

## Using Onomatopoeia in Comic to Improve Vocabulary

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### Abstract

*In the field of second language teaching, vocabulary has been one of the most neglected areas in the classroom. That is why there are many students who lacks of vocabulary will find difficulties in language learning process. They will find difficulties in communication. Therefore vocabulary has an important role in communication process both spoken and written. Vocabulary is needed to support a success communication. This study was meant to find out how to improve vocabulary by using onomatopoeic expression in comic and to describe some challenges in using comic as a media of teaching and learning process. This study used a qualitative descriptive analysis. The participants were taken from the students in private classes. The research data is collected by using test (test after the first treatment and test after the second treatment) and by observation for collecting data on the students' motivation in improving vocabulary mastery using onomatopoeic expression. The data were analyzed by using the descriptive analysis. The result showed that in the first cycle, the students' average was 65.8, then, on the second treatment, the students' average increase to be 75.9. It can conclude that teaching vocabulary by using onomatopoeic expression in comic can be used as media to improve students' vocabulary ability.*

**Keyword :** Onomatopoeia, Vocabulary, Comic

### Abstrak

*Di dalam bidang pengajaran bahasa kedua, kosakata menjadi salah satu hal yang diabaikan didalam kelas. Oleh karena itu wajar jika banya siswa-siswa yang memiliki keterbatasan kosakata akan menemukan kesulitan dalam proses mempelajari bahasa kedua. Mereka akan menemukan kesulitan dalam berkomunikasi. Oleh karena itu, kosakata memegang peranan penting dalam proses berkomunikasi antara satu dengan yang lain baik secara lisan maupun tulisan. Dalam hal ini kosakata sangat diperlukan untuk menunjang suksesnya proses berkomunikasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan bagaimana cara meningkatkan dan memperkaya kosakata dengan menggunakan kata-kata onomatopea atau beberapa bentuk ekspresi onomatopea yang terdapat didalam komik dan penelitian ini juga dimaksudkan untuk melihat serta meninjau beberapa tantangan yang akan dihadapi ketika menggunakan komik didalam proses pembelajaran bahasa kedua. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian yang bersifat analisis deskriptif kualitatif. Data dalam penelitian ini diambil dari beberapa kelas privat. Adapun bentuk pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah dengan menyelenggarakan beberapa tes dan observasi untuk melihat bagaimana kata dan ekspresi onomatopea yang terdapat di dalam komik dapat memberikan motivasi kepada para siswa dalam meningkatkan kemampuan penguasaan kosakata. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat peningkatan perolehan nilai rata-rata siswa dari 65.8 menjadi 75.9. Maka dapat disimpulkan bahwa penggunaan kata-kata onomatopea didalam komik mampu meningkatkan dan memperkaya kosakata.*

**Kata kunci :** Onomatopea, Kosakata, Komik

## 1. Introduction

In learning language, there are some components that must be regarded to be learned by learners. One of those elements is vocabulary. Vocabulary is one of the language components that should be mastered by learners. It has an important role in communication process both spoken and written especially for the beginners. Vocabulary has an important part in learning English, which can improve language skill: reading, speaking, writing and listening. To measure the ability of the students in English, we can measure it from their vocabulary mastery. The linguist David Wilkins cited in Thornbury (2002) stated that without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. He added that "we can say very little grammar, but we can say almost anything with words. Richard and Renandya cited in Suwastomo (2016) are in line with wilkins as he argued that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. He also confirms the importance of vocabulary in daily life. When teachers ask students to say something, some of them do not know what they want to say. It seems hard for them to express it in English language due to their lack of and limited vocabulary. It causes students cannot speak English well. It is difficult for the student to deliver and give their idea by using English language.

In addition because of limited vocabulary the students will find difficulties in learning English. So the selection of teaching strategies and media must comply with the conditions of the students. In English language learning ideally teachers should use the media in teaching. Teachers facilitate the students using teaching and learning media. The strategy determines the successful process. If a teacher does not use any media, there will be no interesting teaching and learning process. Students need something new in their process of learning. Many years ago teacher used conventional method in teaching vocabulary, the teacher only wrote on white board and then asked to memorize the words, pronounced and repeated it without furthermore explanation. In addition, some students felt bored in teaching learning process since the teacher did not explain the whole of text, students have to search the difficult words and then open the dictionary to know the meaning. Besides, many students were not interested in learning vocabulary because the teacher did not use certain strategies to create a more interesting atmosphere in learning vocabulary and also develop the student's vocabulary. There are so many kinds of media which can be used to help students learn the vocabulary. One of them is comic. According to Sujana cited in Suwastomo (2016), comic is a kind of cartoon from expressing character and playing the story in sequences of closely related drawing and designs to give fun to the reader. It contains several continued stories. The stories are brief and interesting, completed with action. Pictures are identical to fun, interest, and concrete things. It can

attract the reader to read the story further. If the reader is motivated to read the whole story, then the implicit aim of reading the comic (entertainment or education) can be reached easily.

