"A Picture Speaks a Thousand Word"

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE USE OF PICTURES IN THE TEACHING OF VOCABULARY TO LOW-ACHIEVERS

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APRIL 2005

"A Picture Speaks a Thousand Word"

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE USE OF PICTURES IN THE TEACHING OF VOCABULARY TO A GROUP OF YEAR 5 LOW-ACHIEVERS IN SEKOLAH KEBANGSAAN ENCIK BUYONG

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An academic project submitted in partial fulfillment of a degree of Bachelor in Education (Hons) (TESL)

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Praise be the Lord Almighty to have given me good health, granted me safety throughout the four challenging years.

My most sincere gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor, Mr. John Francis Noyen who had been patiently and kindly guided me throughout the course of this study as well as in all the courses he had taught me. I had learnt a lot from him. I truly appreciate the precious time he had spared for me.

My heartiest appreciation to my children especially my baby daughter whom I had neglected and my husband who had supported me financially and morally.

Lastly, my students whom I had victimized being the subjects in this study.

Without the involvement of those mentioned above, this book will never exist.

This book is especially dedicated to my nine-month baby daughter, Katrina Dalphne

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the use of pictures in the teaching of L2 low-frequency vocabulary in common nouns in relation to objects. The subjects of the study consisted of a class of 35 Year 5 pupils 2004 intake with low achievement in English. The results showed that low-achievers students were able to name the objects that they seldom use or see daily when aided with pictures. The methodologies used were aptitude test and questionnaires. The conclusion of the study is that even though pictures help learners to identify specific vocabulary, background knowledge still played an important role.

Abstrak

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti keberkesanan penggunaan gambar dalam pengajaran perbendaharaan kata Bahasa Kedua yang jarang digunapakai. Sampel kajian ini terdiri daripada 35 orang murid dari sebuah kelas Tahun Lima. Perbendaharaan kata tersebut hanya merangkumi perkataan-perkataan untuk menamakan benda. Murid-murid ini mempunyai pencapaian yang sangat rendah dalam matapelajaran Bahasa Inggeris. Instrumen kajian ini ialah ujian aptitude dan soalselidik. Hasil kajian menunjukkan penggunaan gambar membantu murid-murid mengenalpasti benda-benda yang jarang digunapakai seharian. Namun, pengalaman sedia ada murid turut menunjukkan keberkesanan.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The so-called colonial language, English is no longer viewed as a sign of intellectual development. Rather, it is a means by which a student responds to his experiences through improved thinking and communication skills. In other words, the acquisition of the English language could enhance the knowledge, understanding and communication skills of the students to face a more complex situation in the future.

However, in Malaysia the English Language is no longer being looked upon as a prestigious language. The standard of English has gradually deteriorated since the implementation of the **Education Enactment Bill** in **1971**. In accordance with the bill, **the Malaysian Government had replaced the use of the English Language throughout public sector, including the administration system with the national language, *Bahasa Malaysia* (Malay Language)**. From then on, the use of *Bahasa Malaysia* is made compulsory in all official

transactions and a credit   pass in the subject of *Bahasa Malaysia* is necessary before confirmation in any government service.

Meanwhile, the English Language remained as a medium of instruction in secondary school until 1979. The conversion programme was completed in 1980. Nevertheless, the English Language is retained in the MalaysianIntegrated Curriculum for secondary schools. It is taught as a second language at all school levels. From then on, we see the declining role and importance of the English Language in Malaysia. In schools, the children are minimally exposed to English. As a result, the language seems less important and irrelevant in classroom usage, thus becoming the main contributing factor towards the difficulties of teaching and learning the subject in today's classrooms. The situation has worsened especially among learners who are not speakers of the language. This critical situation somehow alerted the concerned parties. Before it was too late the former **Prime Minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohammad** made a brave move to amend the **Education Enactment Bill**. The initial move is to teach the **Science** and **Mathematics** subjects in English so as to fulfill global demands like the business and tourism industry.

Whatever the issue is; teaching and learning a foreign language particularly to begin with the most basic, vocabulary, is not an easy task.

The vocabulary of whatever second language one learns is very important as it forms a basis of a multitude of vocabulary acquisition (Nikolova, 2000). The process requires varieties of **techniques**, which includes drills, exercises and memorization (Brown, 1994). All these are meant to enhance learning, helping the learners to remember and be able to use them automatically in a wide range of language context when the need arises (McCarty, 1984).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

On the contrary, most theories do not always proof effective foreign vocabulary learning. The teaching and learning would become more difficult if the learners regard learning **L2** as unimportant and difficult. On top of that, L2 is hardly used as **L1** is more prominent in every aspect of interaction.

So, how then should vocabulary be taught to these kind of learners whom Brown (1995) categorizes as **Novice-Low L2 Learners**? Perhaps, as Sanabria (1988) in her book "**A Picture's Worth a housand Words: A Vocabulary Book**" suggests the use of pictures to teach beginning students a basic vocabulary in English. Apart from that, visual techniques as in the use of pictures are useful in particular for teaching concrete item (Gaims & Redman; 1991. **Working with Words:**

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A Guide to teaching and learning vocabulary). Nevertheless, how effective is the use of pictures to teach vocabulary among beginners as of has yet to be determined.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness use of pictures in learning second language common nouns among the low achievers in Year 5 Seroja at Sekolah Kebangsaan Encik Buyong, Kuching.

1.4 Research Questions

This research has only one major question as follows: **Can pictures help the low achievers to acquire the second language low frequency vocabulary in common nouns?** This question hopes to find out the effectiveness of the use of pictures in the learning of low frequency vocabulary in common nouns among the low achievers. Better usage of the vocabulary as to be shown in the posttest would indicate the effectiveness of low frequency vocabulary in common nouns among this low achievers group.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Teaching a **second language** such as the English to learners bearing **negative perception** towards the language is painstaking. As a teacher, I often become very indecisive when it comes to defining the meaning of new words. Translation is often a shortcut to avoid tense teaching mood. Indeed, it sounds very unprofessional as it hinders learners' progress (Hunt & Beglar) but it's worthwhile rather than wasting the precious 30 or sixty minutes for the day. The least, they learn one or two new word(s) for the day. Even **Gairns & Redman (1991)** support translation technique. They claim "translation can be a very effective way of conveying meaning. It can save valuable time that might otherwise be spent on a torturous and largely successful explanation in English. ... [It is] a very quick way to dispose of low frequency items that may worry the students but do not warrant significant attention".

