

**Improving Students' Vocabulary Ability Through Keyword Technique
(Action Research at Class XI MIA 2 of SMA Negeri 5 Kendari)**

Mclean Hy

Lakidende University

mcleanhy@gmail.com

Abstract

This research investigates the improvement of students' vocabulary ability by applying Keyword Technique at class XI MIA 2 of SMA Negeri 5 Kendari. It aims to find out whether teaching vocabulary by employing the Keyword technique can improve the students' vocabulary ability or not. This research focuses on solving the students' problem vocabulary in definition (find out and recognize the meaning of the word) as the major problem in that class based on the preliminary research. This research used a classroom action research (CAR) as a method which requires four stages such as planning, action, observation and reflection. Two cycles are administrated during the application of this research, where each of them consists of three meetings. In collecting data and information, researcher uses some instrument such as field note and vocabulary test. The planned target of this study is 75% of the students can obtain the bench score 75 at minimum. As a result, students' vocabulary improved after applying keyword as a strategy of learning in the classroom.

Diterima : 05 September 2018

Direvisi : 07 Januari 2019

Diterbitkan : 28 Pebruari 2019

Kata Kunci :

Improving Students'
Vocabulary, Vocabulary
Ability, Keyword
Technique

Introduction

Vocabulary is the one of core component of language proficiency. It is also considered as the basic of mastering English and it would help the learner in speak, listen, read, and write. The vocabulary of language always changes and grows and no one knows exactly numbers of words in English vocabulary today.

School Based Curriculum (SBC) had been replaced by Curriculum 2013 and implemented in 2014 up to the present at SMAN 5 Kendari. The Curriculum 2013 focused on believe or religion implementation (K1), honest, discipline, responsibility etc (K2), Knowledge and its implementation (K3) analysis knowledge in concrete and abstract things etc (K4). Teaching and learning in senior high school especially in second grade (XI) using a book through text written and applied in written activity as a way to convey their ideas or message based on the text itself . Vocabulary is more essential in Curriculum 2013, because the teaching material is provided to make easier the students in order to understand the text and apply some vocabularies. Whereas, vocabulary knowledge played fundamental roles to facilitate and supported students in having comprehension, so they are not difficult to comprehend the content of reading text.

Based on the result of the researcher's observation and informal interview with students and teachers in SMAN 5 Kendari on October 20th, 2014, it was found out that vocabulary becomes more difficult in term of learning English and affected in reading text. As a result, many students were poor in vocabulary knowledge. However, the researcher did diagnostic test to make sure the students' problem related the word meaning. The result showed, only one student who got score above 75 as the standard minimum criterion (KKM). In addition, students had difficulty in some aspects of vocabulary namely definition. In this case, it clears that students are poor in vocabulary.

On that account, the researcher thought there is enough reason to use Keyword technique in improving students' vocabulary ability at class XI MIA 2 of SMAN 5 Kendari.

This present study investigated the use of Keyword Technique in improving students' vocabulary ability at class XI MIA 2 of SMA Negeri 5 Kendari. Researcher concerned on word definition. Then, vocabulary have taught through reading by using hand-book of student because the text already existed in a book of curriculum 2013 edition.

To avoid misinterpretation about this study, it is necessary to give definition of some technical terms related to this study. The terms are:

1. Students' Vocabulary means the acquisition of new word and fixes with it in order to produce a new word which the most basic level by knowing the form and the meaning as well through keyword by student.
2. Keyword technique means a word that be used to understand and comprehend a meaning of the word in the text.

The simple thought from Ur (2003 p.60) states that words which teach in foreign language defined as vocabulary. We might be recognized word could be seen and gotten in

our routine everywhere. Actually Nunan (1991) reveals Vocabulary was the basic competence that must be reached by students in order to get other competencies. It was difficult to master the other competences without mastering and understanding the vocabulary or having background of knowledge. As the explanation above that vocabulary was the foundation to success in all competence, it was very hard to grasp all competence without vocabulary.

In this study focused on one strategy of teaching vocabulary in the history of language teaching, and it was keyword technique, which popular way to improve students' vocabulary. The name of keyword technique actually came from the research that Atkinson done. The researcher make some point addition to support this study in literature review. The keyword method (Atkinson & Raugh, 1975) is steps mnemonic technique for learning foreign vocabulary item and their English equivalents. Based on Dingle and Lebedev (2008) define keyword as a word that can describe content. Keyword also an effective way for remembering definition, learning foreign language vocabulary and more. By using keyword technique students can recognize the word when reading. The reference to implement of keyword in reading is by looking at in way at the vocabulary power by Dingle & Lebedev (2008) which is each chapter is organized as follows:

1. Words in reading that explained how to understand words from reading
2. Words and definition that explained how to define the words with their definition
3. Word in writing that used in using the words in writing based on the meaning from the text.

