

# IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY THROUGH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSION IN COMIC STRIPS

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**Abstract:** The objective of this research was to determine whether the use of idiomatic expressions in comic strips increased the mastery in eighth class of SMP Negeri 11 Huamual and to determine whether the used of idiomatic expressions in comic strips increased the motivation in eighth class of SMP Negeri 11 Huamual. This research used a quasi-experimental design involving two class groups. The population of this research used in eighth class students of SMP Negeri 11 Huamual which found 56 students. The sample of this research used students of class VIIIA which consisted of 28 students as the experimental class and 28 students of class VIIIB as the control class. The research instrument is a vocabulary test and questionnaire. The results of the research on the vocabulary test showed that there was a significant difference between the post-test of the experimental class and the control class. The average post-test value of the experimental class is 75.21, greater than the post-test value of the control class, which is 67.35, meaning that the average value obtained is a good qualification. Students' interest in understanding vocabulary increased through idiomatic expressions in comic strips using a Likert Scale.

**Keywords:** Comic strips, Idiomatic expressions, Vocabulary

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a system of communication. It is basically a means of both oral and written communication. Language is very important when people want to express their ideas. Without language, people will have difficulties when they interact one to another. In the era of globalization, teachers need to prepare their students to become international citizens. One way to prepare them is to make English an international language. Students can use English as an effective communication tool. Likewise, in learning English, (Diyata, 2016) also stated that there are four skills that should ideally be mastered in learning English, namely: speaking, reading, listening and writing.

Mastering vocabulary is people necessity to understand a reading material, conversation, or article in English language. Without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed (Thornbury, 2002). One of the factors that cause the students' low mastery of English vocabulary is the ineffective and not varied teaching technique of the teacher in the learning and learning process, especially in vocabulary learning. Because as know that the success of a teacher's learning is determined by how learning materials are presented to students (Imran, 2023). This is where the innovation and creativity of teachers teach so that students work more, be active and active in learning. Given the importance of mastering vocabulary in learning English, the teacher must be creative in creating and choosing learning techniques. One of the techniques that

researcher take and can motivate and increase enthusiasm for learning is through idiomatic expressions in comic strips.

The use of comic strips is expected to improve students' vocabulary skills by making readers feel happy. Students' interest in pictures that tell about the need to use comics media for learning. The stories presented in the comics consist of pictures and readings which really help students so they don't get bored in the learning process. There were several questions which can be identified as follows; Does the application of idiomatic expressions in comic strips increase students' English vocabulary mastery and are the students interested in learning English vocabulary by the application of idiomatic expression in comic strips. The objectives of this research were to find out whether idiomatic expressions in comic strips increase students' vocabulary mastery and interest in learning vocabulary.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. The Concept of Vocabulary**

Vocabulary in language learning, including language English, is one of the important things to master besides grammar language and pronunciation. Simple definition of vocabulary according to Nunan, namely, vocabulary is the collection of words that are known to individual knows (Nunan, 2006). Schmitt Broadly defined "We must consider what we mean by vocabulary. The first idea that probably springs to mind is words, a formulation that is admirably adequate for the layperson" (Schmitt, 2006).

The first kind of vocabulary refers to the stock of words which have been taught by the teacher or learnt by the students and which are expected to be able to use. While the second term refers to the words of which the students will recognize when they meet them, but of which they will probably not be able to pronounce.

The benefits of vocabulary in language learning activities are very clear. Vocabulary is closely related to every aspect of language learning. When researching reading, students must know the meaning of each vocabulary in order to be able to understand the contents of the reading they read. Learning speaking, students must understand the meaning of new vocabulary and be able to communicate well. Researching listening, students must also know the meaning of vocabulary in order to be able to understand what is heard. Researching writing too, students must understand the meaning of vocabulary to be able to write well.

There are two types of vocabulary, they are active and passive vocabulary. Active vocabulary (productive) is used in speech or writing and is made up of words that come up in person's mind immediately when he or she has to produce a spoken or written sentence. On the other hand, passive vocabulary (receptive) is known but not used by a person. People understand it when it is heard or read. The group of passive vocabulary is usually larger than the one of active vocabulary. (Read, 2000)

The teaching of vocabulary is not easy to do. Some people think that vocabulary teaching only wastes the time because vocabulary number is unlimited. The English teachers had better teach English vocabulary first than other aspect of this language, such as grammar, speaking, reading and writing.

Vocabulary in language learning, including language English, is one of the important things to master besides grammar language and pronunciation. Learning a language is often associated with how to compose good sentences for speaking. Many people think that they want to be able to directly speak fluently and interact with each other with the language they are learning, but they rarely think that it is more important to learn and reproduce the vocabulary of the language, no matter how mastery it is. The large number of vocabulary is the main facility for learning to compose sentences and speak fluently.