Yet, "English is the lingua franca of globalisation and mastery of the language by Malaysians is essential to access information and knowledge" (Tan Sri Musa Mohd. The Star Online > Education; Sunday, Oct. 06, 2002. **Vital to Master English)**.

On the other hand, the failure to acquire the necessary vocabulary could cripple the four language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Nikolova (2002) quotes: Foreign language vocabulary is viewed

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as a primordial factor in successful communication (Levelt, 1989) and to a great extent, in high-level reading ability and comprehension (Anderson & Freebody, 1981; Markham, 1989; Segalowitz, Watson & Segalowitz, 1995 as cited in Moras, 2001).The importance of vocabulary acquisition is not only expressed in books but other media like the online magazine. For instance, The Onestop Magazine published online for the convenience of English language teachers. The editor emphasizes words being the building blocks of language and having a good supply of them is very important for the students, right from the beginning of their English learning. The sooner students are able to communicate ideas in English, the more motivated they will be. So, giving them a bank of vocabulary to draw on is necessary.

As such, my unmotivated students have to acquire the English vocabulary by whatever means possible to meet the abilities to listen, speak, read and write in the language. In other words, acquiring the vocabulary could help them to respond to what they hear in English, to read and understand what they read and to be able to pick suitable words to write simple sentences. It also serves as a preparatory move to equip and familiarize them with the most basic vocabulary like adjectives and nouns so that at least it helps them in the learning of Mathematics and Science in their secondary education. Otherwise, expression of ideas, comprehending of the questions in both subjects would be

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impossible. I have seen this impossibility in my son's and my brother's performance.

1.6 Limitations

This study was conducted to determine the attitude of 35 Year 5 pupils 2004 intake with low achievement at Sekolah Kebangsaan Encik Buyong towards the learning of L2 **common nouns** in relation to **objects using pictures**. Due to the limited time frame, whatever result and outcome obtained from this study will not be applicable to the other Year 5 classes in the school itself as well as in other school. The result of the study would also not be made applicable to the Year 5 in the coming intakes.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Technique: Technically, it refers to the specific activities manifested in the classroom that are consistent with a method. Throughout the study it simply refers to the way the students or the learners learn. It also refers to the way the teacher can best present the teaching process.

L1: L1 means first language. In this study the first language is *Bahasa Melayu* (Malay Language).

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L2: L2 is the second language used or learnt by the learners. The second language mention in this study is the English Language.

Novice-Low: A term used to describe the competency of the learners. At this level the learners' competency level is very low. They are able to communicate minimally with learned material. The learners use isolated words and a few mostly and commonly used phrases.

Negative Perception: The learners perceive the learning of the English Language as a difficult subject to learn and not as important compared to other subjects. Thus, hinder their learning of the language.

Sample: The sample in this study is a subset of the population involved in the study, to be representative of the larger population.

Random Sampling: A sample selected in such a way that the selection of one member of the population in no way affects the probability of selection of any other member.

Aptitude Test: It is a kind of test designed to predict future performance in some activity. It can provide information that is useful in determining learning readiness, individualizing instruction, organizing classroom groups, identifying underachievers, diagnosing learning problems and helping students with their educational and vocational plans.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter serves readers an explanation and direction of the study. The next chapter reviews the various literature on the subject studied in order to draw a theoretical framework towards the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

Vocabulary plays a vital role in learning a foreign language. Through vocabulary all four language skills, namely; listening, speaking, reading and writing are linked together. Acquiring an adequate number of vocabularies and knowing how to use the vocabulary accurately is important when a learner wants to communicate in a foreign language that they have learnt. These learners have to deal with unfamiliar vocabulary during their language acquisition.

Vocabulary has not been a particular subject for learners to learn, but has been taught within lessons of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Learners are introduced to new words by their teacher or classmates, which they apply to classroom activities. The learners will automatically focus their thoughts on a list of new words with meanings whenever they come across vocabulary. A number of learners may look up in a bilingual dictionary to find suitable definitions when they encounter new words. They may simply copy lines of new words in content. After a while, this method becomes boring and learners may find out that learning vocabulary in

the list does not satisfy them and they think the cause for it is just bad memorization (Gnoinska, 1998).

2.1 A Theoretical Overview of Vocabulary Instruction

The goal of developing effective communication skills involves the use of skills to improve an individual's listening, speaking, reading and writing by promoting the ability to distinguish shades of meaning and to foster an interest in words (Hall, 1976). Hall further explains that the importance of studying words needs to be based on personal meaning and motivation. She believes that vocabulary should be incorporated into the entire language experience.

According to Glenco's "Effective Vocabulary Instruction" research, general knowledge is a critical component in determining how well readers understand text (Anderson and Freebody, 1981). Teachers must use reinforcement listening, speaking, reading and writing skills for vocabulary development because vocabulary learning is not an isolated activity but is built on repeated encounters with the spoken and written word.

McCrimmon (1998) in "Writing With A Purpose" states that people have basically two types of vocabulary; a recognition vocabulary, which enables a learners to recognize words well enough to understand them even though they will probably not use them. Another type is the active vocabulary. As its name suggests, a learner becomes familiar with words he/she encounters and this will indirectly increase his/her recognition vocabulary by 10 percent. McCrimmon also believes that vocabulary building is part of intellectual; growth and it cannot be artificially constructed. Therefore, the major prerequisite for increasing vocabulary is learners' attitude, which is the desire to learn.

2.2   The Role of Vocabulary in Second Language Learning

Word knowledge is an essential component of communicative competence and it is important for production and comprehension in a second language (Coady & Huckin, 1997). So, what does it mean by word or vocabulary knowledge? Vocabulary knowledge is the size and the depth of vocabulary, which includes learners' knowledge of pronunciation, spelling, multiple meanings, meaning in context, the frequency of use, morphological and syntactical properties and how the word combines with other words (Qian, 1999).

