



Teachers' Perceptions, Plans, and Their Practices on Teaching Vocabulary in Context At SMP N 1 Parakan, Temanggung

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Abstract

This study is aimed at examining teachers' perceptions, plans, and practices on teaching vocabulary in context at SMP N 1 Parakan. A case study was employed to describe the phenomena happened in this study. Two teachers were selected to become participants of the study. The data gathered through questionnaire, interview, observations, and document analysis. The result showed that both teachers had good perception on teaching vocabulary. Both teachers perceived that vocabulary became the important aspects in English in enabling the English skills both receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing). In planning vocabulary teaching, both teachers planned their teaching by involving some elements of vocabulary material in the lesson plans. Teachers inserted vocabulary material, list of vocabulary, and activities to learn vocabulary. However, teachers did not provide certain strategy applied in the classroom. In the real practices in the classroom, the teachers applied a direct method while teaching vocabulary by providing students a list vocabulary. This direct vocabulary learning built a large recognition of vocabulary for students. Relating to the alignment and misalignment of teachers' perception, plans and practices on teaching vocabulary, it was revealed that those aspects were aligned proved by teachers had good perception, plans and practices on teaching vocabulary. It was expected for further research to continue this study by adding another subject such as students so that it will give another perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

The government had already set a new curriculum called curriculum 2013. In curriculum, the government had set some basic competences and standard competences that need to be achieved by the students. The students are required to master texts both spoken and written that mainly contain long passages. However, in achieving that, students should be equipped with basic vocabulary first, since it becomes the main key to understand the texts. Lack of vocabulary knowledge will lead students to the failure of understanding the texts and instruction. Vocabulary will affect comprehension of a reading text and it contributes the success of students in understanding the passage (Nuttall in Cahyono, 2008). An adequate vocabulary size can affect students' mastery of language skills, both receptive: listening and reading and productive: speaking and writing (Astika, 2016). In case of junior high school students, Nation (2001) already proposed that students in the junior high school level at least should master 2000 high-frequency words to comprehend texts. In fact, students in the junior high school are still far from the minimum standard.

The one who has prominent responsibility to cope the problem is teacher. The teacher has diverse roles to guide the students in acquiring the skills, leading to achieving the competence as the goals of learning. Teacher who has big role in the classroom should be equipped with good knowledge in the form of perception to run the classroom well. Perception becomes the core point in teaching practice (Scarcella& Oxford quoted in Arifin, 2017). Bartel (2006) said that conceptual knowledge realized in perceptions may guide intelligent action of teachers. Xiu (2012) added that teachers' perceptions can improve the educational process because it leads to certain of action such as planning, the choice of strategies actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques to help students tackle difficulty in the classroom.

Gurney in Bharati (2010) stated that a good teacher can be seen from their awareness,

what they have done, and their readiness to share this awareness with their students. Their belief or perceptions of teaching can give impact to the teaching learning process. Richard and Lockart (1996) defined belief or perception of teacher as goals and values that have relation to the content and process of teaching and their understanding of the systems in which they work and their roles within it. In the education field, beliefs or perception are seen as conceptual knowledge that guide to intelligent action (Natael, 2006). Meanwhile, Pajares (1992) defined perceptions as opinions about appropriates of one's practice. The perceptions are held unconsciously, and they often manifest in one's practice. Moreover, Borg (2003) defined perception as a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held and imbued with emotive commitment. Further, Borg (2003) added that perception becomes a guide to thought and behavior that lead to action.

A study conducted by Xu (2012) found that teachers' perception influenced some aspects of teaching such as their behavior in running the classroom. He found that teachers' perception improved the educational process that guided teachers to overcome some teaching problems in the classroom. Perception had close relation towards strategies implemented in the classroom (Alsadat&Hassankiadeh, 2013). Some teacher may have good perception in teaching vocabulary, but some of them may had low awareness or perception in teaching vocabulary. The perception lead them to choose certain practices done in the classroom. Teachers who had low awareness of vocabulary teaching tended to contextualized the vocabulary learning with other skills (Bouirane, 2017). In other words, teachers use indirect way or do not have intention to teach vocabulary directly. Meanwhile, teacher who had good perception will plan an action in the classroom as found in Alsadat and Hassankiadeh (2013) that teacher who had good perception tend to choose direct way in teaching vocabulary.

