

TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH INTERACTIVE VOCABULARY TECHNIQUE

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Abstract

The objective of this research were to find out whether or not (1) the use of interactive vocabulary technique improved students' English vocabulary and (2) students are interested in learning vocabulary using interactive vocabulary technique. This research applied quasi experimental method. The subject of the research was the second year students of SMP Negeri 3 Palopo, academic year 2011/2012. The sample consisted of two classed of two classes, they are control group and experimental group. They were trained through interactive vocabulary technique and coventional technique. While questionnaire was used to collect data of students' interest in learning vocabulary using interactive vocabulary technique. The result of data analysis showed that the students' achievement in experimental group and control group were significantly different. It was proved by the mean score of the students posttest in the experimental group is 7.94 which was greater than the mean score of the students' posstest in the control group is 6,84. The data analysis from questionnaire also showed that the degree of the students' interest was very high. Based on the data analysis, the research concluded that the student' vocabulary improved significantly by the use of interactive vocabulary technique. The use of interactive vocabulary technique was interesting to the students, so they were motivated to learn English Vocabulary.

Keywords: Teaching Vocabulary, Interactive Vocabulary

Introduction

The most important element involved in the language skill is vocabulary. Providing vocabulary instruction is one of the most significant ways in which teachers can improve students' reading, writing, listening, and speaking comprehension. The more students master vocabulary, the more they will understand and more communicative. Vocabulary is needed to convey what one wishes to say, which is organized grammatically. The ability to communicate and to convey our social needs could not be established without having enough vocabularies as Hennings (2000) affirms the important of vocabulary as the building blocks of meaning. Students with limited vocabularies have trouble understanding what they read and hear because they have 'too few building blocks' with which to construct meanings.

In many schools students do not have the opportunity to take intensive vocabulary-building classes. Many of these students have difficulty comprehending what they read or listen. A major cause of this difficulty is their lack of understanding of abstract English words. Courtright & Wesolek, 2000 stated that most teachers deal with vocabulary in a haphazard and rather unprincipled way and most teachers leave the selection of vocabulary to the course book. In teaching vocabulary the teachers have to be focused on: building the learner's 'start up' or initial vocabulary; developing the learner's understanding of what learning words means; showing the learner how to learn the words most effectively.

Research shows that learners need about 3000 'word families' to be good at English. A 'word family' is a group of words that share the same meaning such as 'help', 'helping' 'helped' 'helpless' etc Waring, 2001. The teachers should concentrate on the most frequent and useful words first, as it is these words the learners will meet very often.

Research also shows that learners learn best when they are made actively involved in word learning and at different levels of mental activity. If a learner just repeats a word over and over, the processing is quite shallow because it is just maintaining knowledge. Thus, writing the word out time and time again will lead to little learning. Learners should be trained to work with words deeply, by working with the collocates, looking at how the word is similar but different from other words, by forming 'networks' of word relationships in their minds and not just keeping words in isolation. Thus, learners must be given chances to notice new words for themselves, and made to hypothesize about the meaning of new words. They should also be given chances to experiment with their hypotheses by producing the new words in speech or writing. Only by experimenting will they know if the learning has been successful. Thus teachers should try not to just present the meaning of a word to a learner, but let the learner work it out for herself, with guidance where necessary.

To make the thematic words effective for communication, the teacher must teach them to the students not in isolation. Instead, the teacher must create various activities that can make the students active in practicing the words in the forms of utterances, that is, the activities that can engage the students in practicing the words through the four skills, in other words, the classroom activities must give ample opportunities to students to listen, to read, and to write English (Nurmala, 2005)

Interactive and communicative vocabulary activities can lead to better word learning (Courtright & Wesolek, 2000). Building vocabulary is far more than memorizing words. So by using interactive vocabulary the

students not only memorize the words but they can comprehend, apply, and use them in a certain context or situation.

“Interactive vocabulary instruction means presents key word from the text to students in a variety of ways that require students’ participations” Rupley et al (in Maclean, 2000:15)

Zimmerman’s study in (Courtrigt & Wesolek, 2001) set out the following parameters for teachers who would design the interactive vocabulary lessons. In her subjects’ special vocabulary classes, each lesson was to include the following:

1. Multiple exposures to words;
2. Exposures to words in meaningful contexts;
3. Rich and varied information about each word;
4. Establishment of ties between instructed words, student experience, and prior knowledge; and
5. Active participation by students in the learning process.

She also states that interactive vocabulary activities can be designed to fulfill any of the following purposes:

1. Exposure (word meaning and illustrate appropriate usage);
2. Expansion (using the appropriate word form in context);
3. Expression (word knowledge in either oral or written original expression using the target words)

Interactive vocabulary is one of teaching vocabulary techniques which requires and involves students to be active in learning process.

The researcher formulated research question is addressed: Can the use of interactive vocabulary technique improve students’ English vocabulary? And Are the students interested in learning vocabulary using interactive vocabulary technique?

The research focused on the teaching of English vocabulary through interactive vocabulary technique. The kinds of vocabulary that presented in this research are verbs, nouns, and adjectives which related to the students’ lesson theme. There are most activities used in interactive vocabulary technique. However, only four activities were applied. Those

are: (1) found in dictionary, in this activity the students have to find the meaning of the words in dictionary and find the class of the word in dictionary, whether they are noun, verb, adjective, or adverb. Besides the students also have to differ the words that are similar in appearance but often radically different in terms of grammar and/or meaning. (2) Same or opposite, in this activity the students will determine a group of words whether they are same or opposite. (3) Vocabulary groups, in this activity the student will group some words based on a certain criteria. (4) hot seat games, in this activity the students expected to describe the word, using synonyms, antonyms, definitions etc.