In Gass' (1999) research finding, he found out that second language learners develop incidental vocabulary learning, which is vocabulary that they acquire while focused on a task other than on learning new words. However, learners have to know about 5,000 words families (for example the family of "care" includes care, cares, careful, carefully) in order to understand the meaning in context (Laufer, 1997).

Extensive reading is another way learners gain vocabulary knowledge (Burt, Peyton & Adam, 2003). Reading accompanied by vocabulary building activities is able to increase vocabulary knowledge (Paribakht & Wesche, 1997, 2000).

Active meaning negotiation seems to have a positive effect on vocabulary acquisition (de al Fuente, 2002). Teachers can provide learners with multiple opportunities to use new vocabulary in tasks such as those involving problem solving and information gap.

2.3   Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Research on learner strategies in the domain of second language learning may be viewed as a part of the general area of research on mental processes and structures that constitutes the field of cognitive science (Wenden, 1987). According to Anderson (1985), two kinds of knowledge are involved in the acquisition of skills: declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge. Declarative knowledge is what learners know about a domain while procedural knowledge is the learners' ability to understand and to apply knowledge of rules to solve a problem without conscious application.

Moras (2001) stated that in the past the teaching of vocabulary was mostly incidental, limited to presenting new items as they appeared in reading or sometimes listening texts. The assumption to this indirect teaching of vocabulary is that vocabulary expansion will happen through the practice of other language skills. Nowadays, it is widely accepted that the teaching of vocabulary should be part of the syllabus and must be taught in a well-planned and regularly basis.

O' Malley and Chamot (1990), who have made an analysis on learning strategies in parallel with language learning, found that declarative knowledge is the information about learning strategies.

The procedural knowledge is the automatic use and application of knowledge.

If learners are to make their strategies selection that would help them in the learning process, they would have to know about the process of making this selection because "informed selection of strategies presupposes knowledge of strategies and knowledge of strategies presupposes instruction" (Nunan, 1991).

There are many methods teachers use to teach vocabulary or to encourage vocabulary self-learning by their students. Hulstijn (1992) and Hulstijn, Hollander and Greidanus (1996) distinguish between incidental and intentional vocabulary learning. They believe that both approaches are present in foreign language learning whereby learners learn vocabulary intentionally as part of course requirements but also gain knowledge of words incidentally through their reading. However, Watanbe (1997) claims that, although incidental learning of vocabulary through context is possible.

Hulstijn, Hollander and Greidamus (1996) list several reasons for the inefficient learning. They include:-
1)   readers' false belief that they know the words,

2) readers' decision to ignore the words,

3) readers' ignorance of the connection between the form of a new word and the meaning contained in the context.

4) readers' inability to infer a word form context

5) the non-recurrence of new words.

In order for learners to understand the meaning of new words, they would normally refer to the usage of the word in context or structure, or refer to the dictionary. The amount of dictionary consultation depends on the task and the relevance of words (Hulstijn, 1993).

It is also found out that learners using the dictionary remembered more word meaning than those who do not. Based on Knight's study, it is found out that a common alternative to dictionary look-up is inference, which has the advantage that "inferred meanings are remembered slightly better than given meanings" (Hulstijn, Hollander & Greidanus; 1996). However, the problem with inference is that learners often depend too much on it and as a result learn words incorrectly (Bensoussan & Laufer, 19984; Laufer, 1997).

Glossary is another way learners learn vocabulary. It is alternative to dictionary look-up because it is the easiest way to understand to understand the meanings of words as they appear in context. Vocabulary learning using glossary does not demand the effort of searching and then choosing the correct meaning at the word as compared to dictionary look-up. Moras (2001) debates that, the problem with glossary is that they have to be especially prepared by the writer of the text. When a learner depends too much on glossary in order to be able to read and understand text, he/she is not likely to become an independent reader.

2.4   Vocabulary and Pictures

Using pictures in the classroom is an alternative way to bridge the language gap in today's classroom. Curtis and Bailey (2001) stated that pictures provide something to talk about. They take the focus off the language learner during oral practice and turn it to the picture. A picture evoke images to help second language learners recall a term or concept. Pictures can be used with any and all languages, are easily accessible, and can be used to reinforce literal, critical, and creative thinking.

The **Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM)** developed by Joyce and Calhoun (1998) introduce the use of pictures containing familiar objects and actions to elicit words from the learners listening and speaking vocabularies. The learners develop a greater understanding of the language through thorough practice, experiences and modeling as they classify the words according to common letter patterns and begin to internalize phonetic structural principles. (Joyce, Hrycauk, & Colhoun, 2001).

2.5 Conclusion

Obviously, vocabulary serves as the grass root of language learning. The absence of vocabulary knowledge in second language learning fails the speaker/learner to master the four known language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In the struggle to claim good in those skills, concerned linguists have conducted several studies and researches with one common objective to help the Second Language teachers to teach their students/learners in the best way possible to make them come out as similarly good as the native speakers, and course to use that language knowledge as a device towards success in whatever disciplines and fields that demand it.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample and Sample Selection

There were **35** subjects; 20 boys and 15 girls involved in the study. They were selected at random. All the subjects were Malays and aged eleven years old. The subjects were from the nearby villages whose household income was below RM500.00 per month. Most parents did odd jobs. The subjects learnt English only seven times a week during school hours for 60 – 90 minutes a day. Besides, some were selected for the **Boucher Tuition Scheme** introduced by the ministry, conducted in school for one hour. Unluckily, those selected did not benefit the opportunity. Their attendances were poor. Their class performance in English was extremely poor with the lowest achievement of 6 percent and the highest was only 48 percent of the whole score.

3.2 Instrumentation and Procedures

3.2.1   Pretest/Posttest

All the 35 subjects sat for two tests. The interval between the two tests was one week. Instruction took place during the regularly

scheduled English periods. The tests were conducted within the ninety and sixty minutes lesson for the day, which fell on Monday from 0845 - 1015 hours and Thursday from 0815-0913 before the daily recess. The rationale was that the subjects were still fresh and able to concentrate on the learning activities. The subjects tended to be hyperactive after recess and uncomfortable because they played during recess. Physical Education lessons were carried out after recess causing a very noisy atmosphere which distracted the subjects' concentration.

