

**Using Rosetta Stone Software As Media In Teaching English Vocabulary  
(An Experimental Study At SDN No. 02 Lhoksukon)**

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**Abstract**

Using of Rosetta Stone Software as media in teaching English vocabulary. The aim of this study is to examine the effectiveness of using Rosetta Stone Software in teaching vocabulary. The data were obtained from 64 students who belong to the two classes (groups), the control group and the experimental group, as the representative of all fifth grades of SDN No 02 Lhoksukon, Aceh Utara. The writer took two classes randomly for the sample of three parallel classes. The research instruments used to collect the data for this study were pre-test and post-test. The pre-test and the post-test were given to the two classes; the experimental class and the control class. The result of the test was students' scores of the experimental group and the control group. This result was analyzed by using statistical formula in order to see if there is a significant difference between the students who were taught by direct method and the students taught by using Rosetta Stone Software as the media in teaching vocabulary. The use of Rosetta Stone Software focused on matching the pictures and meaning of some activities of Rosetta Stone Software shown on the screen. Base on explanation above, using Rosetta Stone Software as media also proves that the treatment has given some effects on students' vocabulary improvement.

**Key Words:** *Rosetta Stone Software, Teaching vocabulary, Media*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Teaching vocabulary is quite different for each age range, including for the young learners in learning English as foreign language. Young learners cover a wide range of age as what Prabilova (2006:10) defines that “Young learner is anybody from the age of three to the age of fifteen, there is a difference between what a three – year old child can do and what a child of fifteen can do.” It means that the teachers should select the vocabulary that is appropriate with the level of the children age. In teaching vocabulary to young learners the lesson should be creative and lively. Teacher should use a variety of teaching methods, approaches and techniques to make learning more interesting. Some techniques that are commonly used include games, singing songs, doing puzzle, telling stories and using media in teaching English. Using these techniques help students increase their achievement in mastering vocabulary.

The use of media influences the students’ interest in learning English. Often, the teacher performs a text without any illustration of the text, so that the students can get bored and usually stop reading the text. In addition, the teacher teaches vocabulary by writing it down on white board and asks the students to memorize it. Automatically, it affected their vocabulary and pronunciation that finally influence their ability in understanding the whole text because they still have limited vocabulary. Consequently, this technique of teaching vocabulary did not

contribute much to increase the ability of students’ vocabulary and pronunciation which affects their ability in understanding the whole text

In contrast a good lesson has to be creatively and lively prepared by teacher. Teacher should have good knowledge in designing a good and interesting material. Applying good techniques such as singing songs, doing puzzle, telling stories, and role play help young learners to increase their achievement in mastering vocabulary. Thus good teacher is needed to learn the students’ background, learning style and preference in order to get an idea what actually students want and need the most.

As a result, Rosetta Stone Software is offered as one of the effective and interesting media to be used to enhance students’ motivation in learning so that their English will improve. The use of Rosetta Stone in teaching English is to help define the goal of syllabus, and the roles of teachers and learners within the instructional process (Wright, 1987). Media are designed to be used by inexperienced or poorly trained teachers, while others are intended to replace the teacher completely. In this case, Rosetta Stone Software is not only used as the materials, but also as an efficient technique to motivate the students in second language learning. By using appropriate media, a teacher of English can better interact with their students and help them achieve the language learning goals. In addition, Gardner (1993) says that visual media in learning and teaching are supported

by the research demonstrating and explaining that learner preferences and styles can be more effectively addressed.

Rosetta Stone Software was introduced as an audio visual aids that is beneficial for the teachers and students in teaching and learning English. This software can be used as an aid to teach the four skills namely reading, listening, speaking and writing. The Rosetta Stone Software consists of a combination of images, text, and sound, with difficulty levels increasing as the student progresses, in order to teach various vocabulary terms and grammatical functions intuitively, without drills or translation. According to Stoltzfus (2007), the software is designed to teach languages the way of the first languages are learned.

The other research conducted by Rockman(2009) shows that Rosetta Stone Software quickly builds vocabulary, language structures, and speaking skills. The result showed that conversational skill built and bolster students' confidence in their ability to understand and produce new language. Teachers expand language skills and person-to-person conversational skills in the classroom. Increasingly, the classroom takes over the primary work of developing conversational language and providing conversational practice, while Rosetta Stone Software continues to build conversational skills and booster students' confidence in their ability to understand and produce new language.

In addition, Rosetta Stone Software provides some materials for the teachers with standard-based activities that enable teachers to incorporate Rosetta Stone Software content into the class. Thus Rosetta Stone Software is appropriate to be used for English subject and also possible to conduct at elementary through university education.