Comic is considered as one of teaching media. Teachers use comic as both materials and media. Comic consists of a story which describes concrete things which describes daily life activity of the student. The utterances uttered by the characters can be imitated by the students to make their spoken English well. Then, for young learners, comic strips should consist of short and life-like utterances so that the students can understand the meaning without any significant difficulties. Furthermore, in comic there are so many onomatopoeic words that can be found. According to Miyakoda, H., Kaneko, K., Ishikawa, M., and Shinagawa, N (2010) Onomatopoeic expressions refer to words that contain sounds that are similar to the noises they describe such as 'quack' is an imitated word that represents the sound of a duck, *buzz, crack, growl, hum, plop, roar, squeak, whizz*. These words are named of an object by imitating the sound that produced by the object itself. By employing the onomatopoeic expression in comic as a media in teaching and learning process is expected that the learners can easily memorized new vocabularies by imitating the sound with the onomatopoeic expression. Related to the background of the research, the objective of this research is how to improve vocabulary by using onomatopoeic expression in comic and to identify some challenges in using comic. Based on the purpose of this paper, the writers did classroom action research. In this research, there are procedures which consist of two cycles. Each cycle involves four steps. They are planning, acting and reflecting. In the planning phase, the teacher prepared lesson plan and the instrument of teaching. After doing the planning, it is continued to do action in the class. Then, the last phase is reflecting. Reflection is the analysis and reflection of the data.

### A. Teaching Vocabulary

According to Palmer cited in Kurniawan (2009) stated that vocabulary was one of the most important aspects of foreign language learning. It means that vocabulary has an important to learn a language especially English. Therefore it can say that students express their knowledge using vocabulary. Moreover vocabulary as one of language component should be mastered by the learners for communication and expressing idea in the target language. The people must have special ability to choose appropriate word in making a good sentence. It is known that not all people have ability in mastering a lot of vocabulary well. In other words it can say that because of lack vocabulary, the people will find difficulties to express their idea in making a sentence.

A student who lacks of vocabulary will find difficulties in the language learning process. Vocabulary is necessary to make a communication to be successful. Vocabulary, indeed, is important in studying English as a foreign language. In line with this Cameron cited in

Suwastomo (2016) said that vocabulary is central to the learning of a foreign language at primary level. Then it has moved to center stage in foreign language teaching in recent years, backed by substantial and increasing research. Vocabulary as the one of language component has an important role in learning English. Without mastering vocabulary, it is impossible to master English well. The students who get more vocabulary, they can enrich their English easily. On the other hand the students may still understand ungrammatical formulation sentence in the occasional of conveying ideas, but the wrong use of vocabulary leads miss communication and misinterpretation.

According to Gairns and Redman (2003), there are many techniques of vocabulary teaching. There are: mime and gesture, visual aids, verbal explanation, and contextual guesswork.

1. Mime and gesture. In this technique, a teacher can use real object and command. In real object, the teacher can use something available around of the students such as door, curtain, pen, pencil, book, clock, and so on. In using command, a teacher can give command such as open the door; open your book, etc.

2. Visual aids means that a teacher can use pictures, photographs, flashcards, and blackboards. One of the visual aids is blackboard. It is a writing the words and their meaning on the blackboard. Pictures for vocabulary teaching come from many sources. It can be from the magazine, newspaper, comic or the student's handmade. Pictures can be used to explain the meaning of vocabulary items. The meaning of vocabulary is in the student's mind before he is given the English word because they can understand it from the picture which drawn.

3. Verbal explanation. It is a teacher should select and provide words will be taught based on the student's level, the aim and the time allocated. A teacher can explain the synonym, antonym, and definition of the words formation. The use of Technique is often a quick and efficient way of explaining unknown words, but usually the students become bored in teaching process.

4. Contextual Guesswork means that the students learn vocabulary from a text. The students can understand the meaning of difficult words from a text through deducing meaning from context, deducing meaning from form, word association and word formation

#### B. Onomatopoeia in Comic

Onomatopoeia is a special language expression because its phonological form appears to be more directly associated with its meaning. In short onomatopoeia is a name for an object which is made from an imitation of the sound it produces. Onomatopoeic words can convey imaginative, animated, and picturesque meanings. According to Bredin cited in Dofs (2008) there are three kinds of onomatopoeia, which reflects that the relation between meaning and sound can be expressed and interpreted differently.