The first thirty minutes was used for teaching-learning activities. The subjects were first given riddles without pictures cue **(appendix i)** to solve. Then, a set of 10 statements and a cloze with 10 blanks text on low-frequency common nouns related to objects **(appendix ii)** was shown on transparency. This was to gain the subjects' attention. The subjects were guided to read each statement. Then, a set of 15 flashcards **(appendix iii)** comprising of choice of answers with 5 distracters were shown on transparency for the subjects to read and pick the answers. Once again, the subjects were guided in the reading activities. At the same time, being prompted to state the use of each object. However, the introduction of these objects was without the aid of pictures. They were then assigned to sit for the test for twenty minutes. Soon after the test, they were given a set of questionnaires to give feedback on the level of difficulty of the questions.

After one week, they were required to sit for the test; the same set of test except this time each word was accompanied with pictures. The cloze text was replaced with pictorial clues. **(appendix iv** Nevertheless, there was no instruction carried out because it was hoped the pictures would be able to help the subjects to do the test better. The questions for the 10 statements in the posttest had been rearranged randomly. The objective was to see whether the subjects remember the content of the pretest. Since no instruction was carried out, the subjects were given 30 minutes to attempt the test and the next 30 minutes was used to answer the questionnaires. Meaning the posttest was conducted within the 60 minutes lesson for the day, which fell on Wednesday from 0715 - 0815 hours.

3.2.2   Questionnaires

The subjects were given a set of questionnaires with **10** simple questions to answer after the pretest. It was given after each test. The purpose was to find out the difficulties they faced in answering the test. Another set of **10** different questionnaires was given after the posttest. The purpose was to find out if the pictures given as clue had been able to help them in answering the test. As the command of their language was poor, they were guided in answering the questions. Dual-translation (English-*Bahasa Malaysia*) was used to explain the meaning and the requirement of each question. As a result, every subject had to answer each question at the same time. This was to ensure that every subject understood the requirement of every question and able to answer them

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without doubt. They were also allowed to express their thoughts in their first language; *Bahasa Malaysia*.

3.2.3   Observation

I believe one's attitude plays a role in one's learning ability. So, this method was used merely to relate the subjects' performance with their behaviour during the test which included the length of time taken to complete the test and their seriousness in answering the test. Seriousness here means that the subjects really focused on the test and not answering just for the sake of answering without bothering to think over for the correct answer. The subjects were monitored strictly; presumed that they were sitting for a public examination whereby they were not allowed to refer to dictionary for meaning of words they did not know, discussed with friends or copied from friends.

3.3 Method for Data Analysis

3.3.1   Graph

The results for both tests were converted into simple bar graphs; one represented the pretest and the other represented the posttest. Then, comparisons were made.

Actually, the comparisons were mainly on the results of the test with and without the aid of pictures. The analysis was focused on the effectiveness of pictures in vocabulary learning of a second language.

3.3.2 Qualitative Analysis

This method describes the subjects' behaviour during both tests. Behaviour here referred to the subjects' attitude; their concentration or focus towards the tests. The length of time each of them took to answer the questions was also considered. Then, relative comparisons were made to see whether time factor also affected the learning outcomes.

3.3.3 Tabulation

Tables were used to analyse the results of the questionnaires. The purpose was to find out the difficulties the subjects faced in answering the tests especially when dealing with low frequency vocabulary. Furthermore, it would be easier to analyse tabulated questions since they were categorized according to the type of answer. The number of responses was also clearly placed in columns parallel to the respective questions. Thus, reference was much easier.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter had explained in detail the methodology used in the study. It followed closely the research questions. The following chapter would discuss the results of the study that would be presented in several graphs and tables.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

The focus of this chapter was the findings of the study based on the research question: **CAN PICTURES HELP THE LOW ACHIEVERS TO ACQUIRE SECOND LANGUAGE LOW-FREQUENCY VOCABULARY IN COMMON NOUNS IN RELATION TO OBJECTS?**

The findings were based on the results of the test scores, which were later analysed and presented in the form of bar graphs. There were two tests administered throughout the study.

The first test given served as a diagnostic test; conducted to find out the subjects' abilities in naming the low-frequency vocabulary as described. The result of the test was used as a device to identify the difficulties faced by the subjects.

4.1 Findings of the Study

4.1.1 Before the Experiment

Subjects were first taught as usual. They were given riddlesthey had seen and done before. The teacher helped to read the riddles to the subjects and acted out the actions for sentences, which contained difficult words. The subjects were then given five minutes to write their answers followed by corrections where answers were written on the board.

After this warm-up activity, the subjects were disappointed with their answers. Most of them complained that they could not remember the answers because the riddles were rearranged. Secondly, they could not spell the words correctly and some knew the words in the first language (*Bahasa Malaysia*) but unfortunately did not know the words in the English version. They requested that such exercises should de done with the help of a dictionary.

4.1.2 During the Experiment

4.1.2.1   Before the test

The subjects were guided to say and enunciate 15 words in the vocabulary list. They were also asked to state in brief the

use of each object introduced. Next, each subject was given two exercises; **Exercise A** and **Exercise B**. Again, the subjects were guided to read each statement whereby teacher read and the subjects repeated. Teacher also explained meaning of new words by showing actions and the use of first language for translation purposes.

4.1.2.2   During the Test

The subjects were seated individually to disallow discussion or copying of each others' answers. Meanwhile, the teacher walked around to monitor the subjects' behaviour and their keenness in doing the test. They spent some time reading each statement/sentence. After twenty minutes, the exercises were collected. Finally, they were given questionnaires to elicit their feedback on the test.

4.1.2.3   After the Test

After distributing the questionnaires, the subjects were asked to answer each question at the same time. This was done after each question was explained and every subject knew how to answer each question. The use of the first language was allowed where the subjects needed to give their opinions. The

following charts were the results of the tests for **Exercise A**, **Exercise B**, a table showing the subjects' responses to the questionnaires and a brief description of the subjects' attitude during the course of the tests.

