

CHAPTER II

REVIEW LITERATURE

2.1 An Overview of Vocabulary

2.1.1 Definition of Vocabulary

Up to now, there has not been only one but a wide variety of definitions of vocabulary. In order to find the best and most easiest to understand definition is not a simple work. In the most popular way, Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary Online has applied a meaning for vocabulary as "all the words which exist in a particular language or subject." This definition covers vocabulary's meaning on the whole. However, it does not show vocabulary in a deep understanding. More precisely, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English presents six meanings of the word "Vocabulary" as follow: 1. All the words that someone knows, learns or uses; 2. The words that were typically used when talking about a particular subject; 3. All the words in a particular language; 4. The word failure/ compromises, etc. is not in somebody's vocabulary used to say that someone never thinks of accepting failures, etc.; 5. A list of words with explanations of their meaning in a book for learning foreign languages; last, 6. A list of the codes or terms used in a computer system.

A clear explanation of the definition of vocabulary can be defined, as the words we teach in the foreign language. However, a new item of vocabulary may be more than a single word: for example, post office and mother-in law, which were made up of two or three words but express a single idea where the meaning of the

phrase can not be interpreted from an analysis of the meaning of the component words. Vocabulary is bigger than just the meaning of words. It covers a wide aspect of language and it is the medium to express ideas.

2.1.2. Importance of Vocabulary learning in EFL context

In the context of learning English as a Foreign Language, the role of vocabulary is vital. This has been claimed by many linguists and experts in the field. Wilkins (cited in Thornbury, 2002) clearly stated that “without grammar, very little can be conveyed; without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed” (page 13). It means the communicative purpose in learning vocabulary as a goal for learning a new language.

The importance of learning vocabulary is also mentioned in many other researches. Gu in his research paper on Vocabulary learning in a second language believed that vocabulary acquisition is an essential achievement that one needs to fulfill his/her study in second language (Gu, 2003). He also stated the need for motivation students to get to self studying in this extensive learning requirement. Self strategies were needed, thus, they were motivated by how teachers can produce a motivating lessons to raise students' interest.

2.2. Young learners

2.2.1. Definition

The term “ young learners”, according to Thornbury, “is used to describe children of pre-primary and primary school age, although it is sometimes used to include adolescents as well”(p.250). In the same way, “young learners” as defined by

Phillips (1993) were “ children of formal schooling (five or six years old) to eleven or twelve years of age .” (p4). In recent years, there has been a phenomenal increase in the teaching of English to young learners, in EFL context as well as in ESL, and in state school as well as in private ones (Thornbury: 251).

2.2.2. Characteristics of young learners

The special characteristics of young learners that distinguish them from other learners, as mentioned by Thornbury (2006) can be grouped under three parts namely cognitive, affective and social. In his theory, Thornbury indicated that the most relevant cognitive factors could be seen in: children’s relatively limited world knowledge, the fact that they are still developing concepts and language simultaneously and that their memory is still developing, their inability to conceive of language as an abstract system, and do not recognize error correction such as : a difficulty in sustaining attention for extended periods of time, a preference for holistic rather than analytic learning, and a related preference for remembering “episodes” (things that happened) rather than facts, a greater tolerance for ambiguity – in the sense that children do not have to know what every word means: they are tend to understand messages, even when they do not recognize the code. Affective factors as explained include a lack of self-consciousness about expressing themselves inaccurately or through minimal means, and the need for encouragement and support. Also, young learners are more likely to be motivated by intrinsic factors, such as the inherent interest of an engaging task or game, than by extrinsic factors, such as the need to pass a test. They are particularly tend to learning through play.

The last, social differences include a lack of social skills especially where peer collaboration is required, and consequently a greater dependency on the teacher for direction and support. Their socialization into classroom life is helped when they can recognize and rely on regular routine. Preferably, as young learners are subject to rapid mood changes and often find it difficult to sit quietly, they can learn at best when they are involved in a large variety of activities.

2.3 Teaching English Vocabulary for young learners

2.3.1 Rules in teaching vocabulary to young learners

Thornbury pointed out to suggest a number of rules when teaching young learners.