Similarly, the Rosetta Stone Classroom utilizes engaging, voice-driven technology, and management and administrative capabilities that together, accelerate language learning and provide quantifiable measurement of success. By placing Rosetta Stone Classroom's English version in all of its schools ESL programs, Grand Rapids Public Schools should expect to see great success from its English learning students.

Thus by providing this form of language-learning technology to all of our ELL students, it was expected to improve students' performance and hoped to see them flourish within the school system in learning English. Thus, Rosetta Stone Classroom provides an alternative way for students to learn English with fun and innovative language-learning method that helps them discover their natural language abilities.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Teaching Vocabulary**

In learning new words in foreign language, a thing that should be considered is that the learners are still building up their first language vocabulary and are still in process of acquiring and organizing concepts. The

children relate the L2 with their L1 knowledge to develop and understand the meaning of a word. In addition, as stated previously, children learn language better because they are in the period where the elasticity of their brains is still conducive absorbing the language. Therefore, vocabulary as the basic part of language should be best taught since childhood (Pinter, 2006:29).

Furthermore, Nation (2001) affirms that vocabulary learning is only one sub-goal of arrange of goals that are important in the language classroom. Thus, Nation's statement conveys the goal of acquiring vocabulary should be presented in a context which is familiar to the child. Visual support becomes very important to help convey that meaning and to help children memorize new vocabulary.

Vocabulary is, according to Hatch & Brown (1995), the list of words that speakers of a particular language use. As language teachers we use different types of teaching aids to explain the meaning of new words. Using pictures is one of the teaching aids that teachers depend on in their teaching. Harmer (2001:134) states that teachers have always used pictures or graphics – whether drawn, taken from books, newspapers and magazines, or photographs – to facilitate learning. "English teachers tend to feel that using pictures in teaching new words makes the process enjoyable and memorable. They also feel that pictures attract pupils' attention and deepen their understanding of vocabulary. Pictures can also help learners with abstract words, as

associating the words with a concrete object make these words easier to remember. Harmer (2001:135) states that "one of the most appropriate uses for pictures is for the presenting and checking of meaning. An easy way of explaining the meaning of the word aero plane, for example, is to have a picture of one." Of course, not all new words can be taught using pictures but most concrete vocabulary can.

Nation (1990:51) lists a number of basic techniques through which teachers can explain the meanings of new words, all of which can be used by the young learner in the classroom. Some of these techniques involve the use of pictures from a variety of sources - pictures from computers; photographs; drawings or diagrams on the board; and pictures from books. It will be interesting in this study to see which techniques teachers use.

Of course, pictures must be chosen carefully and it is hoped that this study will shed some light on how teachers make these choices. According to Harmer (2001), pictures should be appropriate not only for the language to be learned but also for the classes they are being used for; if pictures are too childish students may not like them and if they are culturally inappropriate they can offend people. Pictures also need to be visible – especially if they are being shown to the whole class they need to be big enough for everyone to see. And it also helps if pictures are durable – that is, strong enough to be used several times.

As mentioned earlier that learner learns better through fun activities. Teaching techniques for them should vary so that they will not feel bored. Using media, particularly You Tube video, is to attract children's attention and heighten their curiosity while the teacher is delivering the message. In this case, using pictures, and realia are very helpful for teacher to do his activity.

As quoted from Harmer (2002) one of the main advantages of video is that learners do not just hear the language, but they also see it too. This greatly aids comprehension, as for example, in actually general meaning and moods are often conveyed through expression, gesture and other visual clues. Thus, children observe how intonation can match facial expressions.

In line with Harmer's benefits of using video found out that the use of video would have a positive effect on the learners' performance and participation; (1) it will be a great starting point for communicative activities for introducing discussion topic area, (2) there is a much clearer fast-play or fast-rewind facility, allowing students to watch the images while the teachers wind, (3) teacher can also pause a single image more clearly, (4) many videos have isolated sounds cues and music available, (5) videos can provide interesting discussion matter (Harmer,2002).

As noted above, although it is generally accepted that pictures can play an essential role in supporting vocabulary learning, we know little about teacher and learner perspectives on this issue by using

Rosetta Stone Software as media in teaching vocabulary.

### **The Effect of Multimedia Annotations on Vocabulary Acquisition**

In recent years, an increasing number of studies in the field of computer assisted language learning (CALL) have addressed the issue of the effects of multimedia annotations on second language vocabulary acquisition. A brief overview of these studies will be given here. Chun and Plass (1996) emphasize the idea that associating lexical items with different types of media fosters richness of recall cues and increases the retention. They examined the impact of multimedia annotations on L2 vocabulary acquisition and comprehension from a reading passage using a written production and recognition learning. The test items paralleled the modality in which the information was presented. They found that students performed better on both types of tests when both pictorial and written annotations were presented than when single or no annotations were accessed during reading. In addition, Jones and Plass (2002) found that the combination of two annotation types allowed for more than one retrieval route to the information in long term memory. They reported that those students who accessed both pictorial and written annotations as they listened to a multimedia-based aural French text performed better on a written vocabulary recognition test than those who accessed single annotations or no annotations at all.

