IMPROVING ENGLISH VOCABULARY MASTERY IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT OF SEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS THROUGH PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

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Abstract

This research is a two-cycle classroom action research consisting of four stages; planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. This research aims to increase students' mastery of English vocabulary, especially in descriptive text through Project Based Learning. The subjects were 33 students in class VII-F of SMP N 1 Getasan. This research took at SMP N 1 Getasan in class VIIF because many of them lack vocabulary mastery. It happened because most of them haven't got English basic in elementary school. Data collective techniques are observation and documentation, as well as research instruments using observation sheets and questionnaires. The observation did in the implementation stage of each stage by the two observers. The documentation is made in the planning stage of each cycle. Every reflection did with the questionnaire for the students. There is also some test as the documentation to measure the starting situation, cycle I, and cycle II. The results of the study showed that 31 students or 93.9% had completed their studies, while 2 students or 6.1% had not completed them. From the passing grade, it states that if 75% of the total students have scored above 75, then the learning model applied is successful.

Keywords: Project Based Learning, Vocabulary Mastery, Descriptive Text

Introduction

Nowadays, technology is developing very rapidly. This causes the process of learning through the media like two sides of a coin. On the one hand, it is a positive thing because students can keep up with the times and easily obtain information from various sources. On the other hand, it makes the character of children who justify any means to complete tasks quickly with the help of technology. According to the outcome of observations and experiences found in the school environment, many students use *google translate* and *google lens* to translate English text. These events certainly make it easier for students to do assignments, but they do not necessarily understand and learn the vocabulary well.

Language learning is closely related to vocabulary. Vocabulary is knowledge about words and meanings (Kamil & H., 2005). Mastering vocabulary is a basic language skill. Based on Hastunar, D. E., Bharati, D. A. L., & Sutopo (2014), there are at least four major indicators of vocabulary learning: the meaning of words, pronouncing words, spelling words, and using words in sentences. The better they master the main elements of the vocabulary, the better they will be able to listen, read, speak, and write.

Language learning will be easy to follow when students know and had a desire to learn various vocabularies. Many students become dependent on using technology. Many of them are motivated to learn fast but forget the learning process. It triggers students to learn individually rather than being guided by a teacher. Teachers need to facilitate learning that can improve students' language learning abilities through learning models that are appropriate to students' learning needs and interests, one of those is Project Based Learning.

This research was conducted to find out if the implementation of Project Based Learning can improve students' English vocabulary mastery in descriptive text and to find out how much Project Based Learning has increased in improving English vocabulary mastery in descriptive text. Researchers want to use this learning model to know that project-

based learning can upgrade students' English vocabulary and the process of using this model in improving students' English vocabulary.

There are some benefits that the researchers expected of this classroom action research are; can be used as a reference, description, add insight and experience in carrying out English learning using the Project Based Learning model to increase students' interest in learning English vocabulary for the teachers; can be a form of learning innovation that encourages students to have a confident attitude, dare to try new things, be independent and responsible for students in the future; can be used as material for school considerations to increase students' interest in learning, especially in English vocabulary using a project-based learning; can be added knowledge, experience, and motivate writers to continue in enriching scientific insights in the world of education, especially in the application of project-based learning.

Methodology

Classroom Action Research is the research design which conducted in class intending to upgrade or improve the quality of learning practices. This research design focuses on the learning and teaching process that occurs in the classroom. This is because the conditions of each class are different, so the treatment or ways to improve the quality of learning outcomes will be different. This statement is reinforced by Suharsimi et al., (2012) where classroom action research must focus on the things that happen in the classroom, they are teaching and learning activities.

This research did with 33 students of VII F at SMP N 1 Getasan as the research subject who were deemed to have had better results in learning English, especially in their lack of vocabulary mastery compared to other classes. This triggered researchers to conduct classroom action research through a project-based

learning model to encourage students to learn actively and collaboratively.

The data collection techniques are observation and documentation. Observation is the process data collection where an observer and a researcher observe the research situation. This observation is very suitable for use in research related to the teaching-learning process, student's behavior, and group interactions. The target in this observation is the teacher and students learning English to find out the students' starting situations. The document became a record of past events. Documents can take the form of someone's writing, photographs, or other documents (Sugiyono, 2012). In this study, researchers used documentation techniques to describe the situations and conditions of English learning activities using the PjBL (Project Based Learning) in the form of photos of classroom action activities from the beginning of learning to the end of learning, documentation obtained from the lesson plan, syllabus, and questionnaire documents.