Planning has close relationship with teachers' belief or perception (Othman &Kiely, 2016). The planning represent the perception of

teaching. Someone who has good perception on teaching will set a good planning as well in order to achieve the goals of teaching. A study conducted Suryani et.al (2017) found that planning was a way to build teachers recognition in teaching practice. The plans contain the road map of the need of the students and give description on how the teaching will be done effectively (Milkova cited in Widayanti, 2019).

The teaching planning can be in the form of lesson plan. Brown in Seisorina (2014) describes lesson plan as a set of activities that represent steps of teaching to evaluate and prepare the next lesson. Milkova as cited in Widayanti (2019) stated that a successful lesson integrates three main component: objectives of study for students, teaching or learning activities, and strategies to check students understanding. Therefore, as a realization of the perceptions, teacher need to plan of the teaching by identifying the learning objectives, designing appropriate activities that need to be done in the classroom and developing strategies to obtain feedback on students learning.

Another realization of teachers' perception is the real practices of teaching done in the classroom. In vocabulary teaching, the real practices may be varied. Some teachers may focus on implicit and explicit learning of vocabulary, and some other may focus on using certain strategies based on their perceptions. Lee (2007) had already conducted a research on the most frequent strategies used by Korean students. The result showed that the most frequent strategies used by students were by using bilingual dictionary, saying a word aloud when studying, and studying the sound of a word that counted as cognitive strategies. Lee (2007) also believed that those strategies become affective way in learning vocabulary. The strategies can be varied following the teacher decision and students characteristics. In Indonesia, Cahyono (2008) gave an explanation on how vocabulary should be taught. It was found that teachers had different method to teach vocabulary since they had different perceptions and concept to teach vocabulary. However some studies found that direct way or

explicit way become the effective way in teaching vocabulary. Celce-Murcia (1991) stated that explicit way can build a large recognition of vocabulary, integrate new words, provide a number of encounters with a word, promote a deep level of processing, facilitate imaging using a variety of techniques, and encourage independent learning strategies. This way of vocabulary learning was needed in the early stage of learning, since it build an understanding of some basic vocabulary. By learning it deliberately, students attempt to search some vocabulary, understand it, and memorize it that become easy way of learning.

As mentioned above, a study on teachers perception, plans and practices found in the separated area of studies that could not meet the expectation of readers. Having those problem, a study about teachers' perceptions, plans, and practices was conducted in one area of study. This study was aimed at knowing whether teachers owned good perception, plans, and practices or not and whether those aspects are aligned or not. This study focused on giving information about the teachers' perception, how the teacher plan their action start from beginning, and the real practices in the classroom and discovered the alignment of perceptions, plans and practices of the teachers while teaching vocabulary.

METHODS

A case study was employed in this study to describe certain phenomenon containing prominent information. The research site of this study was SMP N 1 Parakan. In recruiting the participant, I used purposive sampling in which I purposely chose two teachers that suited to become subject of the study. There were several data that were used in this study. They were in the form of questionnaire response, response of the interviews, field notes from the observation, observation checklist, and lesson plans. In collecting the data, I distributed questionnaires to the teachers. The questionnaires were aimed at investigating the perceptions of teachers in teaching vocabulary. I employed some

guidelines, which are adapted from one of study conducted by Lai (2005) on her survey about teacher awareness in teaching vocabulary. These guidelines are as same as what had been done by Borg (2003) while researching teachers' perceptions about grammar. Moreover, I employed he interviews were employed as well to gain deep information about their perceptions and practices. I also conducted classroom observation during the teaching and learning that held three times. I used observation checklist which already employed by Bouraine (2017) while observing teachers' practices. To support the data obtained, I gathered the recent lesson plans of the teachers to complete the information about their planning. In analyzing the lesson plan, the researcher employed a rubric. The rubric was arranged based on four strands proposed by Nunan (2003) with some modification. Moreover, I also considered some elements proposed by Brown (2001) about planning a classroom activity.

