



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING REALIA IN TEACHING ENGLISH VOCABULARY TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SAMMANTHURAI ZONE

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Abstract

This study attempted to shed light on the effectiveness of using realia in teaching English vocabulary for elementary school students. It tries to focus on a suitable way of teaching vocabulary by using realia. The government has recognized and recommended to use realia in second language learners. But most schools do not consider the uses of realia. Because, they may not know whether realia has an impact or not contribute to vocabulary learning. The objective of this study is to find the impact of realia on English vocabulary learning in elementary school students in the Sammanthurai zone. The study selects grade 3A and 3B classes at STR/Muslim Mahalir Vidyalaya as the sample which consists of 60 students. The instrument for collecting quantitative data is vocabulary test. The research design is experimental research as such it divides the sample into two groups: control and experimental group using pre-test and post-test. Here, the Experimental group is taught by using realia to increase the English vocabulary level. The control group is taught by traditional teaching method. The results of the tests are analyzed by using independent sample t-test and paired sample t-test. It finds that, the students who are taught with realia perform well than to the others who are not taught with realia during teaching. It finds that the teaching-learning process runs well, Students are active, enthusiastic and interested in vocabulary. It concludes that realia is significantly improved student's performance in learning English vocabulary in elementary school students in Sammanthurai Zone. This study helps to increase one's understanding of the effectiveness of realia in teaching English vocabulary. This finding will benefit everyone who cares in the field of English second language teaching and learning in elementary school students.

Keywords: experimental design, elementary students, Sammanthurai, realia, vocabulary.

INTRODUCTION

Language is the primary tool for social communication among people in any society. It is impossible for people to communicate with other people and do activities together without language. Furthermore, English is an international language that is the essential language in this modern globalization era. Considering that English plays a crucial role in life, it must be mastered well. Teaching vocabulary in English is very important to learn with an excellent vocabulary; during the learning process, the student can understand well what the teacher says. Students will better catch the content as a result. In addition to this, better vocabulary makes a discussion possible for the student. Yet teaching English to young learners is actually a tricky thing. In class, young learners have almost no emphasis. They're hard to control. Studies have revealed that the effective use of realia could improve vocabulary power. In addition, realia helps to stimulate the mind, and it encourages creativity by involving the senses in the learning process in the classroom. Though, Government recognized to use realia as the teaching aids in second language learners, most schools do not consider the uses of realia in teaching English vocabulary. Because, they may not know whether realia has an impact or not contribute to vocabulary learning. Therefore, this study investigates the effectiveness of using realia in learning English vocabulary among elementary school students in the Sammanthurai zone. The objective of the study is to find out whether realia has an impact on vocabulary learning among elementary school students in the Sammanthurai zone.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Nunan (1999) Realia is defined as "objects and teaching props from the world outside the classroom that are used for teaching and learning". Realia are known as real objects under this definition, which is used to help learn a new language as a way of presenting concrete examples from the real world. The British Council states, along with this concept, that "realia applies to any real objects used in the classroom to bring the subject to life." Realia is thus regarded as objects used as a teaching method, considering it as examples or aids of a foreign language. Realia is objects or activities used by the teacher to demonstrate real-life situations, objects that



educators use to help students understand others' cultures and real-life circumstances, real things. Realia or real objects are useful in the classroom to teach and understand. Intrinsically curious objects can provide a good starting point for a number of language research and social activities (Kadir & Giyoto, 2019).

Teaching is not an easy task for a large number of language teachers nowadays, particularly for those teaching in ESL classrooms. Among the explanations that arise from this assertion are: broad classes, English is not considered a second language, students' motivation to learn English is not the highest, and finally teachers' strategies are not the most suitable in relation to the needs of the learners, i.e. their learning styles, intellect level, social background, etc. In addition, educators should contextualize vocabulary in ways where students can respond to it in terms of their personal experiences, rather than merely as more vocabulary to memorize, in order to motivate students to understand. It can be concluded that by comparing the interactions of the learners with their own learning process, newly learned vocabulary can be efficiently processed (Masturah, Handini, Hartati, & Yetti, 2018).

Real objects are better than images if they have them in the classroom, it is assumed that it alludes to windows, doors, walls, floors, tables, clocks, etc. when referring to real objects in the classroom. It promotes the idea of more usable and cheaper real objects than any other tool. Specific objects attract the attention and focus of help from the students: the latter could be reinforced by the belief that realia brings variety and value to a lesson and helps to make the language associated memorable (Masturah et al., 2018). Real objects may not support cultural distinctions and activities with real objects might lose the classpath. It is spending too much time in one activity in the class when it is applied in the wrong way (Fernandez & Yoshida, 2012). Vocabulary is a crucial active piece in language development in any class. Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of second language learning. The students can understand a reading text and make themselves understood with almost no grammar, but they cannot get anywhere without vocabulary. So vocabulary is seen as more critical in the process of learning a language. It is very different from teaching vocabulary to adults to teach young learners. It's not an easy job because they get language training for the first time and they don't get used to it before. The teacher is therefore advised to make the pupil an interesting learning experience so that they can understand well and the learning process can also run well (Watts-Taffe & Truscott, 2000).