1. **Direct onomatopoeia**, words which are similar to the actual sound they refer to. Some typical examples are *zoom*, *bang*, *moan*, *cluck*, and *hiss*.

2. **Associative onomatopoeia** means that words which are onomatopoeic because of associations, not because they resemble the object or the action they represent. *Whip* is the sound made by a whip, and *cuckoo* is the bird's name but the resemblance refers to the song it produces and does not have anything to do with the bird itself.

3. **Exemplary onomatopoeia** is onomatopoeia based on the amount and character of the physical work done by the speaker in uttering the word. Different words require different muscular effort; words such as *nimble* and *dart* require less effort than, for example, *sluggish* and *slothful*. The resemblance between the sound and the concept it refers to is to be found in implications and associated ideas and not in the actual meaning as specified in a dictionary. *Dart* has a quick darting sound and *nimble* exemplifies nimbleness since it is itself a nimble sound.

On the other hand Ullman cited in Eliza (2012). He stated that from the semantic point of view, a distinction has to be made between primary and secondary onomatopoeias. **The primary onomatopoeia** is the imitation of sound by sound. The sound is produced by the object itself. In this case, naming of an object by imitating the sound that produced by the object itself. For example: Car beeping '*horn*', Phone '*br-r-r-ring*', *buzz*, *crack*, *growl*, *hum*, *plop*, *roar*, *squeak*, *whizz*. **The secondary onomatopoeia** is the sound that occurs caused by there is relation between the sound of an object and its movement (*Sound of eating 'chomp chomp'*, *Sound of drinking 'gulp gulp'*, *Collision of other object 'thum/thud'*, *Collision of metals 'clang'* or based on the movement only.

The form of an onomatopoeia can be found in our daily life. It may derive from the sound of an object, an animal and an action. These onomatopoeic words can be found in mass media, like in a novel, poem, advertisement and comic as well. Among the media, onomatopoeic words are featured heavily in comic.

Mostly comics are created to entertain, since comic itself literally means funny. As in Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary (2003) comic means "to provoke mirth, funny and ludicrous". A comic consist of picture and language expressions. Actually, when students read a comic, they do not only enjoy the images but also deals with the linguistic expressions. One of the linguistic expressions, onomatopoeia, makes comic dialogues become more attractive. On the other hand, onomatopoeic words will help the students easily to memorize the vocabularies.

## 2. Discussion

This research belongs to classroom action research. There are some steps in the action research as follow; plan, action, observation, and reflection. Planning is the process of developing a critical analysis of the information received. Action is the process for taking

action to implement the plan. Observation is the process of observation of the impact of information critically to the contexts of the research targets. Reflection is the process of reflection towards the impact that occurs in the future.

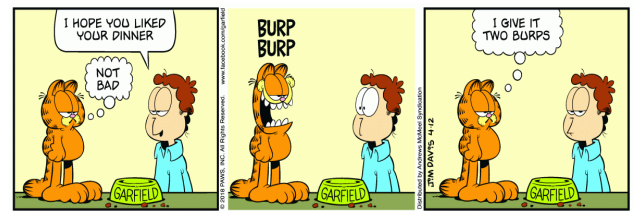
In collecting data, the instruments to be used are: 1) Test consisted of pre-test, post-test, and formative test; and 2) Observation. The writers conducted pre-test to know the ability of the students in mastering English vocabulary.

Test after the first treatment and test after the second treatment are administered to find out the improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery, the formative test was administered to measure about the improvement of their vocabulary ability from the cycle 1 and cycle 2. The observation is administered to measure the characteristics of the students towards the application of using onomatopoeic expression in comic through peer work, and questionnaire is administered to support the data of the students' improvement in vocabulary English ability.

The activities of the research used the following procedures:

1. The researcher observed the previous students' vocabulary average.
2. The researcher planned the action, constructing the lesson plan for the first cycle using comic.
3. The researcher implemented the first action cycle (giving treatment, using onomatopoeic expression in comic).
4. The researcher observed the classroom while implementing the actions in first cycle.
5. The researcher gave reflection to the results of the observation by using the guide of observation in the form of checklist.
6. The researcher analyzed the result of onomatopoeic vocabularies and then classified them qualitatively.
7. The researcher constructed the lesson plan for second cycle.
8. The researcher implemented the second action cycle.
9. The researcher observed the classroom while implementing the second action cycle.
10. The researcher reflected the results of class observation in the second cycle.
11. The researcher analyzed the results of onomatopoeic vocabularies in the first and second cycle quantitatively and then classified them qualitatively.

