

## THE USE OF IMAGES TO IMPROVE ENGLISH SKILLS INCLUDING LISTENING, READING, SPEAKING AND WRITING IN STUDENTS

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### Abstract

*The teaching and learning process is the main key to the success of the education system. Direct interaction between teachers and students is very essential to be prepared in an organized and structured manner. Apart from the national curriculum as a guide for making learning plans, developing learning components including teaching media is also important. This research aims to 1) find out whether visual media can improve the English vocabulary of students at SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru. 2) Find out the extent of the effectiveness of learning in the classroom when teachers teach English using visual media. 3) Describe the advantages and disadvantages of using visual media in Class VII English learning at SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru. This research is classroom action research applied to Class VII students at SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru, which consists of 30 students. Before carrying out the research, the researcher gave a pre-test to find out the extent of the vocabulary possessed by the students. The pre-test results show that the average student score is 68.27. Meanwhile, the Minimum Completeness Criteria (MCC) for English is 75. After that, the researcher collaborated with the English teacher at SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru to carry out cycle I using visual media. The average score of students after receiving visual teaching increased to 76.97. Thus, researchers still need to continue in cycle 2 to further optimize the increase in students' vocabulary acquisition using English visuals. In cycle 2, the researcher gave an evaluation of the vocabulary measurement test and the average score was 85.10. In explaining, teachers find it easy by using pictures. Apart from that, students are also very enthusiastic and active in the learning process. Based on observations, English learning activities become more interesting using pictures and drawings can also increase students' vocabulary.*

**Keywords:** *Use of Images, English Language Skills, Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing*

### INTRODUCTION

English in Indonesia is a foreign language that is studied by many people, especially academics (Megawati, 2016). In this case language is a communication tool. Teaching at various levels of education in Indonesia must emphasize language as a means of communication. Therefore, language users must all master four skills, namely listening, reading, speaking and writing, which cannot be separated from one another (Muradi, 2014). Apart from that, the elements of English (Vocabulary, Grammar and Pronunciation) must also be mastered in order to support the complete acquisition of English.

In the current era of globalization, learning no longer uses the Teacher Center Learning approach but has moved towards Student Center Learning (Richard, 2008). However, this does not

mean that the teacher's active role will be reduced in the teaching and learning process. The teacher is a facilitator who regulates the course of activities in the class without reducing the activity that must be carried out by students (Churiyah et al, 2020). However, the role of the teacher here is not as a dictator who can impose his will on teaching. Teachers must be able to create a conducive atmosphere in the classroom. Therefore, choosing learning media is an important thing that must be adjusted to the characteristics of students.

In learning English, ideally teachers should use media in teaching. However, teachers do not realize the importance of learning media. In the school curriculum, English is taught as an integrated skill. Harmer (2007) explains that instruction in the English learning process is very necessary because the input to students is very

large. So it is hoped that students, in this case, students must be able to communicate fluently.

Language acquisition for junior high school students is something that is not easy to do considering that English in Indonesia is not a second language. Scott and Ytreberg (1990) define young learners as those aged five and ten or twelve years. With several characteristics that are very different from someone who is an adult, they also tend to like to play, like to imitate things, cannot concentrate for a long time, etc. Thus the teaching must also adapt to their conditions.

The teaching and learning process in the classroom also greatly influences educational success. So teacher professionalism is highly demanded. Four teacher competencies (pedagogical, personality, social and professional) must be possessed by an educator in order to realize an effective and efficient learning process. Many teachers only deliver material without using interesting media, so students tend to feel bored with English. So the choice of learning strategies and media must be appropriate to the students' conditions. If it is not appropriate, it will not create a pleasant learning atmosphere for students.

The teaching and learning process plays an important role in achieving educational goals. For the success of the teaching and learning process, a set of learning components is needed that supports the teaching environment. These components consist of teaching objectives, teaching materials, teaching methodology, and teaching evaluation. The key to the teaching and learning process is how the teacher conveys teaching material well and acceptably. A learning process with character is also needed in this case. As ordinary people, teachers need additional teaching aids with the aim that teaching and learning activities do not only consist of verbal symbols. These tools are usually called teaching media.