## **2.2. The Concept of Comic Strip**

A comic strip is defined in this research as a series of pictures inside boxes that tell a story. Among visual genres, comic strips catch many researchers' attention because they are communicative, popular, accessible, and readable, and they combine aesthetic perception with intellectual pursuit. According to Saraceni (2003) comics have several components: panels, gutters, balloons and captions. The panels: Each page is normally composed of a number of rectangular frames named panels, the gutter: Each panel is separated from the others by a blank space called the gutter, the balloon: The use of balloons, in which text is inserted and imposed into the panel which contains the pictures, is one of the principal characteristics of comics. Other types of print such as children's books and advertising also combine images and words, but the use of balloons is unique to comics. The balloons contain direct speech, but significant proportions of it are essentially narrative. It shows that a character is speaking (in the first person) and this makes the reader's involvement in the story much deeper.

Balloons may report speech or thought. The tail of the balloon indicates the character who is speaking or thinking, the caption: The caption is not inside the panel, but is always a separate entity, at the top or bottom of the panel. The text in the caption represents the narrator's voice and adds information to the dialogues in the balloons. Comic strips are very helpful for students who have low intelligence, because they will be helped by the pictures on the comic strip to understand what the text is telling them. Comic strips will help students to help understanding, memorize and remember words, improve grammatical competence, and increase students' interest and motivation in learning. Students will more easily understand vocabulary in idiomatic expressions in comic strips.

## **3. METHODS**

This research used the Quasi-Experimental Method. This research used a nonequivalent Control Group Design, this research design uses two groups, the control group and the experimental group (Sugiono, 2017). Before being

given treatment, the experimental group was given a pre-test and after that was given a post-test (Supardi, 1993). Population and sample is subjects or objects research to be research and draw to conclusion. The population there were 2 classes and each class has 28 students, total population 56 students. The sample of the research is students of SMPN 11 Huamual. One class as the experimental group (Class A) and the other as the control group (Class B).

There were many research instruments in this research the researcher used two instruments, namely; Vocabulary test and Questionnaire. Researcher used a scale model measuring instrument, namely the Likert Scale. The number of statement area about 13 points. Each statement consists of 5 possible answers that have been provided; they are strongly agree (SS), agree (S), Neutral (N) disagree (TS), and strongly disagree (STS) (Mahdi, 2018).

The data of analysis use by researcher in this research aim to answer the questions in the identification of the problem. The method of data analysis use is statistical analysis method for using IMB SPSS 25 software. The researcher used a questionnaire consisting of several statements and will be tested using a Likers Scale.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Experimental Class

**Table 1. The Result Paired Samples Statistics**

Paired Samples statistics				
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	67.7857	28	7.24368	1.36893
Posttest	75.2143	28	7.70453	1.45602

**Table 2. The Result Paired Samples Correlations**

Paired Samples Correlations			
	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pretest & Posttest	28	.826	.000

**Table 3. The Result Paired Samples Test**

Paired Samples Test			Paired Differences					
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Pretest-Posttest	-7.428	4.425	.8363	-9.1447	-57124	-8.8	27	.000

The number of data for each before and before treatment was given = 28, the mean score before treatment was 67.7857 and after treatment was 75.2143. The standard deviation before the treatment had a score of 7.24368 and after the treatment had a score of 7.70453. The paired sample correlation table contains data about the correlation between before and after the effect of idiomatic experiments on comic strips on increasing students' vocabulary, which is 0.826 with a sig. of 0.000. This shows that there is a significant effect on increasing students' vocabulary. In the paired sample test table, load the data from the two paired sample t-test results which include t count and significance. The next step was to see whether or not the idiomatic expression in comic strips had an effect on increasing students' vocabulary. With the results of seeing the test, it shows that the correlation is  $0.826 > 0.000$ . The correlation value is greater than the sig value, this shows the effect of idiomatic expression in comic strips on increasing students' vocabulary. Based on the "Paired Samples Test", it is known that the sig. (2-tailed) is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , then  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted. Therefore, the output table of "Paired Samples Test" above, it is known that the t value is negative, which is -8.882. T-value is negative because the average value of the pre-test learning outcomes is lower than the average post-test learning outcomes.