Provide opportunities for learning through doing, rather than through formal study of the system, grammar for example situate the content of lessons in the world of the learners (personalization), short plan, varied activity cycles; systematically recycle language in different contexts; incorporate activities which engage learners in using language for reasons and purposes which they can relate to; do activities, including physical activities, which involve all the senses (multiple intelligences); provide opportunities for divergent responses and for experimenting and being creative with language; provide plenty of comprehensible input e.g. in the form of teacher talk that is supported by actions, pictures; scaffold the learners' talk, to provide them with a conversational framework within which they can express themselves (scaffolding); establish regular routines in class, such as calling the roll, beginning or ending each lesson with a song (routine); train young learners in how to learn, by, for example, setting learning goals, explaining reasons for doing things and asking learners to reflect on their learning (learner training); do not over rely on pairwork or groupwork, but include plenty of teacher-fronted activities as well; when doing pairwork and groupwork, monitor to make sure that learners are on task, and intervene if necessary to ensure learners are cooperating with one another (monitoring).

Thornbury (2005, p.250)

Those suggestion above is similar on Piaget thought (in Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1995:) states that primary school students are concrete thinkers (thinkers

concrete). They learn best through engagement actively. Involvement in the use of active language can be made more meaningful when linked with the experience and the real things in the lives of children. To avoid the limitations of thinking, children need to be concrete picture so he could examine the issue. Children ages 7 to 12 years still have the problem of abstract thinking.

Many of these principles are, in fact, perfectly consistent with a communicative approach, especially the emphasis on learning through doing rather than through formal study. More importantly, those principle suggest flexibility in dealing with young learners, particularly in teaching them vocabulary.

2.3.2. Techniques in teaching vocabulary

There are two aspect have to be considered by the teacher in technique of teaching vocabulary. In this part of the review, common techniques used in each stage will be with clear and further explained briefly:

2.3.2.1. Techniques in presenting vocabulary

Thornbury (2002) and Nation (1994) a variety of techniques can be used or combined in introducing vocabulary. These are a set of choices related to presenting the meaning through: Translation; Real things; Pictures; Actions/ Gestures; Definitions; Situations with a choice whether to present the word in its Spoken form, or Written form (Thornbury, p.77)

The former grouped those techniques into four categories. Those four groups are:

- Showing the meaning of words visually

. This was the most common way in the very first stage to present meaning of a new word. This group involves using pictures (mostly for concrete words); using realia (the real object to bring to classroom); or using mime (demonstrate meaning of the word by actions or facial expressions).

- Showing the meaning of words in context

. This technique is performed by using examples, situation or explanation. This is most commonly used for abstract words, which appear to be inexplicable by using visual aids.

- Using synonyms and/or antonyms

. This depends on the familiarity of the word that teacher is going to present in class.

- Translation

. This is sometimes to be a traditional way but it turns to be an effective use within classroom context. Showing meaning of a new word by using translation can be quicker and easier for teacher so that time for other activities can be saved ultimately. However, the translation has a weakness since student can be easily forget some translated word the teacher given.

Normally, a combination of the techniques mentioned in four groups above should be implemented when it comes to the effectiveness of presenting meaning of new words. This is because of the reason that each technique combined will reinforce and support the others; thus, making the presentation of new words clearer and more efficient.

2.3.2.2. Techniques in practicing vocabulary

For practicing vocabulary stage, as mentioned in “How to teach vocabulary “ by Thornbury (2002: 93), there can be a variety of tasks which can be used in order to help move words into long-term memory. Those tasks, clarified by him, require learners to make decisions about words and they can be divided into five types. They are identifying, selecting, matching, sorting, last is ranking and sequencing.

The first type is *identifying*, it is involving tasks of finding words in texts. “Listen then tick the words you hear” can be one obvious example of this type. Identification is the first step in recognizing words and requires learners do easy task as counting, ticking or a bit difficult is to unscramble words as in anagram (p.95). The second is *selecting*, as clearly stated by the linguist is “cognitively more complex than identification tasks”.

For *selecting* tasks, learners will have to do recognizing words and making choices among of them at the same time. Finding and odd one out is a common task that teachers may often use in class for checking comprehension.