METHOD

In this research, the researcher applied quasi experimental method using two groups' pretest-posttest design. For the Experimental group, the students were given vocabulary test as pretest. Then, this group was taught vocabulary by using interactive vocabulary technique for four sessions (90 minutes for each session). At the end of the treatment, the students were given objective test as posttest and questionnaire to know the interest of the students about interactive vocabulary technique. As well as the experimental group, the control group was also given objective test at the beginning of the teaching period. This group was taught by using usual technique for four sessions (90 minutes for each). Usual technique here means the technique which has been used by the teacher there. At the end of the teaching period, they were given posttest.

Sample

The population of the research is the second semester student of English education program in academic year 2011/2012. The total number of population is 160 students which are distributed in four classes. Each class consists of 40 students. The researcher applied stratified sampling in taking the sample of this research. The researcher took 15 students randomly from each class, there were 4 classes. So, the total numbers of sample were 60 students. Then, the students chosen were

grouped into two groups, one group as experimental group and the other one as control group. Each group consisted of 30 students.

Instrument

1. Test

The test consists of pre-test and post-test. The test used was vocabulary test to see the improvement of student's vocabulary. The test for pre-test was the same as for the post-test.

Before the researcher gives the treatment to the students, the test was tried out to the students who are not the sample of this research. The aim of the try out test is to know the validity of the test. The try out test administered about a week before giving pretest to the sample students. It aims to give the researcher time to analyze the result of try out test to find the validity of the test.

According to the validity analysis of the test, all of the items were categorized valid (appendix 8). On the first step, 5 items was dropped. On the second step 40 items was categorized valid. It was indicated by coefficient a correlation in second step was from 0.4 to 0.6 which was higher then 0.374.

Furthermore, based on Cronbach's alpha, all of the vocabulary tests were reliable. It was indicated by the reliability of the test was from was from 0.891 to 0.914.

Based on the result of validity and reliability of the test, all of the test was valid and reliable. It means that these vocabulary tests can be used in this research.

2. Questionnaire

This questionnaire was given to find out the students interest about using interactive vocabulary in teaching English. The questionnaire uses Likert Scale with the options: strongly agree undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. The questionnaire consists of ten items. This questionnaire distributed to the respondents after last treatment.

Finding

After calculating the result of the students' pretest, the mean score and standard deviation of both groups are presented in the following table:

Table The mean score and standard deviation of the students pretest

Groups	Mean score	Standard Deviation
Experimental	5,70	1,51
Control	6,01	1,40

The table above shows that the mean score of the students in the experimental class (5,70) is lower than the control one (6,01). It reveals that the mean score of the pretest obtained by students in both groups are different

Table The mean score and standard deviation of the students' posttest

Groups	Mean score	Standard Deviation
Experimental	7.94	1,33
Control	6.84	1,30

The table above reveals that the mean score obtained by the students in experimental class (7,94) is greater than the control class (6,84). It is apparent that the mean score of the posttest obtained by the students in the both group are slightly different.

The classification of the students' interest in learning vocabulary by using interactive vocabulary technique.

No	Criteria	Range Score	Frequency
1	Strongly agree	42-50	21
70			
2	Agree	34-41	9
30			
3	Uncertain	26-33	0
0			
4	Disagree	18-25	0

0			
5	Strongly Disagree	10-17	0
0			
	Total		30
100			

The table above indicates the use interactive vocabulary technique in teaching of vocabulary interested to the students in improving their vocabulary. Since there are 70% students categorized strongly interested and 30% students categorized interested.

Discussion

The application of interactive vocabulary technique to the students can improve the students' achievement and their interest to learn vocabulary. This is proved by the posttest mean score of experimental group is greater than the pretest mean score. The students reached score of post test is 7.94 and where as for pretest 5.70. This indicates there is significant difference between the students mean score in the post test and the mean score in the pretest. The means, there is significant improvement before treatment and after treatment by using interactive vocabulary technique. While, for control group, the pretest mean score is also greater than pretest mean score. The value of the pre-test is 6.01 and the post-test is 6.84. This indicates the difference between the students mean score in the pretest and posttest is not so significant different. This means, the students in control group is not as significant as experimental group.

The comparison of application interactive vocabulary technique in teaching vocabulary with the conventional one (experimental group and control group) shows that the technique used in experimental group can improve the students' achievement significantly than used in control group.

The researcher explained that teacher can use interactive vocabulary technique in teaching vocabulary. The reasons for the use of interactive vocabulary technique are:

1. Students enjoy in learning English vocabulary by using interactive vocabulary technique.
2. Interactive vocabulary technique can challenge the students to think more about words
3. The students are enthusiastic and more active in learning vocabulary by using interactive vocabulary technique
4. The students are not boring in learning vocabulary by using interactive vocabulary technique.

Shortly, learning vocabulary by using interactive vocabulary technique is better to be applied because it can improve the students' achievement significantly greater than the conventional technique.

The questionnaire was given after the posttest to know the students interest in using interactive vocabulary in learning English vocabulary. Based on the analysis of questionnaire the researcher concludes that the students were strongly interest towards the use of interactive vocabulary. It means that there is a good applicable strategy in learning vocabulary.

Conclusions

1. The use of "Interactive Vocabulary Technique" gives good effect to improve the students' English vocabulary.
2. The use of "Interactive Vocabulary Technique" is interesting to the students so they are motivated to learn English vocabulary. This led to the conclusion that the use of Interactive Vocabulary Technique" is effective and applicable in teaching vocabulary.

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