

THE USE OF STYROFOAM AS A MEDIA IN TEACHING ENGLISH FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

The study is a classroom action research which aims at investigating the role of styrofoam as a media in teaching English for the students of primary teacher education program of STKIP Muhammadiyah Enrekang. The result of this study showed that the use of styrofoam as a teaching media improves the students' achievement in the 5th semester class of primary school teacher education in academic year 2017/ 2018.

Keywords: classroom action research, styrofoam, teaching media, students' achievement

1. Introduction

Media is a channel of communication (Matheer & Ghent, n.d.). In terms of teaching, media is an assisted tool used to convey the message or knowledge of the material presented to the learners. It helps the learning and teaching process running well. It is confirmed by Mahnun (2012) stating that teaching media is a proponent of the effectiveness of teaching and learning process.

Pratama (2013) concluded the types of teaching media into 5 categories. The first is visual media such as photos, pictures, books, etc. The second is audio media such as Mp3, audio tape, and radio. The third is audio visual media such as TV and LCD projector. The fourth is multimedia such as computers and internets. The fifth is reality media such as human, animals, herbarium, fruits, etc.

Nowadays, Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) projector which is classified as audio visual media is generally used in university or college as a media to help the lecturers to present their material to the students. The lecturers' material in form of slides, videos, pictures, etc. can be showed by using LCD projector. It is helpful since the lecturers do not need to write down his/ her material on the whiteboard which can waste much time. Moreover, performing video or picture which can engage the students in learning can run well by using LCD projector.

It is one of the effective ways to use LCD as a media in teaching. However, the quantity of LCD Projector applied in some developing colleges is still not enough to cover the quantity of class. This condition also exists in STKIP Muhammadiyah Enrekang. Some lecturers cannot use LCD when she/ he wants to teach because at the

same time it is also used by another lecturer. Besides, it affects the group presentation of the students which needs a projector.

Surely, adding LCD is the best solution to overcome this problem. Yet, it is not lowpriced and it is not enough to buy only one LCD. Consequently, it will take a long time to get the LCD be sufficient for all the classes. Thus, there must be a short term solution of media that is low-priced but still interesting to overcome this problem. Thus, whether the use of styrofoam as a visual media can improve the achievement of the students in the primary school teacher education program of STKIP Muhammadiyah Enrekang is the research question that will be sought in this paper.

Teaching Media

Teaching media is all of the things that can be used to stimulate the thinking, feeling, attention, and the ability or skill of the learners and thus can encourage the learning process (Hariyanto, 2012). Zakky (2018) concluded that the teaching media is the assisted tools in the teaching and learning process. Frima (2013) stated that the taching media is a tool which function is to convey the learning messages. As a result, it can be stated that the teaching media is all of the things that can be used to convey the knowledge to the learners.

Sukartiwi (1966) stated 5 functions of teaching media. The first is to improve the students' motivation. The second is to avoid the boredom of the students in following the teaching and learning process. This is in line with what Ur (1988) stated that media can be used to overcome the boredom felt by the students: if they are interested to what they do then they will enjoy the learning process. The third is to systemize the teaching and learning process. The fourth is to facilitate the students in understanding the teacher's instruction. The fifth is to strengthen the understanding of the students towards the material given.

Accordingly, the role of teaching media in engaging the students cannot be ignored. It has a big potency to motivate and facilitate the students to the learning and thus they can understand the material given well. However, this big potency cannot be separated from the teachers' capability in applying the media. Surahman (2010) argued that some teachers still have "psychological rejection" in using teaching media and low competence in applying the media.

Teaching media can be classified into some types. Haryanto (2012) divided it into four types; audio (e.g. radio, tape, Mp3), visual (e.g. graphic, diagram, chart), projected still (e.g. slide, OHP, in focus), and projected motion (e.g. film, television, video). In line with those types, Surahman (2013) stated 5 types of teaching media; visual (e.g. diagram, pictures, photos), audio (music, sound effect, radio), audio-visual (e.g. sound moving pictures, LCD, TV, puppets), Tactile (e.g. specimen, model, sculptured figure), and virtual media (e.g. internet, website, E-mail). Meanwhile, Anderson in Pratama (2013) classified the teaching media into 10 categories: audio (e.g. audio-tapes, radio, CD), print (e.g. textbooks, modules, pictures), audioprint (e.g. audio tapes that include written materials), visual silent projection (e.g. OHT, slides), audio visual silent projection (e.g. voiced slides), visual motion (e.g. silent film), audio visual motion (e.g. silent motion film, video/VCD, TV), physical objects (e.g. real objects, models), humans and the environment (e.g. teacher, librarian, laboratory), and computers (e.g. CAI/ Computer Assisted Instructional). As a result, it can be classified into 5 general types. They are audio (media that simply heard), visual (media that simply seen), audio-visual (media which is seen and also completed by sounds), multimedia (media presenting the whole parts of media), and real objects (media based on the real objects are on the natural environment).