Chart 1: Bar Graph Showing the Result of Exercise A
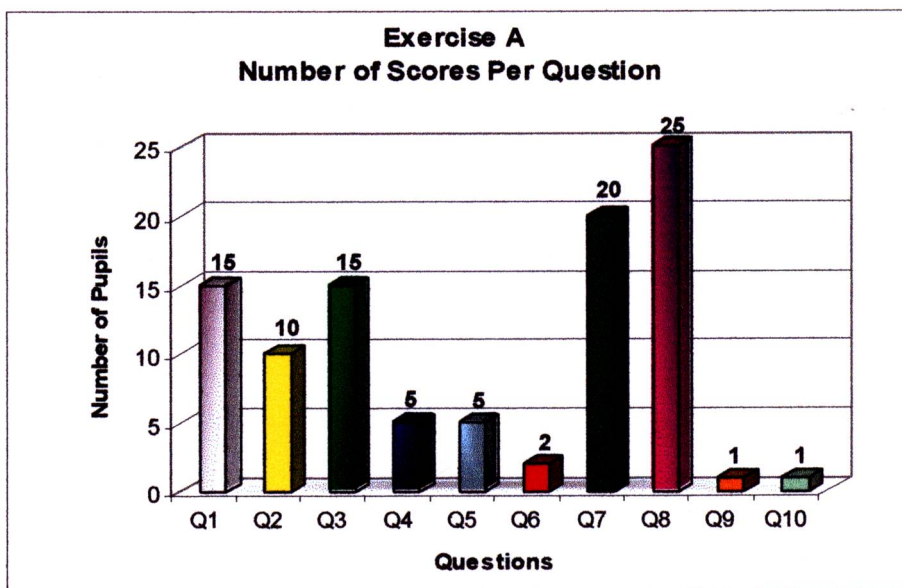
Chart 1 above shows the result of the pre-test that served as a diagnostic test. Of the **35 subjects** sat for the test, only 25 of them could answer Q8 about **SCREWDRIVER** correctly, followed by Q7 on **CAMERA** and Q1 pertaining to HAMMER. Only 15 subjects could answer Q3 even though **NEEDLE** was considered an object the subjects see at home. 10 of them could answer the question item about **REFRIGERATOR**, followed by 5 for Q5 and Q4, which was a considerably poor performance despite having been given explanation before the test. The worst achievement was for Q9 and Q10. Only **one** subject managed to answer Q9 and Q10 and he

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gardener's son. Perhaps, he had the background knowledge of the objects and their uses.

Chart 2: Bar Graph Showing the Results of Exercise B

Exercise B
Number of Scores Per Blank
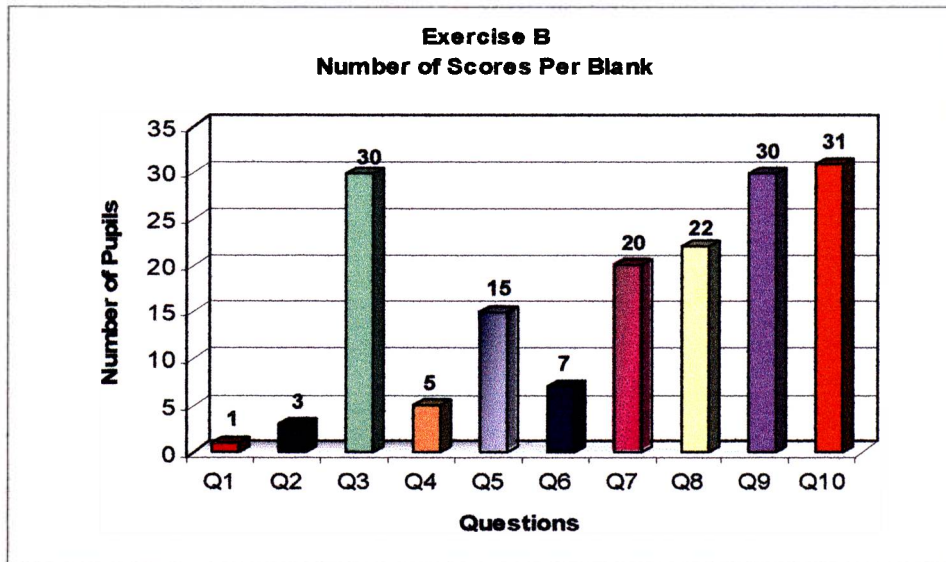
Similarly, the boy whose father is a gardener answered B1 and B2 correctly, as indicated in **Chart 2**. It was found that the subjects could use suitable words, which they were familiar with and knew their purposes. Otherwise, they would not be able to write any suitable word where they seldom hear or use the word. The responses tabulated below could help give us some insight how the subjects felt about learning English.

Chart 3: A table showing the subjects' responses regarding the exercises / tests.

INDEX	QUESTIONS	RESPONDS		
		Yes	No	Others Remarks
1	Do you like learning English?	30	2	3 opted
2	Do you find learning English difficult?	35	-	-
3	Can you speak, read and write in English?	5	30	-
4	Do you understand what your teacher says during English Lesson?	5	20	10 opted
5	Could you answer **ALL** the questions in the exercises / tests?	2	33	-
6	Did you face any problem in answering the questions?	35	-	-
7	Did you know **some** of the objects? / Have you ever **seen some** of the objects?	6	28	1 answered both questions
8	Were you familiar with **All** the objects?	-	35	-
9	Would you like to sit for the exercises / tests again to gain better marks?	35	-	-
10	Can you name one way which, you think could help you in answering such questions.	5	Give words	
		10	Allow the use of dictionary	
		10	Give words with pictures	
		10	No respond	

Obviously, majority of the subjects claimed they like learning English. On the other hand, all of them found that learning English was difficult. Only 5 said that they could speak, read and write in English. 20 said "NO" while the remaining 10 simply shook their head when asked.

2 respondents claimed to have answered all the questions whilst the remaining 32 claimed that they could not answer all the questions,

as was shown in **Chart 1** and **Chart 2**. Perhaps, the 2 only **felt** that they have answered all the questions correctly because they were included in the list to have faced problems in answering the questions. As regards Question 7, only 6 claimed to have known or seen some of the objects while 28 of them could not identify the objects. Only 1 answered both questions. On the contrary, all the respondents said they were not familiar with all the objects. The subjects however showed interest to sit for the same set of exercises/tests for better result.