Trustworthiness becomes an issue in conducting qualitative research. Duff (2010) stated that in case study, the study can be said accurate and trusted if the data that provided by researcher adequate and fit to the research question. In this case, I had provided several sources of data to gain adequacy of data. I assumed that those source of data had fulfilled the adequacy of data that can gain the trustworthiness of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned before, the research site of the study was in SMP N 1 Parakan located in Temanggung regency. This school became one of favorite school among private and public school in Temanggung regency. The reputation of this school was categorized as good school proven by the output and the performance of the students. Two teachers were selected to become the participant, I mentioned them as Teacher #A and Teacher #B. Both teachers had similarities in background of education and experiences in teaching English. Therefore, they were chosen to become the participants of the

study. I assumed that they could provide information on how they perceived the vocabulary teaching, planned their teaching, and implemented their practices in the classroom.

Teachers' Perceptions Seeing the Importance of Vocabulary and Vocabulary Teaching in the Classroom

As Richard and Lockart (1996) stated that perception as goals and values that have relation to the content and process of teaching and their understanding of the systems in which they work and their roles within it, it relies on both teachers' opinion that teaching vocabulary is a must in the classroom. From the questionnaire and interview result, both teacher had good perception on teaching vocabulary. They may get the perception from some factors. Richard and Lockart (1996) stated that some factors could shape teachers' perceptions such as: their experience as language learners, the experience of teaching, personality factors, and educationally based or research-based principles. In this case, the teachers got their perception from their experience in teaching since they had been teaching for about 9 years. Moreover, Borg (2006) also proposed some factors that can shape someone's perceptions in teaching such as schooling, professional coursework, contextual factors, and classroom teaching. From their personal data, it was known that teachers perceive their perception from the schooling, professional coursework, and the classroom teaching. In this case, teachers had already got 9 years experience of teaching. From that experience, they perceive their perception. They had been thinking for years to find the best method in teaching, especially vocabulary. It leads to the conclusion that teachers also got their perception from the professional coursework. It was found that both teachers got the bachelor degree in English education. It means that they had known the characteristics of teaching and learning. They also had joined teachers' training to add their knowledge in the teaching field. As a result, they had equipped with good perceptions on teaching especially

vocabulary. By having these perceptions, it gives effect to their teaching actions starting from planning to their practices in the classroom. Teachers planned and conducted teaching-learning activity based on their thought to achieve their goals of teaching.

In this study, from the questionnaire and interview response, it was known that both teachers stated clearly that vocabulary became the important aspect of English. They believed that vocabulary could help students to enable English skills such as speaking, reading, and writing. Both teachers stated that vocabulary could help students' performance in speaking and writing skill. Therefore, teachers had perceptions that they need to teach the vocabulary and placed vocabulary teaching as an important thing in the classroom.

We need to teach vocabulary in every meeting to add their knowledge about vocabulary. By giving vocabulary in every meeting, they will have a lot of vocabulary that can be used to construct or to understand a text. Then, by giving vocabulary it will help students to have an initial illustration to what will they learn. Moreover, by giving vocabulary they will be easier to understand the material. (Teacher #A, questionnaire 040118)

Teaching vocabulary in every meeting is important. It is used to make students have various kind of vocabulary. Therefore, their knowledge of vocabulary does not stick at the same level. Then, by giving vocabulary, it will help students to know the material since they have already known some vocabulary (Teacher #B, questionnaire 040118)

The teachers placed teaching vocabulary as their goal in their practices. The teachers believed that vocabulary teaching is a need. This conceptual knowledge was known as perception. When teachers believe about something, it will lead to their intelligence action such found in their planning or action in the classroom (Natael, 2006). Another concept that supports that both teachers had good perceptions is their statement about ideal vocabulary teaching. It

has been known that perceptions guide the thought and behavior to the actions (Borg, 2006). It was proven by their actions since they had a good perceptions. In the questionnaire response, it was found that both teachers start their teaching activity by giving students a list of vocabulary.