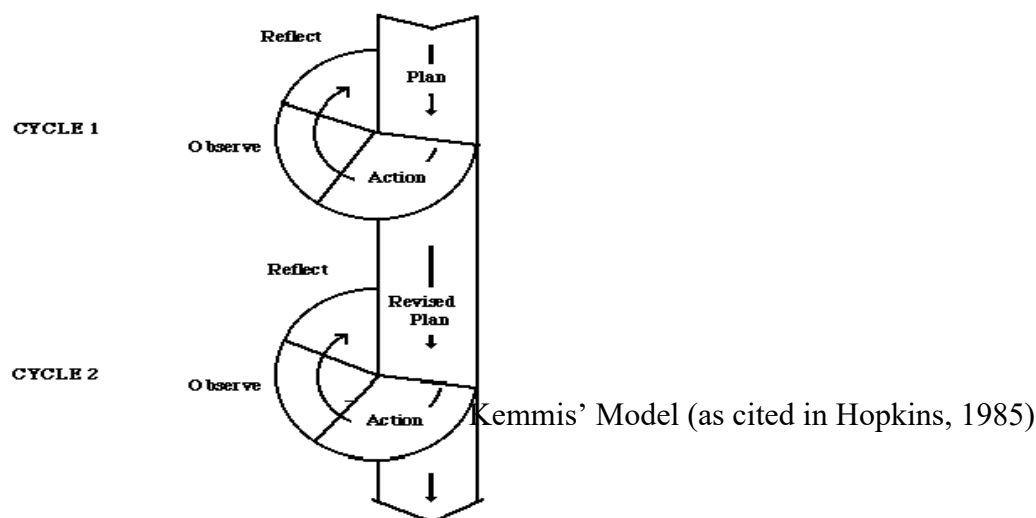
These Strategies adopted from the vocabulary power based on the research on memory. Memorizing a word need to repetition more than one step hence the researcher take one step of four steps. So the researcher focused on words and definition.

Method

1. Design of the Study

The design of this study was a classroom action research in which the aim was to improve students' vocabulary ability by applying Keyword technique. There were four steps in classroom action research that suggested by Kemmis (1988) namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. The cycle of this study was ended when 75% of total students have achieved 75 as the standard minimum criterion (follow the school standard score). If the successful criteria did not fulfill yet, so the study was continued to the next cycle. The figure below shows the stages implementation of this study.

Figure 1. Kemmis' Model for Classroom Action Research Design



2. Subject of the Study

The subject of this study was class XI MIA 2 at SMAN 5 Kendari in academic year 2014/2015. The total numbers of intact class were 36 students. But, the subject of this study consists of 33 students because there were three students did not follow diagnostic test.

3. Factors that were Observed

There were several factors that observed in this research:

- a. Researcher observed students' vocabulary ability through reading, word and definition and word in writing after being taught by using keyword technique.
- b. The teaching strategy that was used by teacher in teaching vocabulary through reading by using keyword technique.

4. Instruments of the Study

Students' vocabulary test and Field note

5. Technique of Data Collection

There were two kinds of collected data in this study, namely qualitative and quantitative data.