Finally, when asked to give their opinions, 5 subjects suggested that such exercises be given words only, 10 suggested permission to use dictionary, 10 suggested words and pictures be provided together. 10 others gave no responses. Subjects were fully guided in answering the questionnaires but there were still some who could not satisfactorily answer the questionnaires.

During the course of the test, some of the subjects did not pay attention. They kept calling their nearby peers asking for the answers. Some completed the task in a very short period of time. Pitifully, the answers were written in repeated and scribbled version of **"NGUWAG"**, **"HMMR"** and a few others that carried no meaning at all.

4.1.3 The Post-test

4.1.3.1   Before the Post-test

The subjects were briefed on the previous tests and distributed the same set of tests with slight changes in which, questions were rearranged randomly in Exercise A as indicated in the table below.

Chart 4: Table indicate the conversion of question numbers

	EXERCISE A	
	Pre-test	Post-test
Questions	1	7
	2	2
	3	8
	4	5
	5	6
	6	4
	7	9
	8	1
	9	10
	10	3

4.1.3.2   After the Test

The result of Exercise A was indicated in Chart 5 below.

Chart 5: A graph showing the Result of Exercise A in the Post-test
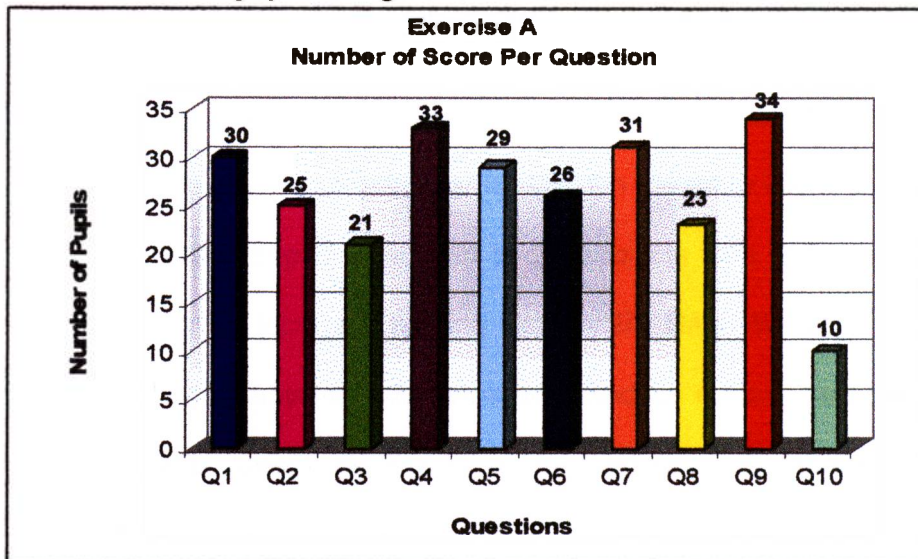
The result for Exercise A presented in Chart 5 above showed satisfactory achievement in every question. A detail comparison of achievement in the pre-test and the post-test were shown in Chart 6 below.

Chart 6: Cross Comparison of Result in the Pre-test and the Post-test

33
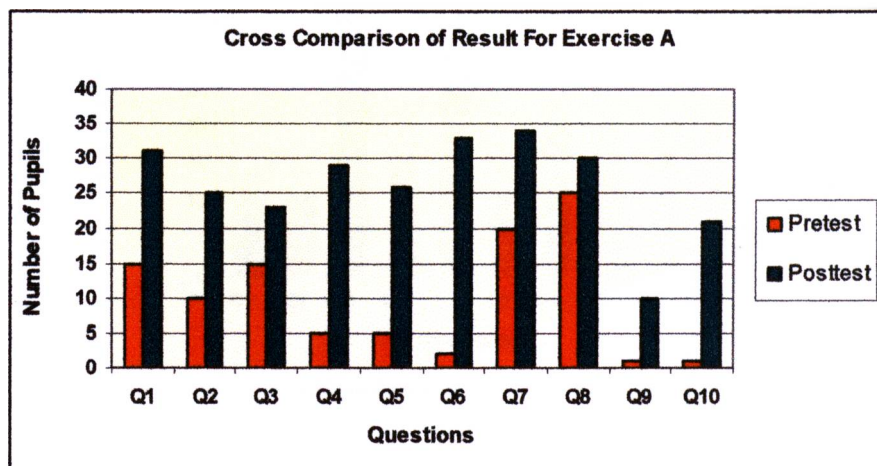
There was an increase of score in every question especially Q6 on VASE. The number of subjects who got the answer correct, including spelling was only 2 but there were 31 more in the post-test. So were Q9 and Q10 with only 1 subject each who got the answer correct. There was an increase in the number of subjects by 9 who managed to give correct answer for Q9. On the other hand, Q10 also showed a big leap of 1 subject to 21 subjects with correct answer disregarding of incorrect spelling like **"WHIL BAROW"** and **"WEEL BARRO"**. The answer given was accepted as correct because the spelling was greatly influenced by the first language where words were being spelt in the basic syllable with **CV** (consonant-vowel). The rest of the questions also showed great increase in the number of the subjects with correct answers.

The following graphs showed the result of Exercise B.

Chart 7: Graph Showing the Result of Exercise B in the Post-test

34
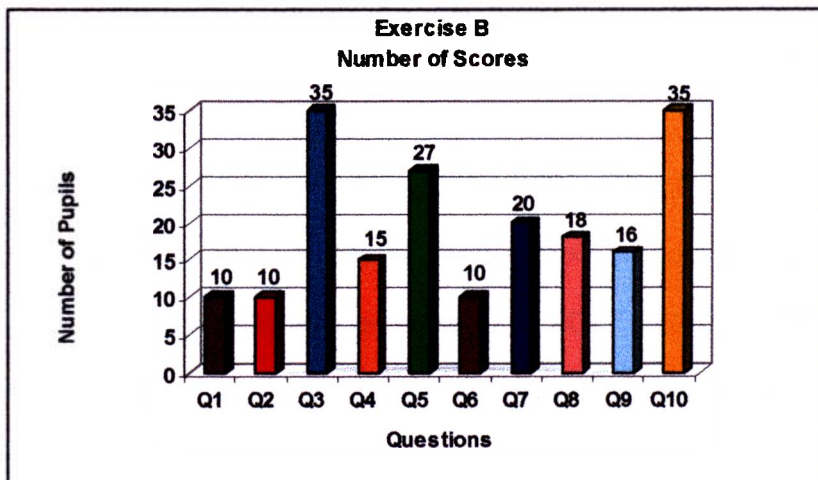
The results of Exercise B in the post-test also indicated great improvement even though there was a slight fall in the number of pupils who answered for Q8 and Q9 correctly.