#### 4.2. Control Class

**Table 4. The Result Paired Sample Statistics**

Paired Sample statistics				
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	60.2857	28	6.73772	1.27331
Posttest	67.3571	28	6.62327	1.25168

**Table 5. The Result Paired Samples Correlations**

paired samples correlations			
	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pretest & Posttest	28	.777	.000

**Table 6. The Result Paired Samples Test**

Paired Samples Test								
Paired Differences								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Pretest-Posttest	-7.07	4.463	.8434	-8.802	-5.340	-8.3	27	.000

The number of data for each before and before treatment was given = 28, the mean score before treatment was 60.2857 and after treatment was 67.3571. The standard deviation before the treatment had a score of 6.73772 and after the treatment had a score of 6.62327. The paired sample correlation table contains data on the correlation between before and after being given treatment, namely 0.777 with sig. from 0.000. This shows that there is a significant effect. In the paired sample test table, load data from two paired sample t test results which include t count and significance.

## 5. DISCUSSION

After analyzing the research results collected from several data sources such as pre-test scores, post-test scores and questionnaires. This section discusses the research findings and students' responses to the use of idiomatic expressions in comic strips during the teaching and learning process. The material given to students can create a good situation in learning English vocabulary. Students actively work on the worksheets without hesitation. Fun learning (joyful instruction) is a learning process in which there is a strong relationship between the teacher and students, without any feelings of pressure or pressure. In other words, fun learning has a pattern of good relationships between teachers and students. Students do not hesitate to cooperate with their peers when doing assignments, but do not succeed in making them during the teaching and learning process. The relationship between students and teachers becomes more comfortable so that students are not afraid to ask questions about the difficulties they find with the material. Also, Inayatul Fajriyah said that vocabulary increased after the application of the use of Picture Card Media, as well as an increase in teacher activity and student activity during the learning process.

Based on the results of the Likert scale questionnaire, students are more interested in learning English by using comic strips because students express more through or their ideas with their groups with friends, in writing students are ready to discuss explaining what they have read. Therefore, with the questionnaire technique, the data analysis was given to twenty-eight students in the experimental class and as many as thirteen items from twenty-eight students after the average analysis answered strongly agree, and were neutral. The results of the research stated that the application of comic strips in learning was effective. This is evidenced by the significant difference in students' vocabulary comprehension scores before and after being taught using comic strips. The results of this research were verified theory by According to (Ramliyana, 2016), one of the biggest problems encountered in learning BIPA is the lack of mastery of the participants' vocabulary, especially participants who are learning Indonesian for the first time.

The effort to increase participant vocabulary mastery is to provide something extraordinary and new in BIPA learning, especially among adolescent and early adult participants. The results of the study show that comics can be used efficiently to improve the vocabulary mastery of BIPA participants. Therefore,

the use of comics in learning has the same impact as the use of game methods in BIPA learning. This provides a pleasant atmosphere in the class. Comics not only entertain and attract participants, but there are many benefits in learning BIPA. According to Smith "Comics can play a strong and influential role in the English classroom, and can have a positive impact on the research habits of many students. Comics can provide a strong median between literature and visual entertainment to improve students' reading comprehension. One of the advantages of comics such as research conducted by Thorndike, it is known that children who read more comics, for example in a month at least one comic book, are the same as reading textbooks every year, this has an impact on students reading skills and long-distance vocabulary mastery were more than students who did not like comics.

In conducting the research, the researcher found that the students had less knowledge of English, therefore vocabulary was very important as the basis for students' English learning. One of the most important factors in influencing learning is the environment, the lack of application of English to students in the school environment. The conclusion from the results of research conducted by researchers is that researchers found various difficulties and factors that affect students' failure and success in learning English. For this explanation as a teacher, the teacher pays more attention to the difficulties faced by students and looks for solutions by learning using the learning methods that students prefer to improve students' vocabulary skills.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Comics have a storyline that is able to bring participants to the conclusion of the material presented. Students will be more engrossed in knowing what will happen, how the story will end (their curiosity arises), and will remember tenses, expressions, and grammar more easily. Comics can also be used as a vocabulary teaching facility. Comic strips are not only funny readings, but also a logical method used. By using comics, researcher can practice almost all competencies. Many more advantages of using comic strips. Shiva has given good input after using comics in learning vocabulary. The application of comic strip media in class is an added value because it can increase student learning interest. Participants feel comfortable with the class atmosphere like that. Participants do not feel bored because of the activities carried out in class with other teachers. Based on the data and interpretation, it can be concluded that the use of comic strips in teaching vocabulary comprehension to eight class students of SMPN 11 Huamual has a positive influence. This can be seen from the statistical data calculated using SPSS version 25. Finally, it is concluded that teaching using comic strips shows a significant effect in increasing students' vocabulary in idiomatic expressions of comic strips in eight class students of SMPN 11 Huamual.

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