As information and communication technology develops, teaching media also

develops at the latest, and the most popular currently is teaching using multimedia. Conventional teaching media have begun to be abandoned, although there are several instructional teaching media such as blackboards and board markers (stationery substitutes for chalk) which are still used to accompany teaching media in any form.

Opinions about the value and benefits of teaching media vary, but basically they are the same, namely conveying the message of teaching materials well, interestingly, creatively and structured to students. Sudjana and Rivai (2009) describe the value and benefits of teaching media into the following points:

1. Teaching will attract more students' attention so that it can foster motivation to learn;
2. The meaning of teaching materials will be clearer so that they can be better understood by students, and enable students to master the teaching objectives better;
3. Teaching methods will be more varied, not just verbal communication through the teacher's telling of words, so that students don't get bored and teachers don't run out of energy, especially if the teacher teaches every class hour;
4. Students do more learning activities, because they not only listen to the teacher's explanations, but also other activities such as observing, doing, demonstrating and so on.

According to Sudjana and Rivai (2009), there are several things that must be considered about teaching media. First, teachers need to have an understanding of teaching media, including the types and benefits of teaching media, using media as teaching aids and following up on the use of media in the student learning process. Second, skilled teachers create simple teaching media for teaching purposes, especially two-dimensional or graphic media, three-dimensional media, and projection media. Third, knowledge and skills in assessing the effectiveness of media use in the teaching process.

According to AECT (Association of Education and Communication Technology)

quoted by Basyaruddin et al (2002), "Media is all forms used for the process of distributing information". Meanwhile, another definition of media is any tool that can be used as a channel for messages to achieve learning goals. From these definitions it can be said that media is something that has a convincing message and can stimulate the thoughts, feelings and desires of the audience (students) so that it can encourage the learning process in them.

In the same sense, Criticos (1996) suggests that media is one communication component, namely as a messenger from the communicator to the communicant. The National Education Association (NEA) defines media as all objects that can be manipulated, seen, heard, read, or talked about along with the instruments used for these activities. In education itself, media is defined as a component of learning resources or physical vehicles that contain instructional material in the student environment that can stimulate students to learn.

In general, media is the plural of "medium", which means intermediary or introduction. Say media applies to various activities or businesses, such as media for delivering messages, magnetic or heat delivery media in the engineering field. The term media is also used in the field of teaching or education so that the term becomes educational media or learning media.

Based on the description number of the limitations regarding media above, along with the general characteristics contained in each limitation (Angkowo and Kosasih, 2007).

1. Educational media has a physical meaning which is currently known as hardware, namely objects that can be seen, heard or touched with the five senses.
2. Educational media has a non-physical meaning known as software, namely the message content contained in the hardware which is the content that you want to convey to students.

Teaching media can be designed simply by the teacher himself, but can also be obtained easily in the surrounding environment. The following are several types of media that you can consider using in delivering teaching material effectively. Graphic media can be in the form of images or lines that state concepts or facts that can support the ideas of delivering teaching material. There are several types of graphic media that can be used in the teaching and learning process, namely:

- a. Chart; types of graphic presentations such as maps, graphs, paintings, cartoons, diagrams, posters, etc.
- b. Diagram; a simple picture designed to visualize interrelationships with connecting lines.
- c. Chart; presentation of data that contains elements of numbers or amounts or population comparisons.
- d. Poster; visual communication media that has a complete picture with elements of images and words that are both provocative and inspiring.
- e. Cartoon; unique media in the form of depictions or paintings or caricatures of certain figures.
- f. Picture; cartoon consisting of characters acting out a story that aims to entertain readers.

Photographic images can be obtained easily through mass media such as the internet, magazines, newspapers, calendars, etc. This media can also be designed independently by obtaining it individually, considering the development of photographic equipment technology which has become multi-purpose. Cell phones are equipped with cameras, portable computers, tablet computers, and even watches are equipped with camera features. In this era, photography is no longer a teaching medium that is difficult to obtain.