Research conducted by Mirnanda (2020) stated that analyzing data is a process of interpreting data to place kinds of information according to its function. Data analysis can be performed before field work, during field work, and after field work is completed. In addition to data collection, we focused on data analysis in the field. Data analysis was performed using two types of data: quantitative and qualitative data. The data obtained in the classroom action research was analyzed through descriptive qualitative, the form of a description of the results of observations. Quantitative data is analyzed through the average, middle value, mode, highest value, and lowest value. While qualitative data is obtained from observations that are given a value to make it easier to analyze.

Classroom action research was carried out at least in two cycles. Each cycle in classroom action research consists of four phases: plan, implement or do,

observe, and reflect. This research did it in two cycles.

a. Cycle I

Planning is done to find out the needs and initial abilities of students so that they can determine what treatment will be carried out to improve students' abilities. Implementation in the cycle I was held for two meetings to complete the five stages of project-based learning syntax. After the implementation doing the project in the cycle I, an evaluation was carried out through a post-test for cycle I. Observations were conducted during the cycle I by both researchers and other teachers. Students also make observations to be included in student reflection/self-assessment. At last, reflection was carried out at the end of the cycle by researchers as practicing teachers, and students through self-assessment through filling out questionnaires.

b. Cycle II

Cycle II planning is carried out after carrying out the reflection of the cycle I. After the results were obtained, the researchers analyzed the success of project-based learning, and whether it was able to improve student learning outcomes in learning English. If it has increased, how much it has increased, if it has decreased or is less effective, the researcher has to change or revise the learning model or method. As a comparison, the pre-test cycle II was carried out to strengthen students' initial abilities after being treated using the project-based learning method in the implementation stage. In the second project, students carry out activities to compose descriptive text from family members or friends, or idols as the final product of project-based learning. The post-test technique was carried out to confirm the results of students' abilities, whether they increased, remained, or even decreased related to mastery of English vocabulary. The observation stage also happened in cycle II. This was conducted during the cycle II both by researchers and

by other fellow teachers. Students also make observations to eventually be included in student reflection/self-assessment. For reflection, it was carried out at the end of the cycle by researchers as practicing teachers, and students through self-assessment through filling out questionnaires.
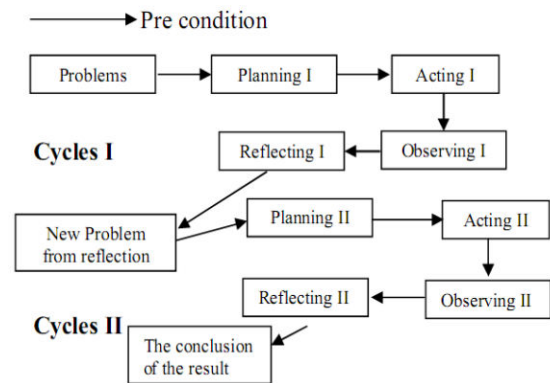

Diagram 1. Classroom Action Research Cycle by (Asrori, 2007)

Finding and Discussion

a. Starting situation

The starting situation that occurs for students at State Junior High School 1 Getasan especially VIIF related to learning English is that their interest in learning English is still low so their grades and learning abilities in class are still low. From the initial learning carried out, students who are still in the category of young learners and the stage of recognizing the language, of course, need the basics of the language, such as English vocabulary. Not all students get English learning at the previous level of education, so more effort is needed for an educator to provide fast and precise learning for students.

Of the 33 students in class VIIF, less than 20 students are aware, responsible, disciplined, and passionate about learning. This is proven because many students pay less attention to the teacher in the classroom, are less disciplined in collecting assignments, and are less active in learning. Therefore, through this project-based learning, it is

expected that students will take responsibility as students more active and understand the importance of learning English through this project-based learning.

In the starting situation process, the researcher did a pre-test to know students' early condition. Here is the result:

Table 1. Starting situation

Highest score	90
Lowest score	40
Range	50
Mean	69.55
Median	70
Mode	60
Sum of students up to passing grade	14

From the table above, it can be said that the starting situations of class VII F students in mastering English vocabulary were not good. This was obtained from the average starting situation of 33 students, 69.55. This value is relatively small when viewed from the research success criteria, that is having a passing grade of 75. As for the median of 70, it is still below the 75 passing grade. It can be stated that almost half of the students (16 children) have scores below 75. From the resulting mode, it is 60, it is stated that more values are less than the passing grade of 75. While the range of values is 50, it means that the larger the range of values, the more types or kinds of values in the data.

b. Cycle I

1) Plan

The cycle I was carried out during two meetings, on April 3, and 5 2023. At the first meeting, a pretest was carried out and an introduction to the material as well as directions for project activities. In this cycle, students made a product called a family tree of their members and describe it in some sentences. This plan is arranged to improve students' vocabulary mastery in descriptive text.