Al-Seghayer (2001) investigates the relative efficacy of two different annotation

modes in a multimedia environment: the printed text definition coupled with a still picture, and the printed text definition coupled with a dynamic video clip. The focal issue of his study was to determine which mode of imagery, still picture or dynamic video, was more effective in aiding vocabulary acquisition. The subjects of his study were 30 ESL participants who were enrolled in the English Language Institute (ELI) at the University of Pittsburgh. A multimedia-learning program designed by the researcher was used in this study. The program provided students who were reading a narrative English text with a variety of glosses or annotations for words in the form of printed text, graphics, video, and sound, all of which were intended to aid in the understanding and learning of unknown words. Three variables were tested: printed text definition alone, printed text definition coupled with still pictures, and printed text definition coupled with video clips. Two types of vocabulary tests were designed and administered to participants after they had read the English narrative. They were recognition and production tests. In addition, a face-to-face interview was conducted, and questionnaires were distributed.

The results of this investigation suggest that a video clip in combination with a text definition is more effective in teaching unknown vocabulary than a picture in combination with a text definition. Participants learned and recalled more words when video clips were provided than when pictures were made available. The variety of modality cues

can reinforce each other and are linked together in meaningful ways to provide an in-depth experience.

Multimedia annotations are very effective in learning vocabulary that support the student to enhance some new vocabulary. This view is supported by Coriano (2001) who writes the effectiveness of multimedia annotations in enhancing the acquisition of incidental L2 vocabulary while reading. He found that low proficiency ESL Puerto Rican college students who viewed three types of annotations (context, definition, and translation) had the highest scores and long term retention, and produced the highest number of target words in controlled and free productive L2 contexts, whereas the group who received no annotation at all performed the poorest.

Furthermore, the value and impact of multimedia context in language learning can be explained by two theories: the generative theory and dual coding theory. Mayer (1997: 9) presents the generative theory of multimedia learning. Claiming that second language learners have two separate verbal systems (L1 and L2) and an imagery system. It indicates that translations of lexical items through simultaneous verbal and visual presentations would have an additive effect on learning as they link the imagery and the two verbal systems. Second, Piavio's dual coding theory (1971) which states that memory and cognition are served by two separate systems; one specialized for dealing with verbal information, such as printed words, and the

other for non-verbal information, such as pictures and videos. Representations in one system can activate those in the other system (cited in Al-Seghayer, 2001).

Based on the previous discussion, we found that most of these studies focused on L2 vocabulary acquisition in adults except for the studies conducted by Sun and Dong (2004), and Wood (2001). Sun and Dong in their research focused on sentence-level translation and target warming-up using animated cartoons. On the other hand, the emphasis of Wood's study was on determining the essential elements of good vocabulary teaching software used for children. However, our study differs from these two studies in that it focuses on the effect of using verbal explanations and animated pictures in combination as a multimedia mode in teaching L2 vocabulary to elementary students.

### **Rosetta Stone Software in Teaching English**

Felix and Askew (1996) state the use of radio, television, video, language laboratory, self-access material and especially computer has become a new trend in language teaching all over the world. Many people seem to assume that using multimedia in language learning will make learners learn language better. This could be right, since the world is changing in its way of communicating. Multimedia is more accessible than it used to be. Therefore, schools have been more readily adopting multimedia technology to keep up with a changing world. Consequently, this will make a difference to language teaching and

classroom instruction. Hoven (1999) adds on the one hand, language teachers can present various authentic materials in various forms which can strongly support Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). On the other hand, it needs to be realized that Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) brings a different dimension in language learning in that learners might get less interaction with peers and teachers and more exposure to the machine.

The use of multimedia for vocabulary learning has shown to be effective in some studies. It is known from SLA research that words associated with actual objects or imagery techniques are learned more easily than those without as cited in Chun & Plass, 1995,1996:183). These features are relatively easy to present in multimedia programs, for example; pictures, videos, which can bring different types of information in addition to traditional definitions of words. There are various choices of multimedia programs to be used in language learning. Some are interactive computer program and the users can interact to each other's stimulus and some others are not, the users just use the computer without being given any feedback by it. Some use holistic approach of presentation and some others use discrete element approach. Some are structured and some others allow learners to explore authentic materials by themselves. One example of CALL material for vocabulary and grammar learning is the concordance.