Chart 8: Cross Comparison of Result in the Pre-test and the Post-test

Exercise B
Comparison of Result in the Pretest and the Posttest
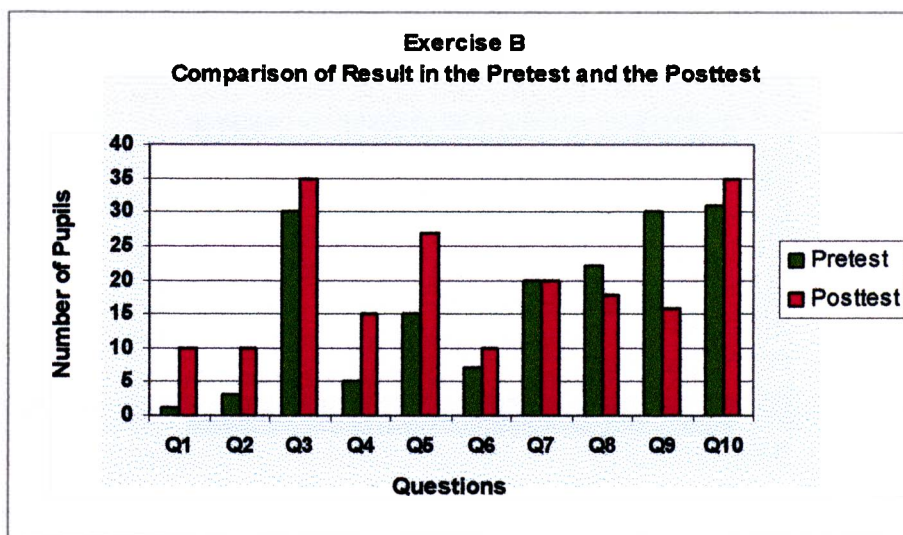
There were increases in number of subjects who answer Q1, to Q6 correctly including the spelling of words. Instead, the number of subjects who answered Q7 remained the same with only 20 subjects could name the object **"CUP"** correctly. Surprisingly, Q8 which was considered easy suffered a slight fall by 4. It was because the subjects could not name the object **"BOWL"** correctly. Instead of bowl as indicated by picture, the subjects simply wrote **"PLATE"** as the answer. Similarly, Q9 was answered as **"POT"** instead of **"PAN"**. On the other hand, Q3 and Q10 were answered hundred percent correct, inclusive of spelling.

Chart 9: A table showing the subjects' responses regarding the exercises / tests in the post-test

INDEX	QUESTIONS	RESPONDS		
		Yes	**No**	**Others Remarks**
1	Did you find the tests easier the last?	34	1	-
2	Did the pictures help you?	35	-	-
3	Could you name **ALL** the objects in Exercise A?	30	5	-
4	Could you spell **ALL** the words?	21	14	-
5	Could you name **ALL** the objects in Exercise B?	32	3	-
6	Were there problems in answering the questions in both exercises?	11	24	-
7	Were you familiar with the objects as indicated with pictures in Exercise B?	26	9	-
8	Were **ALL** the objects indicated with pictures found in your surroundings?	14	21	-
9	Were you confident with your answers?	28	7	-
		Exercise A	Exercise B	
10	Which of these two exercises was easier to answer?	13	22	

After the post-test, 34 respondents found the exercises/tests easy. All 35 respondents claimed pictures had helped them in answering the questions. Nevertheless, there were 5 respondents who could not name all the objects in Exercise A. Only 21 said they could spell the words in both exercises/tests. 32 subjects could name the objects in Exercise B. With regard to the problem in answering the questions in both exercises/tests, 11 claimed to have still faced difficulties while 24 claimed not to have had faced any difficulty. 26 respondents claimed they were familiar with the objects in Exercise B while only 14 said that the objects specified were found in their surrounding. Even then, 28 of the respondents were confident with

their answers. Finally, 22 respondents found Exercise B easier in comparison with Exercise A.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter had analysed and interpreted the data collected as well as presented the final results of the study. The discussion and recommendation of the results will be presented in next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction

The objective of this study was to investigate the effectiveness use of pictures in learning second language common nouns in relation to objects among the low achievers. This chapter will provide discussion and recommendation based on the result of the study that was presented in Chapter 4.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

As a guide to the study, one major research question had been formulated. The question was, **"Can pictures help the low achievers to acquire second language low frequency vocabulary in common nouns?"**

Based on the results obtained from the tests administered, there was an increase in the number of passes among the subjects. The comparison of data as presented in Chart 6 and Chart 8 in Chapter 4 clearly showed an improvement in the subjects'

achievements. It can be deduced that the use of pictures in the teaching of vocabulary in common nouns in relation to objects helped learners significantly in the learning of vocabulary.

The vocabulary taught in the course of the study was comprised of words which they seldom used in their daily interaction. The word **"MUG"** for instance was taken to mean **"CUP"**. Anything used for drinking with a handle is a **"CUP"** because it is very commonly said in the class and widely used at home. However, with the help of pictures they were able to identify and name the objects even though some of the words were being spelt wrongly. Since the level of the language proficiency is very low, the objective of the study was considerably achieved because the majority of the subjects could identify the objects with the help of pictures. This was a considerable achievement compared to the results in the pretest in which the subjects were not aided with pictures.

5.3 Recommendation

It is recommended in the future that this kind of research be carried out with an experimental group and a control group in order to see a detailed result. This study was conducted with an experimental group only. Therefore, the success of the use of

pictures could not be accounted for in the teaching of low-frequency vocabulary in common nouns in relation to objects.