Babikir and Hago (2012) deals with teaching English Vocabulary by using realia for ESL learners, to recognize the advantages and disadvantages of Using real objects in English vocabulary instruction. Researchers realized that to achieve a better teaching and learning system, some suggestions and recommendations are necessary. The approach followed to analyze the data collected; the descriptive procedure has been accepted by the study chief. 41 English language teachers represent the sample of this report, who teach at different schools and span their experience from 1–20 years and more. Argawati (2009) is interested in discussing the process of teaching English vocabulary to young learners in this paper since learning English vocabulary is very relevant for early age students. He eventually addressed teaching English vocabulary, the challenges of teaching English vocabulary using realia, the problem-solving problems found, and the usefulness of using realia in teaching English vocabulary. The information from this study is collected when she taught English lessons from the observation and experience of the students. The measures included greeting, warming up, motivational strategies, strategies for delivery, skill training, and assessment. Oyarzo, Vargas, and Reyes (2008) carried out in order to determine in what ways realia contributes to vocabulary learning among young learners. A comparative analysis of the issue of realia in contrast with other techniques is made regarding the ways vocabulary is taught and learned. The research shows realia is a useful technique that can be applied when learning newly presented vocabulary and at the same time it is a useful methodological tool to learn new vocabulary.

Rokhmawati (2010) concerns with using realia in teaching vocabulary. She used two instruments to collect data, they are test and experiment. And the result of this study is using realia is effective in teaching vocabulary to the four grade students of SDN 1 Kebonbatur. Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson (2003) identifying the difference of writing achievement in procedure text between students' taught by pictures and students did not teach by pictures. It used two instruments to collect data they are tests and experiments. The result shows that the picture can improve the students' ability in writing procedure text. Hami (2011) used documentation, observation, and test to collect data. The result of the research shows that the students improve their writing organization of descriptive text using realia. They are better at organizing the words, and one of the advantages of using realia is that students can produce the words of the object efficiently and accurately. Awaliya, Ariani, and Andayani (2017) design is quasi-experimental research using posttest-only control group design. It is suggested to conduct further research with different research designs such as classroom action research to improve the students' writing achievement by using real objects or realia.

**Methodology**

This section gives a complete description of the methodology to investigate the impact of using realia in teaching English vocabulary to elementary school students in Sammanthurai zone. The experimental research design is used in this study. The 60 number of students from grade Three of STR/Muslim Mahalir Vidyalaya in the Sammanthurai zone is taken as the sample of the study. The two written test are used to measure the student's performance in the English vocabulary levels. The students are divided into two groups such as an Experimental (Group A) and Control group (Group B). Each group consists of 30 students.

Initially, the same question paper is given to the experimental and control groups (pre-test). The test is made up of three main questions. The first one consists to write the name with a suitable vocabulary. The second question has to choose the correct word from the bracket. The last question is to match the picture with the correct name. Then the marks taken by the students in the test are recorded. Then the experimental group is taught by using realia or real objects as teaching aids. But the control group is taught only using traditional teaching methods and they are not given any special attention from their teacher in using realia. The intervention process for both groups is taken place four hours per week for three months continuously. End of the intervention process the 2nd phase of the test is done for both groups and marks obtained by the students are recorded (post-test). In order to measure the impact of realia, the independent sample t-test and paired sample t-test are used.

Hypothesis:

H₀: The mean marks of the experimental group is equal to or less than the mean marks of the control group.

H_a: The mean marks of the experimental group is higher than the mean marks of the control group.

Results and Analysis**Pre-test: Experimental group vs Control group**

An independent sample t-test is performed to find the mean differences of the initial test (pre-test) between experimental and control groups. The test result is presented in table 1. Table 1, shows that the mean marks of the experimental group and control group is 48 and 49 and the standard deviation is 14.71804 and 14.1129 respectively.