Styrofoam

Fajar (n.d.) stated that styrofoam is a kind of chemistry material derived from plastics which is made at certain pressures and temperatures. According to definition.net (2018) "In the United States and Canada, the word styrofoam refers to expanded polystyrene foam, such as disposable coffee cups, coolers, or cushioning material in packaging, which are typically white and are made of expanded polystyrene beads." It can be stated that, styrofoam is a kind of artificial chemical container that can be formed in a various forms.

Styrofoam is mostly used in electronic products as casing or other functions. Besides, it also usually uses in some household appliances such as bowl, plate, cup, bucket, boxes, etc. The people consider that the styrofoam is simple, light, and cheap.

Styrofoam can also be applied as a media in the teaching and learning process. The researcher used the rectangle form. The students are instructed to design their material on that styrofoam to be presented in front of the class. This is as an effort to replace the function of LCD. Thus, it highly depends on the students' creativity and

cooperative level in their group. In order to encourage the students' enthusiasm, the researcher asked them that there would be a reward for the group who made the best media and presented the material well.

2. Method

This study is a classroom action research which was done through four steps: planning, taking action, observation, and reflection. The aim is to find out whether the use of styrofoam can improve the students' achievement. The instrument of this study is the researcher itself and the students' final score. The subject of this research is the 5th semester class of the primary school teacher education of STKIP

Muhammadiyah Enrekang. The content of this research is limited to the teaching of the theories of teaching English in the elementary school.

3. Findings And Discussion

The result of the descriptive analysis of the students at the 1st and the 2nd cycle are shown through the following tables.

Table 1 The score statistic of the students' learning outcomes at the 1st cycle

| Statistic | Statistic score |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| Subject | 26 |
| Mean Score | 42.88 |
| Median | 35.50 |
| Deviation Standard | 21.64 |
| Variance | 468.50 |
| Score Range | 61 |
| The Lowest Score | 12 |
| The Highest Score | 73 |
| The Ideal Score | 100 |

Table 2 The distribution of frequency and the percentage of learning outcomes of the 1st cycle

| Level of mastery | Score | Categ ory | Frequen cy | Percentag e |
|-------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 0% | 0 – 54 | Very low | 14 | 53.8 |
| 54% | 55– 64 | Low | 5 | 19.2 |
| 55% | | | | |
| 64% | | | | |

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|------|---|------|
| 65% | 65- 79 | Medi | 7 | 26.9 |
| 79% | | um | | |
| 80% | 80- 89 | High | 0 | 0 |
| 89% | | | | |
| 90%- | 90 | Very | 0 | 0 |
| 100% | 100 | high | | |
| Jumlah | 26 | 100 | | |

It can be seen from table 1 that the mean score of the students at the 1st cycle is only 42.88. It is categorized as a very low score as can be identified in the table of frequency distribution and percentage of learning outcomes (table 4.2). Subsequently, the students' level completeness can be seen in the table 4.3 which shows that there is only 7 students that is complete while there are 19 of 26 that is incomplete.