Next is *matching*, in this kind of task, learners may need to pair a set of given words to a “visual representation, for example, or to a translation, a synonym/antonym, a definition or a collocate.” (p.97) By grouping words into different categories, learners are being asked to do.

Next is *sorting*, it should be noted that the categories can be given in advance or learners have to guess what the categories are. The last is *ranking and sequencing*; the most cognitively complex and demanding tasks in this stage are ranking and sequencing activities. Different from sorting when learners merely putting words into

categories, in ranking tasks, they may have to put words into unfixed order, often created by learners' preferences themselves. Thornbury, S. (93-98)

2.4 Gouin Series in teaching and learning language

2.4. 1 The Gouin Series

Gouin series is a method which developed by Francious Gouin in 19th century. His proposals for the methodology of second language teaching were based on the observation of first language acquisition. It was a method that taught learners directly without translation, and conceptually without grammatical rules and explanations, a "series" of connected sentences that were easy to perceive. This method later became known as the Direct Method and it received its name from the fact that meaning is to be connected "directly" with the target language, without going through the process of translating into the students' native language. Its basic premise was that "second language learning should be more like first language learning - with lots of interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation between first and second languages, and little or no analysis of grammatical rules" (Brown 2000:21).

In a Gouin Series, language is presented in a controlled context. Five or more related sentences are presented to the learner in a dramatic way with gestures and props. It is important to incorporate gestures and or props when first learning new words. Herrell, A. & Jordan, M. (2008).

Traditionally, these sentences are in the first person and might describe steps or a process. However, a Gouin Series can easily be a third person story. The focus

on vocabulary, verbs, language chunks, grammar, or culture. In addition, it is agreed that it is a nice way of introducing functional chunks of language (Curtain and Dahlberg, 2005). The language is acquired in the natural order: first by listening, then speaking, and finally reading and writing. Students of all ages are engaged and energized in a Gouin Series lesson, and literacy skills can be improved with the proper follow-up activities.

In his method, there is a regular use of the L2, which encourages direct thinking on the part of the students. The verbal expression is linked to real events, expressed through chains of verbal sequences. A context is used in order to make the language that is being learnt clear. In addition to this, there is a use of gestures and actions in order to convey the meaning of utterances. This, then, seems to have been a big step on the road to the Communicative Approach.

Gouin's emphasis on the need to present new teaching items in a context that makes their meaning clear, and the use of gestures and actions to convey the meanings of utterances, are practices that later became part of such approaches and methods as Total Physical Response.

2.4.2 Gouin series method in teaching vocabulary to young learners

The Gouin Series is a method of teaching a foreign language that works to support the tenets of the Communicative Approach, as suggested by Gouin that "students learn a language more quickly and retain it better if it is presented through a chronological sequence of events". Gouin found that if the series of sentences are shuffled or repeated, their memorization becomes nearly impossible. As Billmeyer (2001) suggested that students must use a word between six and fourteen times before

they are capable of using it independently. The learner must use the new concept frequently after presentation, either by thinking or by speaking. A Gouin series is an activity used by foreign language teachers in which all the steps in an activity are given in order (Curtain and Dahlberg: 2004). The implementation of Gouin series in this study is adopted from Curtain and Dahlberg, they explained more about how to teach Gouin series briefly in the following: creating Gouin series and teaching Gouin series.

First is creating a Gouin Series, to create a Gouin series, teacher choose a function or context, then select expressions, chunks, or vocabulary (pronoun, verb or noun), next order logically, last associate actions with each statement. Creating Gouin series, teacher should consider the characteristics of the series, they are no more than 6-8 sentences, length of 7-8 syllables, verbs that can be acted out, vocabulary easily visualized, logical sequence, same person and tense in all sentences

Second is teaching the Gouin series, teacher do some steps, includes: teacher presents orally using words, pantomime /gesture and props, teacher repeats orally, class joins in with pantomime/gesture but now words, then class (an later individuals) pantomimes series as teacher repeats orally without actions, class imitates series orally and with actions (Curtain & Dahlberg :2004)