Table 1A: Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre	A	30	48.0000	14.71804	2.68713
	B	30	49.0000	14.11529	2.57709

Table 1B: Independent Samples t-test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Pre Equal variances assumed	.153	.697	-.269	58	.789	-1.00000	3.72318	-8.45275	6.45275
Equal variances not assumed			-.269	57.899	.789	-1.00000	3.72318	-8.45303	6.45303

Based on the analysis result of the Independent Sample t-test, the significant value of the pre-test is 0.789 and the t value is -0.269. The significant value is 0.789 which is greater than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, it cannot reject the Null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups.



Post-test: Experimental group vs Control group

The second Independent sample t-test is performed to find the differences in mean marks in the second test (post-test) between experimental and control groups. The test result is presented in table 2. The table 2 shows that the mean marks of the experimental group is 74.6667 with a standard deviation of 15.62565 and the mean marks of the control group is 49.6333 with standard deviation is 13.76774.

Table 2A: Group Statistics

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post A	30	74.6667	15.62565	2.85284
Post B	30	49.6333	13.76774	2.51363

Table 2B: Independent Samples t-test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Post Equal variances assumed	.849	.361	6.584	58	.000	25.033	3.8022	17.422	32.644
Post Equal variances not assumed			6.584	57.095	.000	25.033	3.802	17.419	32.646

The table 2B shows that the mean marks of the experimental group is 74.6667 with a standard deviation of 15.62565. And the mean marks of the control group is 49.6333 with a standard deviation is 13.76774. Based on the analysis of the Independent Sample test of the significant value of the post-test is 0.000 with the t value is 6.584. The significant value is 0.000 which is less than alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, it can reject the Null hypothesis that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups (Experimental and control).

Experimental Group: Pre-test vs Post-test

The total number of the pre-test takers of the experimental group is 30 students from Grade 3A. The same students again involved the post-test who is taught by using realia to increase the vocabulary level. The Experimental groups of pre-test and post-test are analyzed by using paired sample t-test.

Table 3A: Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Pre A	48.0000	30	14.71804	2.68713
Pair 1 Post A	74.6667	30	15.62565	2.85284

The paired sample t-test is used to find the mean marks differences between pre-test and post-test among the experimental group. The test result is shown in table 3. The table depicted that the mean marks of the pre-test is 48 with a standard deviation of 14.71804. And the mean marks of the post-test is 74.6667 with standard deviation of 15.62565.

**Table 3B: Paired Samples t-test**

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Pre - Post	-2.6666	5.16175	.94240	-28.59410	-24.73924	-28.296	29	.000

Based on the paired sample t-test, the significant value is 0.000 with the t-value of -28.296. The mean difference of the paired is -2.6666. The significant value is 0.000 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, it rejects the Null hypothesis that there is a statistically significant difference between mean marks. It indicated that the result of paired sample test analysis is significant. In other words, there is a significant effect of using realia in teaching English vocabulary.

Control Group: Pre-test vs Post-test

The total number of the pre-test takers of the control group is 30 students from Grade 3B. The same students are again involved in the post-test after three months to measure their vocabulary level. The control group of pre-test and post-test are analyzed by using paired sample statistics.

Table 4A: Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre B	49.0000	30	14.11529	2.57709
	Post B	49.6333	30	13.76774	

The paired sample t-test is used to find the mean marks differences between pre-test and post-test among the control group. The test result is shown in table 4. the table depicted that the mean marks of the pre-test is 49 with a standard deviation of 14.1152 and the mean marks of the post-test is 49.6333 with standard deviation of 13.76774.

Table 4B: Paired Samples t-test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Pre - Post	-.63333	3.06800	.56014	-1.77894	.51228	-1.131	29	.267

Based on the paired sample test, the significant value is 0.267 with the t-value of -1.131. The mean difference of the paired is -0.63333. The significant value is more than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, it cannot reject the Null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean marks. It indicated that the result of paired sample test analysis is not significant. In other words, there is no significant effect on elementary school students when using traditional teaching without realia in teaching English vocabulary.

Conclusion

The study test the effectiveness of using realia in teaching English vocabulary among elementary school students in Sammanthurai zone. Based on the analysis of the tests showed that the students' vocabulary power has increased significantly among experimental group than and control group after the realia intervention process has taken place. It reveals that the realia is very helpful for increasing English vocabulary among elementary school students in Sammanthurai zone. Using real materials help students feel more comfortable and fruitful in group tasks and activities. Students are motivated and being creative and teachers can motivate their lesson plan in learners' minds through realia. Because it addresses different types of learners such as kinesthetic, visual and auditory. The ways to increase their vocabulary using realia are by providing the real object as an aid in teaching English vocabulary. The advantages of using realia in teaching vocabulary for the students are increasing the student's memory about



the vocabulary, increasing the understanding of the students and decreasing the dullness teaching-learning process especially in teaching English vocabulary among elementary school students.

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