Table 3 The frequency distribution and the percentage of learning completeness at the 1st cycle

| Level of Completeness | Score Interval | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| 65% - 100% | 65- 100 | Complete | 7 | 26.9 |
| 0% - 64% | 0 - 64 | Incomplete | 19 | 73.1 |

Table 4 The score statistic of the students' learning outcomes of the 2nd cycle

| Statistic | Statistic score |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Subject | 26 |
| Mean Score | 83.88 |
| Median | 85.50 |
| Deviation Standard | 10.76 |
| Variance | 115.94 |
| Score Range | 38 |
| The Lowest Score | 60 |
| The Highest Score | 98 |
| The Ideal Score | 100 |

Table 5 The distribution of frequency and the percentage of learning outcomes of the 2nd cycle

| Level of mastery | Score | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------|--------|----------|-----------|------------|
| 0% - 54% | 0 - 54 | Very low | 0 | 0 |
| 55% - 64% | 55- 64 | Low | 2 | 7.7 |

| | | | | |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|----|------|
| 65% 79% | 65- 79 | Medi um | 4 | 15.4 |
| 80% 89% | 80- 89 | High | 10 | 38.5 |
| 90%- 100% | 90 100 | Very high | 10 | 38.5 |
| Jumlah | 26 | 100 | | |

It can be seen from table 4.4 that the mean score of the students at the 2nd cycle is 83.88. It is categorized as a high score as can be identified in the table of frequency distribution and percentage of learning outcomes (table 4.5). Subsequently, the students' level completeness can be seen in the table 4.6 which shows that there are 24 students that categorized as complete while there are only 2 of 26 that is incomplete.

Table 6 The frequency distribution and the percentage of learning completeness at the 2nd cycle

| Level of Completeness | Score Interval | Category | Freq uency | Perce ntage |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 65% 100% | 65– 100 | Complete | 24 | 92.3 |
| 0% 64% | 0 – 64 | Incomplete | 2 | 7.7 |

The following diagram shows the improvement of the students' learning outcomes from the 1st cycle to the 2nd cycle

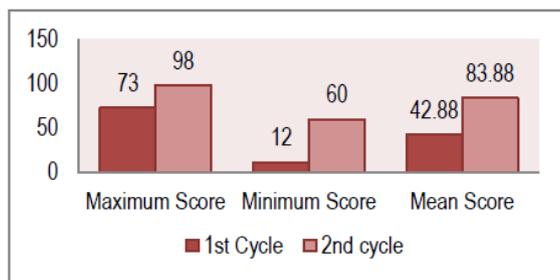


Diagram 1. Thr student's learning outcomes at 1st and 2nd cycle

The diagram below shows the students' level of completeness from the 1st cycle to the 2nd level.

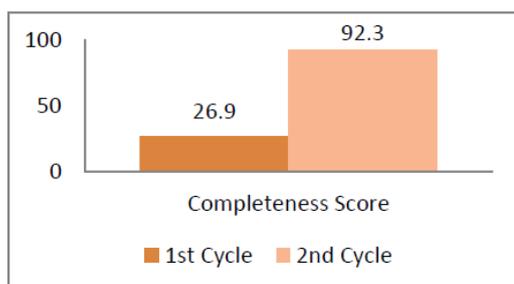


Diagram 2 The students' level of completeness at 1st and 2nd cycle

3. Discussions

Based on the findings above, it can be shown that the mean score of the students' learning outcomes as well as the students' level of completeness from the 1st cycle to the 2nd cycle is improved. It means that the use of styrofoam as a teaching media affects the teaching and learning process especially when it is used as a media of the students' group presentation of the theories of teaching English for the primary school.

Based on the observation of the researcher as the main instrument of this research, some factors making the styrofoam can be an effective media are because it is cheap, light in weight, easy to be found and formed. By having a low-priced, the students do not feel burdened to buy the styrofoam moreover they can share the cost with their group. Because of light in weight, the styrofoam is easy to bring to the class. Besides, some shops sell the styrofoam so it is really easy to find. In addition, the styrofoam can be shaped in various forms so that the students can design their material as creative as they can.

Furthermore, the use of styrofoam can engage the students in learning. It is because when the students design their media, they automatically would over and over read their material and thus they could naturally remember and understand the material. Then, when a group presented their material, the other groups would pay attention to the media as it was interesting to see the different design of styrofoam in each meeting. Besides, a reward that the researcher would give to the best media encouraged each group to give the best performance.

4. Conclusion

It can be concluded based on the findings and discussions that the students' learning outcomes are improved after using the styrofoam as a group presentation media in learning the theories of teaching English for primary school. This is

noticeable by seeing the improvement of the students learning outcomes which is from 42.88 at the 1st cycle became 83.88 at the 2nd cycle. Besides, the students' level of completeness is also improved. That is from 26.9 % at the 1st cycle became 92.3 % at the 2nd cycle.

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