The principles of Gouin series are a Gouin Series moves students from receptive to productive language, cover a range of contexts including a cultural practice, appropriate behavior in a particular situation or classroom. Meanwhile, for the example of Gouin Series can be involved with these theme: home daily routine, making a phone call, school day routine, shopping at the market, etc. As stated by

Knop (1994), Gouin series can help meet the goal of increasing use of the target language. More, students have the opportunity to listen to and observe cultural information and then act it out while describing it. As proposed by Cohen (2008) in her workshop entitled “*Gouin Series Activity Design: Easy to Make & Use Language/Culture Models*” . She believe that the use of Gouin Series activities in the foreign language classroom allows teachers to provide authentic linguistic input and embedded culture to students at all levels of instruction. She introduced teachers to the basic elements of Gouin Series activity design, its pedagogical benefits, provided varied models, to guide hands-on practice of Gouin Series construction and to present assessment options and extension possibilities.

As Francois Gouin believed that language could be learned more easily if it were presented as a sequence of events, a Gouin series consist the statements should include action verbs of uniform tense and person. The following are the examples: Today is the Anton’s birthday; He **gets** a present; He **opens** the present; He **looks inside** the box; He **sees** a racing car; He **takes out** the racing car; He **plays** with the racing car; The racing car breaks.

A Gouin series presenting the statements to the class orally, accompanying students with pantomime of the actions involved. The class responds first through mimicking the actions involved and later by imitating the statements while doing the actions. Another example are: *Making an instant fried noodle*; I **prepare** a pan, water, plate and an instant noodle; I **switch on** the stove; I **put** the pan with water on the stove; I **wait** until water is boiling; I **put** the noodle into boiling water; I **take** the noodle to the plate; I **pour** the sauce, seasoning to the noodle; I **mix** it and noodle

is ready; I say “Yummy.....”.The other example is with the theme *Going to Class* : I **hear** the bell, I **enter** the class; I **take off** my hat; I **take out** my gum; I **greet** the teacher; I **sit down** on my chair; I **take out** my homework.

The key points are that it's more important to learn sentences to speak than words, that verbs are the key elements in sentences, and that sentences are more easily learned when they are formed a narrative. Gouin's method is attractive for its emphasis on actions. Verbs are particularly important because verbs are often the only words used in sentences, and the verb encodes everything from the person and number of the participants in a sentence, to tense, location, and direction.

The Gouin series is a great activity for moving students from listening to speaking, and it also provides a good context for embedding functional chunks of language. The Gouin Series is easy to recall by young learners because it has many ways to get across the meaning. It covers physical actions, visuals and props, logical sequences, beginning, middle and end to a story, appeals to several senses. It declared by Helena Curtain Ph.D in Young learner Workshop in Georgia. In addition, Matton(2009) stated in her article, "*Having a child learn a short sentence that describes his own actions, or the activity in a vivid picture, can help in mastering verb*"(<http://www.examiner.com/article/raising-a-bilingual-child> [Montreal#ixzz1s7pjjj](#)).

It means, with the different action presented by the teacher, the child will learn to conjugate as he meets the verb in different context. Thus, to teach young learners, a Gouin Series have a lot of benefit, they are it is suitable for the children or under age of 12, use the imagination and to make some sentences, what we see all

will be the material of teaching, learning more sentence and vocabulary, the vocabulary can be understood , stored , recalled easily and the series are related to reality.

2.5 Previous Research

Riyadi (2008) on her classroom action research at the sixth grade of students of SDN 02 Pablengan Matesih, implemented Gouin series to improve the students' vocabulary mastery. The classroom problem that she found in her classroom was that the students had difficulty to memorize the meaning and the pronunciation of the words. In addition, they were not interested in studying in English because they feel bored with the teaching technique. There, the teacher taught vocabulary by translating at the beginning of the lesson or translating of the material containing new words or glossaries at the end. The teacher never uses self defining context, definition in the target language. It was a successful implementation of Gouin series by 2 cycles of action research. Riyadi found the improvement of the students vocabulary mastery after implementing the method. In her application of the method, Riyadi only take advantage of gestures and pictures to support in teaching process. However, it needs more props that may be used to support to actualize the word meaning by seeing the real object directly in the context.