Projection media that can be used are OHP (Overhead Projector) and Slides or film strips.

Since the advent of digital projectors that can be connected to a computer directly, OHPs that require transparency printing have begun to be abandoned and switched to more up-to-date technology (Indriana, 2011). Projection media is a very effective teaching medium because it can save paper for printing teaching materials. The teacher only needs to display it in front of the class and the students are actively involved in it.

Audio media is suitable for use as an instructional intermediary, for example listening in English learning. English songs can be played to improve various basic language skills. Audio is also more effective for providing real examples of sound material in the teaching and learning process.

A three-dimensional model is a three-dimensional imitation of a real form, for example a human skeleton, globe, statue, etc. This type of media can be used to replace concrete objects that are too big, too small, too complicated, or even dangerous to be presented directly in front of the class.

Environment as a Teaching Media, this type of media is media that can make the teaching and learning process more meaningful and concrete. Direct experience can be easily remembered and understood by students. The use of this media can lead to the possibility of more expensive operational costs, for example field trips. Involving students directly with real experiences without leaving out the essence of the teaching material that must be conveyed, has proven to be very effective when applied to any type of subject or subject, especially learning English as a Foreign Language.

Gayeski in Munir (2012) defines multimedia as a collection of computer-based media and communication systems which have the role of building, storing, delivering and receiving information in the form of text, graphics, audio, and video and so on. Multimedia is the latest teaching media and can be applied in all areas of learning including language.

Meanwhile, according to Ariani and Haryanto (2010), multimedia is a combination of various media in the form of text, images, graphics, sound, animation, video, interaction, which are packaged in digital files.

Visual Media is one of the determining factors for learning success. Through media the learning process can be more interesting and enjoyable (joyful learning). By using media technological like computers, it really helps students in learning. Another important aspect about using media is that it helps clarify learning messages. Information conveyed orally is sometimes not fully understood by students, especially if the teacher does not explain the material sufficiently. This is where the role of media is, as a tool to help clarify learning messages.

In connection with English lessons, it is necessary to design image media to improve learning situations that are more enjoyable than other subjects. Flash cards, realia, pictures can be used to represent something new that has never been translated. Pictures are something that is very interesting for all levels of students, both Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced. Of course, different opinions will arise if what is shown is just a still image, without explanation. Writings or sounds can support the existence of images as a teaching medium.

The silly picture characters try to say English words that some readers may not know the meaning of or even know where the humor lies. Here, linguistic and cultural knowledge is needed to support readers in interpreting the story from the picture.

The popularity of images is growing with the filming of several story images into motion pictures or what are usually called cartoon films. Many teachers experiment with this medium to carry out creative teaching. Many experiments have been made in language arts at the middle and high school levels. The writing in each short picture box can attract students' interest in reading

by paying attention to the picture to help interpret the story of the picture. If there are words that are not understood, students will try to find out what the words mean, and this is what is intended for students to gain knowledge of new vocabulary in English through picture stories presented by the teacher.

Some teachers may find it difficult to design or create their own character images. This can be overcome by looking for famous images from up-to-date information media such as the internet. Teachers must be as creative as possible in incorporating these teaching media components so that they can be used effectively in the classroom.

The use of extensive images with colorful illustrations, concise storylines, with realistic and interesting characters can motivate students of all age levels (Sudjana and Rivai, 2009). The single largest and most important component of the language learning experience is vocabulary. Of the various basic language skills that are important to learn, vocabulary mastery is more important to know first, because no matter how well you learn grammar, it cannot beat the power of words that have meaning. Because vocabulary is the most important component of grammar itself. The existence of language and vocabulary appeared before grammarians discovered language structures or features that could make it easier for students to learn the target language (McCarthy, 2008).

Teaching English vocabulary seems to be somewhat neglected due to the obligation to teach listening, speaking, reading and writing which are considered the basic and most important of the other features of English. The fact is that good vocabulary mastery can support the learning of English skills to be more active and effective. Interesting and interactive learning techniques are needed in conveying new vocabulary to students.