2) Implementation

Implementation of cycle I include learning activities that are carried out on Monday, 3 April 2023 in class VIIF at 8.30-09.50 or during the 3rd and the 4th lesson hours on Wednesday, 5 April 2023 in the 6th-8th lesson at 10.50-12.10. The material studied is descriptive text with the subject of discussion of family members. In addition, teachers and fellow researchers also made observations during cycle I. This stage of cycle one did in two meetings, in which every meeting having different activity. In the beginning, the teacher took attendance by mentioning the position of the student's family members (ex: Arif mentioning father, Aqil mentioning brother), students are given pre-test sheets to find out students' initial abilities regarding English vocabulary in descriptive text material related to the family. Students are introduced to the family tree and know the family tree. It was observed that there were still many students who did not know English of several family members and many had difficulty understanding the meaning of a family tree.

In the same meeting, students were directed to carry out two project-based learning syntaxes, namely fundamental questions and designing product plans. In basic questions, students are given an illustration of a picture and count the number of family members they have and mention which members they have. For activities on designing product plans, students write down in pairs who their family members are, try to write on the blackboard which family members they know, and design their family diagrams. In this cycle I of the first meeting, students design a schedule for making a product, namely a product in the form of a family tree along with a description or depiction of the diagram. When ending the meeting, do not forget that the teacher encourages students to reflect on today's learning activities and provide an overview of activities at the next meeting.

The second meeting which was on April 5, 2023, carried out a continuation of the project-based learning syntax cycle; monitoring the activity and progress of the project, the teacher knew the learning abilities and enthusiasm for learning students. After that, students presented the results of the products designed in front of the class, and other friends gave appreciation and responses to student work. At the end of the lesson, students returned to reflect on each student's work and revise the projects undertaken, supported by practice questions (post-test) for the cycle I.

After knowing the starting situations of the students through the pretest, the researcher treated them by using the project-based learning in learning English with descriptive text material. Obtained post-test data for cycle I as follows.

Table 2. Cycle I

Highest Score	100
Lowest Score	60
Range	40
Mean	73,64
Median	80
Mode	80
Sum of students up to passing grade	18

Based on the table above, the highest value has reached 100, meaning that there has been an increase compared to the starting situation (value 90). The average post-test cycle I was 73.64, which was stated to be less than the passing grade value, 75. Related to the median, it had reached a value of 80, where more than half of the students (16 children) had scores above the passing grade. The resulting mode is already above the passing grade value of 75. So it can be stated that there has been a slight increase from the starting situations and cycle I.

3) Observation

During the cycle I of observations, there were several data collected by two observers with the score:
4= Strongly Agree; 3= Agree; 2= Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree

Table 3. Observation Cycle I

No.	Condition	Obsr 1	Obsr 2
Conditions of Learners during learning			
1	Students are actively involved in learning.	3	3
2	Students carry out collaborative discussions.	2	3
3	Students work on projects responsibly.	3	2
4	Students take part in learning well and responsively.	3	3
5	Students are well facilitated by the presence of the teacher and the media used.	4	3
6	Students understand the material well.	3	3
7	Students can present the project results confidently.	2	2
8	Students can design projects that are interesting and easy to understand.	3	4
9	Students can reflect on learning activities honestly.	3	3
10	In learning English with the Project Based Learning, students are collaborative.	3	3
Implementation of Project Based Learning in English Learning			
1	The teacher facilitates the needs of students well.	3	3

2	The teacher encourages students to be active and collaborative in project planning.	3	3
3	Teachers support students to make projects that are creative and easy to understand.	3	4
4	The teacher uses learning methods that attract students' attention.	3	3
5	Teacher applies the order of the project-based learning model appropriately.	3	3
6	Teachers can attract students' learning interests.	4	3
7	Teachers can manage student's conditions well.	3	3
8	Teacher gives assignments according to students' needs.	3	3
9	Teacher asks for students' responses and suggestions for learning.	4	3
10	Teachers reflect on learning responsibly.	3	3
	Total	61	60

From the results of the cycle I of observations conducted by two observers during the two accumulated meetings, the students were quite actively involved, collaborative, and able to take responsibility for learning English in class. Teachers are also quite capable of facilitating and encouraging the needs and abilities of students. The teacher also asked about the difficulties experienced by the students and reflected on them at a later stage so that the effectiveness and passing of student learning outcomes related to the English vocabulary mastery of class VIIF students became valid and could be accepted positively.