Vocabulary was learned directly. Before starting the material. Students were given a list of vocabulary. It was done to make students understand toward the material that mostly contained story. Students should know vocabulary first so in the following activities they would not find difficulty in understanding the text. (Teacher #A, questionnaire 040118)

Before starting the material, students were asked to list vocabulary that they found in the given text. Students listed the vocabulary that they did not know. They were asked to find the meaning in the dictionary. Then, they grouped it into the group of words. This activity was useful to help students make sentence based on the vocabulary that they found since they knew the part of speech of the word. (Teacher #B, questionnaire 040118)

It was confirmed that the teachers start thinking the effective way that will be applied and realized it in the classroom. Those facts lead to the conclusion that teachers had good perception on teaching vocabulary. This findings were in line with statement brought by Xu (2012), stating that perceptions influenced some aspects such as their behavior in the classroom. It supports that teachers' perceptions affects their teaching-learning activity such as planning and practices. Teachers who equipped with a good perception affect their plans and actions. Similarly, the research from Ireland, Watters, Brownlee, & Lupton (2012) also proves the same things. They revealed that teacher's understanding of inquiry teaching leads them to their practices. Their research confirms my research that good perception will lead to good practice in the classroom. In brief, it can be claimed that most teachers tend to have good

perceptions that lead to their planning and practices

Teachers' Vocabulary Teaching Planning by Inserting Some Vocabulary Aspects in the Lesson Plans

Jacobs et al in Sergis et al (2016) mentioned that lesson plans contained the teachers' perspective of teaching in the teaching and learning process. Richard and Smith (2004) also mentioned that lesson plan was a set of core elements that contained educational objectives. In the finding, I found that the lesson plans contained complete elements as required. They made their owned lesson plans based on the basic competencies and standard competencies following the standard format proposed by the government. They also fulfilled basic elements of lesson plan proposed by Brown (2001) such as mentioning the goals of learning, objectives, activities, media, and assessment in the lesson plans.

Both teachers had similarities in formulating the lesson plan. The availability of some elements in vocabulary teaching, such as vocabulary material, list of vocabulary and practices were found in the lesson plans. Meanwhile, elements such as strategies of teaching vocabulary and assessment were not found in the lesson plan. Nunan (2003) argued that learning vocabulary should be based on meaning-focused input learning that students learn from material then they will learn some basic vocabulary from the material. While checking the lesson plans, it was found that the teachers provided vocabulary material. Regarding to deliberate meaning idea in the lesson plans, it is reflected by providing a list of vocabulary. Next, learning vocabulary should be from the meaning-focused output. Teachers provided some practices in the lesson plans. However, teachers did not provide their assessment in their lesson plan. Teachers only put the aspects of vocabulary assessment indirectly in the speaking skills and reading skills.

Comparing to the previous research, a research conducted by Sesiorina (2014) confirm

the findings of this present study. Seisorina (2014) analyzed the whole lesson plans of some teachers. She found that some teachers made their lesson plans well, equipped with complete elements of the lesson plan. Seisorina (2014) stated that it needs more improvement in the lesson plans. The findings of Seisorina (2014) is parallel with my research findings, in which the teachers had already arranged the lesson plans well, but some elements were not complete. In short, lesson plan is a need to be arranged by teacher to become their guideline. Teachers need to make a complete section of lesson plan so that teaching learning can be planned well and applied well.

Teachers' practices by Applying Direct Method on Teaching Vocabulary

In knowing the action of the teacher in teaching vocabulary, it was employed classroom observation. In the observation practice, both teachers show a positive attitude toward the vocabulary teaching. It was found that they gave an amount of vocabulary to their students before started giving material. Both teachers also employed enjoyable activities to make students enthusiastic in learning English. From the observation, it was got that the teachers gave list of vocabulary in every meeting. Sometimes, the teacher asked the students to list vocabulary and search the meaning. It was to train them to do self-learning. After giving the vocabulary, teachers gave an example of the words in the sentence. Teachers also helped the students if the students faced difficulty in understanding the words. When trying to analyze the whole activities in the teaching and learning activities, I found that teachers followed some strands as Nunan (2003) proposed in learning vocabulary. In the teaching activities, teachers provided some materials that made students could learn vocabulary, applied a meaning-focused input method in teaching vocabulary and provided opportunities to learn vocabulary by observing pictures and things around them. Learning vocabulary was held in enjoyable situation.