In the first treatment, the researcher does some activities related to the using of comic. The first treatment activities are:



**Pre-activities:**

1. Preparing some comics which will have to be chosen by the students and teacher.
2. Distributing the comic to the students.
3. Reading own comic that has been chosen.

**Main Activities:**

1. Finding some onomatopoeic words and asking students to underline some onomatopoeic vocabularies and making a list of onomatopoeic vocabularies in piece of paper.
2. Asking the students to look for the meaning by using dictionary and matching the picture with the onomatopoeic expression. If the onomatopoeic vocabularies are not found in the dictionary, create a model of clue to match the word with its meaning.
3. Circle the word that has many meanings. Discussing with students the various meaning and word class classification of those words.
4. The teacher drills the new vocabularies related to the pictures. In this case, the teacher can utilize the picture in comic, mimic and gesture as a media to support in memorizing the new word.
5. Drilling the new vocabularies in pairs among the students.
6. After drilling the new vocabularies, the teacher should teach the student to write spelling of those words. Many of students sometimes do not comprehend how to write the spelling of new word that they have memorized.

**Post-activities:**

1. The teacher asks their difficulty and their problem in vocabulary process.
2. The teacher gives motivation in studying and closes the lesson.

From the first treatment, the research gets the problem as bellow:

1. For some students comics are not so interesting.
2. The students get difficulty in memorizing some of vocabularies which have variety of meanings.
3. The researcher needs to pay attention more to the students who are weak in memorizing vocabulary. So

the teacher should give much time to the students in drilling process.

Based on some problems above, the researcher needs to pay attention to the problems in the first treatment and solve those problems in implementing the second treatment. The second treatment has similar procedure with the first treatment. Therefore the researcher should help and give more assistance and support to the weak students. Besides, their partner or friend in peer work will help them in memorizing the vocabularies. In the first treatment, the student's average score was 65.8 while on the second treatment, the student's average score increase to be 75.9. It showed that the score was increased significantly.

#### A. Challenge in teaching comic

Comic is one of materials for the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The kind of comics is comic strips. Comic strips have a very exciting potential to help the teachers in achieving the learning objectives. Teachers are able to use comic strips as both materials and media. Good learning media is media that can help teachers and learners to follow the process of learning to achieve learning objectives.

Teacher should be ready for facing many situations and conditions in teaching and learning process even unpredictable situation such as some difficulties and obstacles. There are some challenges will probably occur which should be prepared by the teacher. Sometimes there are some students are not interested in using comic. The students are not able to follow the learning styles of visual media. Then the teacher must adjust to the level of willingness and ability of students. On the other hand, the teacher should find the way how to attract those students. It makes the students keep involving to the process of learning.

Comic is a visual medium which consists of graphic designs and characters. It does not provide pronunciation form because it is not an auditory medium automatically students rely on examples from the teacher. The vocabularies should be pronounced by the teacher. Then, the comics cannot be the additional form of media supported audio conversations with native speakers. Therefore, teachers can use other supported media besides just using the comics as a media of learning in the classroom.

### 3. Conclusion

Based on the discussion of the study, it can be concluded that the implementation of teaching English in this action research using onomatopoeic expression in comic as one of teaching strategy could improve student's vocabulary mastery. It can be shown from the student's increasing average in vocabulary score. Comic is effective for teaching media because it gives the easy way for the teachers to deliver the materials especially mastering vocabulary. It also gives effect for the students' ability in memorizing the new vocabularies through onomatopoeic words and the expression of the

characters in comics. Therefore the students were able to comprehend and easily memorized new vocabularies. Later on, the use of comic through peer work as another teaching strategy could also improve vocabulary ability significantly. This leads to the conclusion that the use of comic through peer work as a teaching strategy is a need in English language teaching and learning in improving their ability to speak English in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and their performance based on the context of situation. On the other hand, some obstacles also occurred and were faced by the teacher in learning and teaching process. The teacher should anticipate it by finding another way to make the students keep involving to the process of learning. The teacher should be creative to find a new strategy to face those challenges.

### Suggestion

After discussing the study above, there are some suggestions, the following suggestions are:

1. For English teacher: the teacher should be creative and innovative in giving and providing a material. The teacher is able to find a new way in facing the obstacle and challenge in learning and teaching process.
2. For foreign language teaching researchers: the classroom implementation of the findings since the implementation of using comic has been proven to be successful in improving student's vocabulary mastery by using onomatopoeic expression in comic. Then, the teacher should pay more attention to the students who have difficulties in memorizing new vocabulary. The teacher is able to ask the student to work in pairs with their friends.
3. For further researchers: The emphasis of conducting this research was the improving vocabulary by using onomatopoeic expression in comic. The other researchers are able to conduct the research which focuses on how onomatopoeic expression improve pronunciation.

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