4) Reflection

After carrying out a series of planning and implementation as well as observations in the cycle I, it is necessary to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the project-based learning that need to be improved in the next cycle. As a result of the assessments conducted or the post-test in the cycle I showed that there were still many students who had not passed the passing grade, there are 15 students. Therefore, the researcher reflects that project-based learning activities in learning English in the descriptive text material related to family members through family diagrams still need to be improved. When students were asked about their difficulties, they answered that it was difficult to describe a family in a family diagram, because they had too many family members, had more than one father or mother, and were confused about whether to write down family members who had died or not. These things make it longer for students to design family diagrams so that it challenged their mastery of English vocabulary to be more optimal.

Discussion activities and language vocabulary development in project-based learning on syntax 2, 3, and 4 encourage students to discuss and improve their vocabulary knowledge but are not yet fully effective because of time management. The cycle I did in the Ramadhan month which made the time duration only 60 minutes for each meeting. Normally each meeting of English learning in Junior High School is 80 minutes. From this, it should be noted that teachers must also facilitate more actively and creatively such as using more varied media so that the discussions carried out are more meaningful for students.

c. Cycle II

1) Plan

At this stage, researchers and teachers collaborate in compiling teaching modules that will be used in learning, namely regarding descriptive text, especially body parts/parts of the body through activities describing family

members/friends/idols with Project Based Learning, compiling teaching materials, preparing worksheets observation, as well as evaluation in the form of pretest and post-test for students.

2) Implementation

The cycle II was carried out for two meetings, on 3 and 5 May 2023. The one-month difference was carried out for planning activities in the cycle II. The results obtained in the cycle I became material for reflection and planning for the cycle II. At the first meeting of cycle 2, on May 3, 2023, students worked on the pretest of cycle 2 and then continued trying to describe the physical characteristics of friends who came forward in front of the class. After that, students practice designing product plans such as discussing various English vocabularies related to hair characteristics, skin color, face shape, etc. Students also design the manufacture of products, namely describing/describing the characteristics of family members/friends/idols. Do not forget that at the end of the meeting, there was a discussion of the benefits, difficulties, and conclusions of the lessons that had been carried out.

At the second or last meeting in a series of research cycles, students write down the characteristics of family members based on the vocabulary they have found and write down at least five descriptions of the pictures shown. In front of the class, students also present their project then other friends give appreciation. At last, students are encouraged to find out and improve their project to be collected later. Not only that, but the students are also given an evaluation in the form of a cycle 2 post-test to find out the developments that have occurred.

In cycle I, several value analyzes have improved considerably compared to the starting situations, there are the highest value, mode, and media. However, the average cycle I was still below the passing threshold. Therefore, researchers conducted further research in the cycle II to encourage results and arguments in the cycle I. The following data was obtained in the post-test cycle II:

Table 4. Cycle II

Highest core	100
Lowest score	50
Range	50
Mean	86,67
Median	90
Mode	95
Sum of students up to passing grade	23

The highest score in the cycle II of post-test data was 100, surviving from the cycle I which was both 100. The lowest score decreased by 10 points, indicating that the greater the distance or range of values, the more variants or variety of values were obtained. The average in the cycle II rose dramatically to 86.67 which was also above the specified passing grade. Therefore, more students in class VIIF get above 75 than those who get scores below 75, which is reinforced by the mean value of 75. For mode, it can be said to be quite high because it is close to 100, which concludes that there are also many students in class VIIF with high or good English vocabulary mastery.

3) Observation

Here is the result of cycle II observations by two observers in two meetings with the score:

4= Strongly Agree; 3= Agree; 2= Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree

Table 5. Observation Cycle II

No.	Condition	Obsr 1	Obsr 2
Conditions of Learners during learning			
1	Students are actively involved in learning.	4	4
2	Students carry out collaborative discussions.	3	3
3	Students work on projects responsibly.	3	4
4	Students take part in learning well and responsively.	3	3
5	Students are well facilitated by the presence of the teacher and the media used.	4	4
6	Students understand the material well.	3	3
7	Students can present the project results confidently.	3	3
8	Students can design projects that are interesting and easy to understand.	4	4
9	Students can reflect on learning activities honestly.	3	3
10	In learning English with the Project Based Learning, students are collaborative.	3	3
Implementation of Project Based Learning in English Learning			
1	The teacher facilitates the needs of students well.	3	4
2	The teacher encourages students to be active and collaborative in project planning.	4	3
3	Teachers support students to make projects that are creative and easy to understand.	3	4
4	The teacher uses learning methods that attract students' attention.	3	4
5	Teacher applies the order of the project-based learning model appropriately.	3	3
6	Teachers can attract students' learning interests.	4	4
7	Teachers can manage student's conditions well.	3	4
8	Teacher gives assignments according to students' needs.	4	3
9	Teacher asks students' responses and suggestions for learning.	4	3
10	Teachers reflect on learning responsibly.	3	3
Total		67	69