Vocabulary consists of words that can stand alone and have meaning. For beginner level students, such as elementary and middle school

students, vocabulary can be conveyed using drilling techniques so that students' memory of the vocabulary they have learned can be higher. For vocabulary teaching, according to McCarthy (2008), teachers must pay attention to several things, namely:

1. Composition of vocabulary and the elements contained therein.
2. Organizing vocabulary from each word that has meaning.
3. Rules for structuring vocabulary in its use in larger features such as phrases, sentences, etc.
4. The acquisition of vocabulary itself is more dominant in human thinking, memory, or habits in using it.

The guide to mastering English vocabulary lies in the teacher's role in using appropriate media in delivery according to the context planned for the classroom learning process. Involving students in using vocabulary teaching media is also effective in increasing students' recall or memory.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Research design

The type of research used is Classroom Action Research (CAR). Classroom action research is reflective form research carried out by educators themselves on the curriculum, school development, improving learning achievement, developing teaching skills and so on (Arikunto & Suharsimi, 2010). To realize these goals, classroom action research consists of 4 stages, namely: planning, taking action, observing and reflecting.

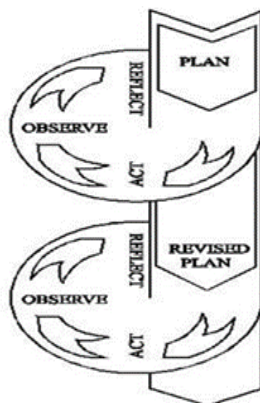
### Research Subject

This research held in Class VII even semester of SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru. This research was carried out during the 2021/2022 academic year from September to October 2021. The subjects of this research were Class VII students at SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru, especially Class VII.



The following are the stages that researchers must carry out to carry out CAR:

1. Planning stage; namely the process of developing critical analysis of the information received.
2. Action stage; the process of taking action to implement plans.
3. Observation stage; the process of critically observing the impact of information on the research target context.
4. Reflection stage; the process of reflecting on the impacts that will occur in the future. The procedures applied in this class action research are as described below:



**Figure 1.** Classroom Action Research Cycle

### Instrument

An instrument is said to be valid if it is able to measure what is desired and can reveal data from the variables studied accurately (Arikunto et al, 2014). To determine the validity of the question items, it is determined by calculating the correlation coefficient of the total score with the question score using the product correlation formula moments rough figures. The  $r$  price obtained from each item is then consulted with the product moment  $r$ -table price with a significance level of 5%, if  $r$ -count  $\geq$   $r$ -table the item is declared valid and if vice versa then the question is declared invalid (Arikunto & Suharsimi 2010).

Meanwhile, reliability refers to the understanding that an instrument can be trusted enough to be used as a data collection tool

because the instrument is good. To calculate reliability, you can use the KR.21 formula (Arikunto et al, 2014), If  $r$ -11 count  $>$   $r$  table then the question set is reliable and if  $r$ 11 count  $<$   $r$  table then the questions are not reliable (Arikunto et al, 2014). The  $r$ -11 value obtained is consulted with the  $r$  table with a significance level of 5%, if the calculated  $r$  value  $>$   $r$  table then the instrument being tested is reliable.

### Data collection technique

Test techniques are used to collect data on student learning outcomes in the cognitive domain is Test and non test. The test given is in the form of an objective test, namely in the form of description and multiple choice. Whereas, Non-Test given is documentation and Observation.

### Data analysis technique

Data analysis is carried out by paying attention to the type of data to be analyzed. The indicator of success in learning outcomes is declared successful if at least 70% of the total number of students get a Minimum Completeness Classical (MCC) score  $\geq$  75, then the action is declared successful in both the cognitive and affective domains.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Finding

Before carry out In cycle I, the researcher gave a pre-test to students to find out the extent of the students' vocabulary. This pre-test activity was attended by Class VII students of SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru and was held on Monday 7 September 2021.