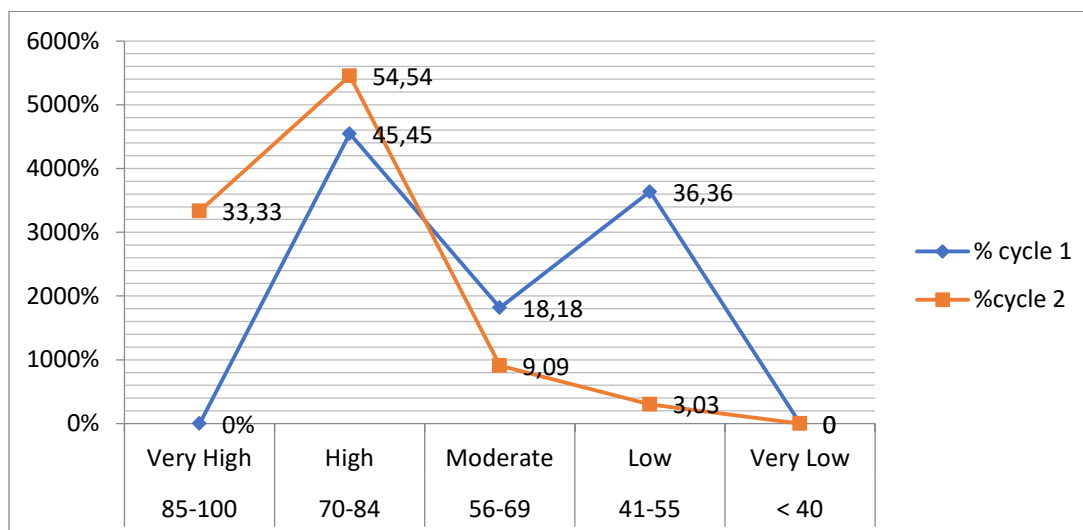
6. Assessment

Researcher used ESL Composition Profile proposed by Sudjinah, (1980) to assess students' vocabulary ability. This study focused on word definitions.

Results And Discussion

1. Result of students' vocabulary ability in aspect of vocabulary

Generally, students' vocabulary ability in terms of definition improved after being taught by using Keyword technique for two cycles. Such improvement can be seen in the figure below:



The figure 2. above told about the percentage students' improvement each cycle, where have covered the first and the second cycle. It seems clearly that, there is any significant improvement among two cycles. The researcher observed that in the first cycle, student in very high categorized that get around 85-100 score is none. In addition, in high, moderate, and low categorized, the percentage shows that 45.45%, 18.18% and 36.36% students who get it. It seems quite different when the researcher done the second cycle, there is any significant improvement. In the second cycle any student who categorized in very high level around 11 students namely 33.33% and 54.54% in high categorized also student who get score < 40 is none, means that the frequency of student get score ≥ 75 is very significant. It could conclude that there is any improvement by using Keyword technique.

Actually, the score covers before and after treatment. From the diagnostic score looked only 44.69 mean score who students got called very poor of vocabulary. The significant interval number was 18.79 mean score if compared between the diagnostic and the first cycle. At the end, the mean score improve to 77.87 mean score.

Because more than 75% of total students in the class could reach the standard minimum criterion (KKM), researcher conclude that teaching vocabulary through Keyword technique could improve students' vocabulary ability at class XI MIA 2 of SMA Negeri 5 Kendari.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it concluded that implementation of Keyword technique could improve students' vocabulary ability at class XI MIA 2 of SMAN 5 Kendari in terms of word definition aspect. This was proved by the improvement of students' mean score in diagnostic test, assessment of first and second cycle.

In diagnostic test, there is only 1 student (3.03%) of 33 students achieves the target score and the mean score is 44.69. In the first cycle, there are 11 students (33.33%) achieving the target score and the mean score increases to 63.48. In second cycle, there are 28 students (84.84%) achieving the target score and the mean score increases to 77.87.

In addition, the target of this study, at least 75% of students should achieve the target score namely 75, had been achieved. Therefore, researcher concluded that the implementation of Keyword Technique in teaching vocabulary, could improve students' vocabulary ability at class XI MIA 2 of SMAN 5 Kendari.

References

- Akbari, Z. &Tahririan, M. H. 2009. Vocabulary learning strategies in an ESP context: The case of para/medical English in Iran. *Asian EFL Journal*, 11 (1), 39-61.Retrieved October 3, 2014, from www.asian-efl-Journal.com/March-2009.pdf
- Atkinson, R. C. 1975. Mnemotechnics in second-language learning.*American Psychologist*, 30(8), 821-828.Retrieved October 3, 2014, from <http://psynet.apa.org/psycinfo/1975-30979-001>
- Atkinson, R.C., &Raugh, M.R. 1975.An Application of the mnemonic keyword method to the acquisition of a Russian Vocabulary. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Learning and memory*, 104, 126-133.Retrieved October 3, 2014, from <http://psycnet.apa.org/journal/126.pdf>
- Aureli,M,D. 2011. *A thesis : a study of vocabulary acquisition in fifth grade in Southern New Jersey*. Rowan University.Retrieved October 3, 2014, from <http://dspace.rowan.edu/bitstream/handle/10927/84/aurelid-t.pdf?sequence=4>
- Baleghizadeh,S and Ashoori, A. 2010. *The effect of keyword and word list method on immediate vocabulary retention of EFL learners*: *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences* 30(2). Retrieved October 3, 2014, from http://www.bzu.edu.pk/PJSS/Vol30No22010/Final_PJSS-30-2-06.pdf
- Craik, F. I. M., & Lockhart, R. S. 1972. Levels of processing: A framework for memory research. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 11, 671-684.Retrieved