From the data of the observation in cycle II, the students were actively involved, collaborative, responsive, and able to take responsibility for assignments and learning English in class. Teachers are also able to condition and facilitate and encourage the needs and abilities of students. The teacher always asks about the difficulties experienced by students, both in group forums and individually because some students are still embarrassed or reluctant to ask questions, so the teacher provokes them by asking individually and provoking the creativity and innovation of students in designing this cycle II project. In this cycle II of projects, students are allowed to have one of the characters, be it family members, friends, or idols so that the creations and ideas obtained are more diverse.

4) Reflection

After conducting the cycle II of classroom action research consisting of planning, implementing, and observing in the classroom, researchers thought to conclude and find out the strengths and weaknesses of this cycle. The results of the assignment or the posttest in the cycle II indicated an increase, that 31 students already had scores above the passing grade, 75, and only two students had scores below the passing grade. Therefore, the researcher reflected that the results of the reflections in the cycle I were planned

further in the cycle II to be successful and also appropriate to students' needs to improve English vocabulary mastery. By providing other options in carrying out project assignments describing physical characteristics for people with three different choices, namely family, friends, and idols, students are free to choose and develop their ideas than being limited to just family members. When presented, one task and the other have a variety of products so that it becomes an enrichment of vocabulary related to parts of the body. This made the post-test scores in the cycle

II increase compared to the cycle I and the starting situations.

From the previous explanation, it can be stated into a discussion that is easier to see and compared from the starting situations, cycle I and cycle II, through the table below.

Table 6. Starting situation, Cycle I, and Cycle II Data

Category	Starting situation	Cycle I	Cycle II
Highest Score	90	100	100
Lowest Score	40	60	50
Range	50	40	50
Mean	69,55	73,64	86,67
Median	70	80	90
Mode	60	80	95
Sum of students up to passing grade	14	18	31

By concluding the assignment result of the starting condition, cycle I, and cycle II, student learning outcomes were improved. It is clear that the class average of 33 students is improving. The average increase in the starting situations in the cycle I was 4.09%. In the cycle I with the cycle II, there was an average increase of 13.03%. The increasing average value indicates the success of the project-based learning process being carried out. Likewise, there was an increase in students who had scores above the passing grade of 75. Even so, it was still noted in the cycle II, that the lowest score was 50, while in the previous cycle it had increased with a value of 60. This happened due to external factors outside the implementation of project-based learning that cannot be peeled off further.

The mean value shows an increase as well. In the cycle II, it reached 90, which incidentally is a high score. From

the midpoint, it is skewed to the right, which means that more than 16 students already have scores above the passing grade of 75, supported by the results of the number of students with scores above the passing grade, namely 23 students. This number increased from the starting situation of 14 students to 18 students in the cycle I and increased again in the cycle II as many as 13 students to 31 students. There has been an increase in student learning outcomes related to English vocabulary mastery in descriptive text material through project-based learning, in the class average score, the highest score achieved, the median, the mode value, and many students whose scores are above the passing grade. The number of students who have exceeded the passing grade value of 75 at the end of project-based learning is 31 students or 93.9% while those who have not reached the passing

grade value are 2 students or 6.1% of the 33 students.

Conclusion

The final results obtained from classroom action research using the Project Based Learning model in descriptive text material in class VII-F to improve in English vocabulary have been carried out well because there has been a significant increase and has reached the passing grade. In the class average, the highest score achieved, the median mode value, and the numbers of students whose scores are above the passing grade have increased. From the two cycles of classroom action research that done in a total of four meetings this research had a result from the score of post-test in each cycle. Many students have exceeded the passing grade value, 75, which is 31 students or 93.9% while those who have not reached the passing grade value are 2 students or 6.1% of the total 33 students. The indicator criteria states that if 75% of the total students score above the passing grade of 75, then the learning model applied is successful.

In order for further research to be successful, researchers must carefully monitor the students' condition, so the research will be more effective and credible. Discussion with fellow teachers and other researchers was also helpful in finishing this classroom action research. For the effectiveness of using project-based learning, the researcher must give vary of project tasks to increase students' vocabulary mastery.

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