Based on pre-test data, researchers found that the average pre-test score was 68.27, while the MCC for English in Class VII of SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru was 75. Most of the students' scores were below the MCC. This can be seen from the data on the scores obtained by students, namely that there were only 2 students who achieved the

MCC score or only 7.32% while the other students were below the MCC or 92.68%.

Based on the average score, students' pre-test results can be categorized as adequate. The researcher concluded that active and creative English teaching is needed for Class VII students. Therefore, researchers collaborated with English teachers to carry out research on learning English using visual media to increase students' vocabulary. Meanwhile, the results obtained from the pre-test are used by researchers to analyze problems and make plans in cycle I.

### Cycle I Results

Cycle I was carried out on Monday and Wednesday 12 and 14 September 2021. In the learning process the teacher used visual media. During the learning process students began to be interested in the English pictures presented by their teacher. Based on the results of cycle I, researchers found that the average test evaluation score in cycle I was 76.97. Some of the students have achieved the MCC score. This can be seen from the score data obtained, namely that 24 students got scores above 75 or 84.54%, while there were still 5 students who were below the MCC or 15.46%.

Based on the average score, the students' first cycle evaluation results can be categorized as Good. Researchers still think that the scores achieved by students are not optimal because when compared with the MCC score the increase is only 1.97. Thus, the researcher continued activities in cycle II because cycle I needed to be improved.

### Cycle II Results

Cycle II was held on Wednesday and Monday 21 and 36 September 2021. This activity was attended by Class VII students of SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru because 1 student was absent. In the learning process teachers use visual media. During the learning process, students are very interested in the English pictures presented by their teacher. At the end of cycle II the teacher

also provides an evaluation in the form of an oral test to students. Based on the results of cycle II, researchers found that the average test evaluation score in cycle II was 85.10. All students have achieved the MCC score. This can be seen from the score data obtained, namely that all students got a score above 75 or 100%.

Based on the average score, the students' second cycle evaluation results can be categorized as very good. Researchers consider that the scores achieved by students are maximum. Thus, researchers no longer need to carry out cycle III.

### Discussion

Observation notes that have been carried out by researchers in each research cycle, both in cycle I and cycle II, can show that image media is effective as an English learning medium. The researcher's observations included the teacher-guided learning process through the flow of material and teaching steps as well as student responses in each cycle. The following is a description of the results of the researcher's observations from two cycles of Classroom Action Research (CAR) which were carried out in Class VII of SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru.

### Cycle I

Cycle I is the starting point for applying image media as an English learning medium. To prepare for the implementation of learning in cycle I, researchers advise teachers to use the Learning Program Design (LPD) that has been prepared. The purpose of implementing this lesson plan is to provide teachers with an overview or steps on how to use image media that has been assembled into a learning medium that can increase students' English vocabulary. The teacher and all students each get one copy of the prepared image media. Researchers describe the results of observations from two points of view, namely teacher responses and student responses.

#### *Teacher response*

The teacher looked enthusiastic and interested when the researcher asked to become a collaborator in this CAR. This can be seen when the teacher knows that the content and story of the image media are appropriate to the learning at the beginning of the odd semester of Class VII of SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru. Wonderful Places with descriptive text is a range of material that will be conveyed unconsciously and can increase students' vocabulary. At this stage, the teacher uses the RPP that has been prepared by the researcher. The lesson plan provides an overview and explanation of the material, flow and teaching steps using picture learning media.

When the teacher brings the material in front of the class, the teacher finds it easy to associate image media with commonly used vocabulary. Students' attention remaining focused on a series of media images and teacher explanations can increase the effectiveness of the methods used by teachers in delivering material because the class can be mastered and students' focus can also be obtained easily. The teacher explains coherently according to the story in the picture and the students listen. The teacher does not necessarily translate all the expressions expressed by the picture characters, but asks students to brainstorm about existing graphics and expressions. In this way, teachers find it helpful to give students a real picture through stories equipped with pictures. So far, student worksheets or resource books only present dialogues as examples of expressions in English without pictures or rich graphics such as pictures. Teachers also find it easy when asking students to further describe the situations and conditions in the picture. Because with the help of pictures, teachers can explore more vocabulary beyond the expressions used by the characters. Students are asked to write down difficult words in the dialogue and translate them, then the teacher just monitors the translation process so that students do not experience misunderstandings.