Concordance is a computer program that is able to search rapidly through large quantities of text for a target item such as

morpheme, word, or phrase and show all the examples it finds with the contexts in which they appear. It provides learners with authentic materials in an unstructured way. It benefits both the teachers and learners. Students might ask some questions that the teachers do not really know the answers, but they can both explore in the concordance to find the answers. The concordance is not an interactive program by itself; however, combined with appropriate teaching instruction it can be used to support interactive learning activities. Other famous CALL materials that are more communicative are the websites, e-mail, and chat rooms. Through these media, L2 learners can interact and negotiate meanings with other learners and individuals all over the world.

A well-known way to create meaningful context for teaching English is through using media, which can be delivered through a wide variety of print, audio, and visual formats. The current information age requires teachers to be familiar with media and media literacy. Thoman (2003:23) argues that media literacy has an influential role in educational programs, including second language learning. Media can be integrated into language lessons in a variety of ways by developing activities based on radio programs, television shows, newspapers, and videos.

According to Azikiwe (2007:46), instructional media cover whatever the teacher uses to involve all the five senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste while presenting his/her lessons. Instructional media are information carriers designed specifically

to fulfill objectives in a teaching-learning situation. They are very important in language teaching, especially the foreign language, because they facilitate the direct association between sounds and their symbols and also words and the objects they represent. They help to vividly illustrate meanings of things because they are associated with materials used by the teacher to improve the quality of his teaching.

Many times teachers only use single meaning symbols to teach simple language concepts to students when they teach vocabulary in learning English. But in Rosetta Stone software steps in teaching vocabulary words are visually presented in authentic contexts and real life situations.(Godwin-Jones&Robert, 2007). Rosetta Stone Software helps students to relate subject matter content to real world situations and motivate students to make connections between knowledge and its application to their live.

#### **Advantages and Disadvantages of Rosetta Stone Software.**

Rosetta Stone software has numerous methods and features to ensure the best possible learning experience. For example, dynamic Immersion is the core feature of learning of a new language; this software is designed to teach the language the same way first language is learned. It uses a combination of images, texts, and sounds with difficulty levels that increase with the student's progress. This method provides the learner with an interactive virtual environment that will help teach vocabulary terms and



grammatical rules in context without translation. Dynamic immersion mimics introduces the new components of the language through recognition, correlation, and deduction, instead of just simple translation.

The Rosetta Stone software also has an adaptive recall feature that brings back review exercises to help the learner transfer this knowledge into term memory (Rockman2009). Contextual formation uses life like scenarios and pattern to provide the environment for the learner to reproduce the spoken or written language. Each new feature provides a unique way to learning the fundamental components of the language through technology.

Speech recognition technology uses state of the art signal processing and adaptive statistical methods to recognize spoken words and compare them the voices of native speakers. Rosetta Stone Software offers a wide range of tools to help teach pronunciation and speaking skills. Learners build confidence and refine their pronunciation with dialogues and vocabulary building exercises.

In general, software is a program that enables a computer to perform specific tasks. Rockman, (2009) argues that Rosetta Stone software in one of with a very specific functions to teach a foreign language. With every software comes technical problems and security concerns. Rosetta Stone Software is a very secure and efficient product with very few errors. One of the difficulties of learning a new language is the inability to evaluate one's own pronunciation as beginners, something

that cannot be adequately satisfied by simplistic systems that do not have practical interactions with the user. Fortunately, by using this software becomes possible.

One common complaint with Rosetta Stone software is that the vocabulary learning system is too slow; it does not teach enough words or grammatical structure in a clear manner to ensure fluency of the foreign language. Also, another complaint is that Rosetta Stone does not teach common phrases that are useful in real life situations such as particular language as verb conjugations or noun and adjective cases.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the explanation above, it can be said that applying Rosetta Stone Software was effective in improving students' vocabulary. In addition, the large of effect size score also supported the statement above that where applying Rosetta Stone Software as media gave some effects to student in increasing vocabulary higher than direct method. As stated by Materna (2008) that truly allowed students to immerse themselves in the experience and engage naturally with the Rosetta Stone Software like the first language learned without relize they had been acquiring it. In fact, by using this Rosetta stone Software the students establish their individualized language learning goals and utilized many tools to enhance their language learning process. It also allows them to set both short and long term goals for language study, so the teacher and student can track and assess the progress base on teacher's goals.

In addition, Rosetta Stone Software allows the students to record information about their learning process as well as about newly acquired word, phrases or grammar rules in their language study then the students can write questions during the learning process which is addressed to teacher for further explanation. It is easy to the students to learn and increace the vocabulary fast in learning English.

It is relevant what the writer had done about using Rosetta Stone Software to enhance

vocabulary for elementary students more effective and significance effect in learning English. brings some advantages by using Rosetta stone software i.e. the students building confidence and refine their pronunciation with dialogues and vocabulary building exercises giving students a chance to find meaning or sense in subject in their daily lives generally. The students can construct the relativity in many ways in order to see the meaning of the lesson without translation to acquary new vocabulary.

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