from http://www.numyspace.co.uk/~unn_tsmc4/prac/labs/depth/craiklock.pdf

- Chen, Y. M. 2006. *The effect of keyword method on English vocabulary long-term retention of elementary school students in Taiwan*. Unpublished Master Thesis. Department of Applied English, Southern Taiwan University
- Coxhead, A. 2000. *A new academic word list*. TESOL Quarterly.
- Darminah, et al. 2008. *Modul: Pengembangan Kurikulum dan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris*. Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka
- Dingle, Kate & Lebedev, J.R. 2008. *Vocabulary Power: practicing essential words*. Pearson Education, Inc.
- Djamal, M., et al. 2005. *Improving reading skill in English*. Kencana Prenada Media Group. Jakarta
- Gay, L.R et al. 2006. *Educational Research: competencies for analysis and applications (8th ed)*. Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall. Columbus, Ohio.
- Harmer, J. 1993. *The Practice of English Language teaching*. Longman
- Holek, H. 1981. *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Hopkins, D. 1985. *A Teacher Guide Classroom Research*. Open University Press: Philadelpina
- Kamil, M.L., and E.H. Hiebert. 2005. *Teaching and learning vocabulary: Perspectives and persistent issues*. In E.H. Hiebert and M.L. Kamil (eds.), *Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- KEMENDIKBUD. 2013. *Pendidikan dan Latihan Profesi Guru tahun 2013: Modul PLPG Penelitian Tindakan Kelas*. Jakarta
- _____. 2014. *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA Kelas XI Sememster 1*. Jakarta
- Lestari, D.T. 2012. *Improving year-two students' vocabulary under boomerang technique at SMAN 4 Kendari*. A thesis. UHO. Unpublished
- Nation, I.S.P. 1990. *Teaching and Learning Vocabulary* (New York: Heinle & Heinle Publishers
- _____. 2001. *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge university press: Cambridge
- _____. 2002. *Managing vocabulary learning*. SEAMEO regional language centre: Singapore
- _____. 2009. *Teaching ESL/EFL reading and writing*. Routledge. New York
- Nakata, T. 2006. *Implementing optimal spaced learning for English vocabulary learning: Towards improvement of the low-first method derived from the reactivation theory*. The

- JALT CALL Journal, 2(2). Retrieved October 3, 2014, from http://journal.jaltcall.org/articles/2_2_Nakata.pdf
- Nunan, D. 1991. *Research methods in language learning*. Cambridge university press: Cambridge.
- _____. 2003. *Practical English Language Teaching*. McGraw-Hill international Edition.
- Mastropieri, M.A., & Scruggs, T.E. et al. 1991. *Teaching Abstract vocabulary with the keyword method: effects on recall and comprehension*. Journal Of Learning Disabilities, 23 (2). Retrieved October 3, 2014, from <http://ldx.sagepub.com/content/23/2/92.abstract>
- Palumbo, A. & Loiacono, V. 2009. *Understanding The causes of intermediate and middle school comprehension problems*. International Journal Of Special Education, 24 (1), 75-81. Retrieved October 3, 2014, from <http://blogs.ubc.ca/prattetec511/files/2010/09/ETEC-511-Dennis-Pratt-Special-Needs-Paper.docx>
- Richards, J & Renandya, W. 2003. *Methodology in language teaching : an anthology of current practice*. Cambridge Press. Cambridge
- Siringganjanavong, V .2013. *The mnemonic keyword method: effects on the vocabulary acquisition and retention*. Published by Canadian of science education: ELT 6(10). Retrieved October 3, 2014, from <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/elt/article/viewFile/30156/17863>
- Stahl, S.A. 2005. *Four problems with teaching word meanings (and what to do to make vocabulary an integral part of instruction)*. In E.H. Hiebert and M.L. Kamil (eds.), *Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Sudjinah. 1980. *Materi Pokok Penilaian*. Jakarta. Depdikbud
- Tavakoli, M & Gerami, E .2011. *The effect of keyword and pictorial method on EFL learner' vocabulary learning and retention*. University of Isfahan, Iran.
- Ur, Penny. 2003. *A course in language teaching: practice and theory*. Cambridge university press: Cambridge
- Wallace, M. 1988. *Action Research for language teacher*. Cambridge University Press
- _____. 2001. *Practical Language Teaching: Teaching Vocabulary*. Cambridge University press
- YongqiGu, P. 2003. *Vocabulary learning in second language: Person, task, context and strategies*. TESL-EJ, 7(2). Retrieved October 3, 2014, from <http://www-writing.berkeley.edu/TESL-EJ/ej26/a4.html>