Students' acquisition of vocabulary in general would show significant improvement if they are able to use the vocabulary correctly. There could be other better methods of conducting vocabulary testing besides those administered in the study to find out the best methods in teaching vocabulary to low achievers group.

5.4 Conclusion

Vocabulary is the most important component of a language that every learner has to master. Without any vocabulary knowledge, a learner is unable to listen to the language, speak the language, read in the language and write in the language. Mastering ample vocabulary in the language learned will the learners be able to use the four main skills effectively with confident. Even though this study was done on a small group of learners, it could help future researchers to conduct similar study in order to divise other effective methods of teaching the English vocabulary to second language learners.

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Appendices

Appendix i

Riddles

1. I am like spectacles,
    But does not improve normal sight;
    I serve swimmers well,
    Without me, their eyes turn red.
    What am I? _____

2. I come in many colours and names;
    always liquid, never solid.
    I am kept in bathrooms
    to clean and beautify your hair.
    What am I? _____

3. Doors, gates without me;
    Could invite thieves into houses.
    I usually come with three keys;
    Without the keys, you cannot open me.
    What am I? _____

4. Puffing cool air is my job;
    People love me very much.
    I work in modern offices and homes;
    providing comfort on hot days.
    What am I? _____

5. The bed is lonely without me;
    Without me, the bed is not dressed.
    Without me, you will have sleepless nights;
    Bring me to your home I'll serve you well in the bedroom.
    What am I? _____

Name: _____ Class:_____ Date: _____

_____

Exercise A: Name the suitable object for each statement.

1. It one of the most important tools a carpenter uses to in nails.

   _____

2. Maria keeps the rose syrup in here to keep it cool. _____

3. Mother uses it with thread to sew button on shirts. _____

4. Suraya bought it to bake cakes and biscuits for Hari Raya Puasa.

   _____

5. Mother uses it to put her beautiful plastic flowers. _____

6. An object very similar to a cup with handle used for drinking hot drinks.

   _____

7. Everyone brings this object to take photographs of Siti Nurhaliza.

   _____

8. An object used to drive in screws. _____

9. After cutting the grass, Pak Mat uses this hand-like object to collect

   the grass. _____

10. A kind of instrument that is very useful to a gardener with only one

    wheel. _____

Exercise B: Fill in the blanks with suitable objects.

Malek is a gardener at Sekolah Kebangsaan Sipotag. Everyday he cuts grass with a (1) _____. Then, he collects it a (2) _____ and put it into a (3) _____. He prunes the tree branches that had grown long weekly. He uses a (4) _____ to climb up the trees. He wears a (5) _____ on hot days to cover his head and protect his eyes.

Later, he rests in a small hut and ready for brunch. He boils some water in an old (6) _____. Then, he makes tea. He uses a (7) _____ to drink. He always eat *nasi lemak* in a (8) _____. Sometimes, he eats Maggi Mee, which he cooks in a (9) _____. Usually, he naps on an old (10) _____ in the hut.

hammer	scissors
oven	mug
wheel barrow	glass
rack	trishaw
screwdriver	nails
refrigerator	camera
needle	telescope

vase

Questionnaires given after the pretest

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

_____

Answer the following questions. Place a tick in the box.

1. Do you like learning English?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Do you find learning English difficult?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

3. Can you speak, read and write in English?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

4. Do you understand what your teacher says during lesson?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

5. Could you answer all the questions in the test exercises/tests?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

6. Did you face any problem in answering the questions?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

7. Did you know some of the objects? / Have you ever seen some of the objects?

Yes ☐   No ☐

8. Were you familiar with all the objects?

Yes ☐   No ☐

9. Would you like to sit for the exercises/tests again to gain better marks?

Yes ☐   No ☐

10. Can you name one way which, you think could help you in answering such questions?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

_____
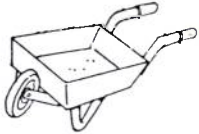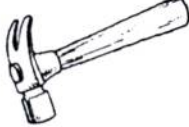
Exercise A: Name the objects correctly. Use the pictures to guide

you.

NO.	PICTURES	STATEMENTS	ANSWERS
1		An object used to drive in screws.	
2		Maria keeps the rose syrup in here to keep it cool for lunch.	
3		It is a very useful instrument a gardener uses with only one wheel.	
4		An object very similar to a cup with handle for hot drinks.	
5		Suraya bought it to bake cakes and biscuits for Hari Raya Puasa.	

6		Mother uses it to put her beautiful plastic flowers.	
7		It is one of the most important tools a carpenter uses to hit in nails.	
8		Mother uses it to with thread to sew buttons on shirts.	
9		Everyone brings this object to take photographs of Siti Nurhaliza.	
10		After cutting the grass, Pak Mat uses this hand-like object to collect the grass.	

Appendix iv

Exercise B: Fill in the blanks with suitable words. Use the pictures to guide you.

Malek is a gardener at Sekolah Kebangsaan Sipotag. Everyday he

cuts grass with a (1) _____. Then, he collects the

grass with a (2) _____ and puts it into a (3)

_____. He prunes the tree branches that had grown long weekly,

He uses a (4) _____ to climb the trees. He wears

a (5) _____ on hot days to cover his head and protect his

eyes.

Later, he rests in a small hut and get ready for brunch. He boils

some water in an old (6) _____. Then, he makes tea.

He uses a (7) _____ to drink. He always eat *nasi lemak* in

a (8) _____. Sometimes, he cooks Maggi Mee in a

(9) _____. Usually, he naps on a small (10)

_____ in the hut.

Questionnaires given after the posttest

Name: _____   Class: _____   Date: _____

Answer the following questions. Place a tick in the box.

1. Did you find the tests easier than the last?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Did the pictures help you?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

3. Could you name all the objects in Exercise A?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

4. Could you spell all the words?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

5. Could you name all the objects in xercise B?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

6. Were there problems in answering the questions in both exercises?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

7. Were you familiar with the objects as indicated with pictures in

   Exercise B?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

8. Were all the objects indicated with pictures found in your

   surroundings?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

9. Were you confident with your answers?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

10. Which of these two exercises was easier to answer?

    Exercise A ☐   Exercise B ☐