It can be said that, in the practices, mostly vocabulary teaching was held directly. Teachers provided direct learning of vocabulary by asking them to list vocabulary and search the meaning of the words. Sometimes, the teachers directly gave students the list of vocabulary. A direct learning method also called explicit learning. Explicit learning is a vocabulary learning activity that learned intentionally. That is by learning some vocabulary they found directly (Celce Murcia, 1991). Schmitt (1997) classified a direct method as determination strategy in which learners should try to analyze the picture and gesture, guess the meaning, and use the dictionary to find the meaning. I found that strategies applied by the teachers also followed Schmitt (1997) theory. Both of the teachers directly asked their students to observe, guess and consult in the dictionary as what Schmitt (1997) proposed.

In applying the direct strategy, I found that the teachers successfully brought the vocabulary teaching became meaningful teaching activity. From the observation, I found that direct learning or explicit learning built a good understanding of some basic vocabulary for the students. The students are easier to understand the passage since they had already known the vocabulary. Moreover, while producing some sentences, the sentences were varied since they had so many vocabulary.

Comparing to the previous research, my research is in line with some researches relating to teachers practices on teaching vocabulary. In Anari, Sajjadi, & Sadighi (2015), they stated that a direct instruction approach provokes learner's memory in a certain size of vocabulary. The teachers applied a direct method in teaching vocabulary. It becomes an effective way to understand the passage. It confirms the findings in this research that a direct method applied by the teachers can help the students to understand the vocabulary. Similarly, Omer (2015) investigated some strategies that become the most effective strategy on teaching vocabulary. The result shows that teaching vocabulary by guessing words from the contexts, flashcards, dictionaries, and word parts becomes effective

strategies applied by teachers. In brief, the direct method by using dictionary or searching meaning becomes effective way to learn vocabulary.

The Alignment and Misalignment of Teachers' Perception, Plan and Practices on Teaching Vocabulary

From the previous findings, it was found that among teachers' perception, plan and practices on teaching vocabulary were aligned. When someone gets a good perception, it will bring to good action and behavior (Borg, 2006). There is no misalignment among those factors. All factors of this research support each other. At first, teachers had already got a good perception. As a result, teachers planned their teaching practices well then followed by good practices in the classroom. Teachers' perceptions, plans, and their practices are symbiotic relationships in which they are related to each other (Foss and Kleinsasser in Borg, 2006). This statement confirms that among teachers' perception, plan and practices on teaching vocabulary are aligned. Those aspects are supported each other to make a success of the teaching-learning activities. The symbiotic relationship between perceptions, plans, and practices make vocabulary teaching become meaningful and successful

CONCLUSION

All of the findings suggested that both teachers had good perceptions on teaching vocabulary. Both the teachers stated clearly that vocabulary became the important aspects in English. They believed that vocabulary could help students to enable the English skills and performance both receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing). In the teachers' planning, both teachers planned their teaching by involving some elements of vocabulary material. Meanwhile, in their practices, it was evidenced by the observation that the teachers applied a direct method by providing students a list vocabulary. This direct vocabulary learning could build a large

recognition of vocabulary, integrate new words, provide a number of encounters with a word, promote a deep level of processing, facilitate imaging using a variety of techniques, and encourage independent learning strategies (Murcia, 1991). Relating to the alignment and misalignment of teachers' perception, plans and practices on teaching vocabulary, it was revealed that among the teachers' perception, plans, practices were aligned. Those aspects were in line in vocabulary teaching. It was admitted that the someone who gets a good perception will bring to good action and behavior (Borg, 2006). Teachers who have good perceptions will lead to good planning and will execute a good teaching practices as well.

For further research, the research needs to be conducted in boarder field with great number of participants so that generalization can be drawn. Other researchers can conduct the similar study focus on other skills such as on teaching speaking, writing, and reading or English as a whole field.

There are some limitations of my study. While conducting interview, it was conducted in semi-structured and some topics of interview were not explained well. Another limitation was the limited number of participants involved in this study. More participants will be better to draw generalization of the teachers' perceptions, plans and practices.

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