#### *Student response*

In cycle I, when they each received one copy of the picture to study, the students' enthusiasm was visible. The researcher stated this because based on the results of observation notes, most students immediately opened and read the pictures they had obtained. This proves that images are still effective in attracting young learners' interest in reading. If from the start students are interested in the learning media as well as the teaching materials, then the learning process that will be carried out has a greater chance of success. Fun English learning methods are being promoted to attract students to master international languages and no longer be a threat to students who love science or exact sciences who in fact don't like or even find it difficult to master linguistics.

Students also enthusiastically wrote down difficult words they found in the pictures, most of them immediately checked the translation in their respective dictionaries. This can show that students' vocabulary will last longer if they are curious and adapt to the context and there is no element of coercion in memorizing or looking for new vocabulary. Students can subconsciously know and apply the English expressions in the picture.

#### **Cycle II**

This stage is a refinement seen from the evaluation results of cycle I. Based on the evaluation results, researchers expect more significant results to prove the effectiveness of the images through increasing student evaluation scores from the pre-test and evaluation cycle I. Previously, students were expected to be able to respond to evaluation questions with short and precise answers in English. From now on, students are expected to be able to respond to questions with complete answers to increase their ability to combine the vocabulary they have acquired. The following is a description of the results of observations seen from the responses of teachers and students.



*Teacher Response*

As with cycle I, the teacher did not encounter any significant difficulties when delivering the material using the lesson plan for cycle II prepared by the researcher. There is a slight development in the treatment in cycle II, namely the teacher asks students to role play the characters in the picture. At this stage the teacher feels the need to apply the drilling method to students so that it is easier for them to understand and carry out the instructions given.

The teacher asks several students randomly using random expressions. Once it is sufficient, the teacher selects students with outstanding abilities to give role play examples to other students in front of the class. Otherwise, the teacher only monitors the students' courage, enthusiasm and understanding from their appearance in front of the class without image captions.

*Student Response*

Students begin to be able to independently understand and study all the contents of the picture, and even practice it with their classmates. When asked to take turns and appear in pairs to present a dialogue adapted from a picture without providing text, the students still had the courage and motivation. This was proven by the number of students who raised their hands wanting to show off their skills in performing role plays in front of the class.

The students' responses were very good because they could understand more quickly because most of the dialogue in the pictures contained complete sentences in accordance with the rules of good and correct English grammar. Students are also happy to try to practice these conversations with their classmates without any instructions from the teacher first.

**CONCLUSION**

The conclusion from the results of research on classroom actions using visual media for Class VII students at SMP Negeri 4 Wolowaru

is; (1) The results of this research show an increase in vocabulary acquisition by using visual media with the theme Wonderful Places. The test results in cycle I showed the class average score was 76.97. In cycle II the average class score increased to 85.10, meaning there was an increase of 8.13% from cycle I to cycle II and the results achieved had met the targets that had been set. This increase in average score proves the success of increasing students' English vocabulary; (2) The effectiveness of pictures as a learning medium can be seen from two points of view, namely the teacher and student responses from cycles I and II. Image media is very appropriate and effective to use as a learning medium because it makes it easy for teachers to convey existing material without having to bother providing a description of the characters and story content; (3) The advantages of pictures can be drawn that the attractiveness of visualization of the characters in the pictures can fulfill students' needs for interest and motivation to learn as well as entertainment because of the entertaining and educative nature of pictures; (4) The weakness of the image is only in the description that the image only relies on the visual side which can move students' imaginations about educational stories.

The suggestion given by the researcher based on these conclusions is that teachers can use the same media for learning other English language skills/components because visual media can increase students' English vocabulary and can motivate students to learn English. Therefore, researchers in the field of language education can carry out similar research by combining other media in order to train students to think and discover for themselves the knowledge they should have. Apart from that, in the field of English education you can carry out research on vocabulary using different media.

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