ENHANCING FOR VOCABULARY MASTERY THROUGH MNEMONICS KEYWORD METHOD TO THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract:

This research is focused on mnemonic keyword method to enhance vocabulary mastery to the university students. Mnemonic refers to instructional or learning strategies designed specifically to enhance memory. One of the most powerful mnemonic strategies is the **key word method**. The keyword method is a useful mnemonic aid which can help broaden students' vocabulary by means of speech and ultimately with reading and writing. Then keyword method effective way to provide a meaningful visual image upon which to base memory for a new word's meaning. This research involves twenty students at the first grade. The research instruments of this study are consisted of tests, observation checklist, and a questionnaire. This study was class action research. From the cycle 1 reflection result, some procedures and activities were revised. Different from the cycle 2, the researcher used mnemonic keyword method and there is no reflection. The enhancement of students' vocabulary mastery shows with individual test and got mean score 67.75 in the cycle 1 and 79.75 in the cycle 2.In addition the enhancement of students' vocabulary mastery in group test and got mean score 72.00 in the cycle 1 and increased to be 81.00 in the cycle 2. In this result, it shows there enhancement for vocabulary mastery through mnemonic keyword method in the first grade students at STKIP PGRI Blitar.

Keyword: *Enhancing for Vocabulary Mastery, Mnemonic Keyword Method,*

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Introduction

Vocabulary is an essential lesson for students to master in English. As a lecturer must have many strategies to make students are interested and not feel bored in the classroom. One of strategy to enhance for vocabulary mastery through mnemonic keyword method. Based on (Mastropieri, M.A., & Scruggs,

T.E.1991) mnemonic instruction refers to instructional or learning strategies designed specifically to enhance memory. In many cases, it refers to modifying or changing to be-learned in formation to link it directly to information the student already knows. One of the most powerful mnemonic strategies is the keyword method. It works best when the information to be learned is unfamiliar to the students.

The keyword method is a mnemonic (memory-enhancing) technique used to increase the initial learning and retention of facts and fact systems which young adults often encounter in schools/University level. This method incorporates both auditory and visual cues to enhance meaningfulness of the information to be learned and to promote strong associations between questions and answers (Mastropieri, 1988). In addition, Thornburry (2002) states that mnemonics are 'tricks' to help retrieve items or rules that are stored in memory and that are not yet automatically retrievable. From those definitions above, the researcher sum up the definition of mnemonics as a method to help the student to retrieve or to recall the information. The most common technique is using the keywords method or technique.

From this research, the researcher found same cases. First, the students found some difficulties to express and to respond something written and spoken in English even in a simple expression. Second, the students do not have self-confidence to express their ideas because they are afraid of making mistakes if unknown many new meaning and difficulties to know by heart. They felt if vocabulary learning is boring. The last problem refers to the monotonous teaching style. To solve the problems, the researcher offered a method to enhance for vocabulary mastery through mnemonic keyword method to the university students. The objective of study is to investigate whether Mnemonic keyword method can enhance for vocabulary mastery to the university students. The special research is the student who has problem about vocabulary. The students involved twenty students of the first grade with the researcher as an English lecturer.

RELATED LITERATURE

Mnemonic instruction is a way to help students remember information/vocabulary more effectively and easily. It involves linking unfamiliar to be learned information with familiar already known information through the use of a visual picture or letter/word combinations. Based on (Amiryousefi and Ketabi, S.2011), Mnemonics is a memory enhancing instructional strategy that involves teaching students to link new information taught to information. They already know mnemonics are techniques or devices, either verbal or visual in nature, that serves to enhance the storage of new information, and the recall of information contained in memory (Solso, 1995). Although there are many kinds of mnemonic approaches, the one that has long been used to teach vocabulary is called the keyword method by Atkinson in1975. The method has been investigated ever since for its effectiveness in helping learners retain newly learned words in their memory. The keyword method is a mnemonic procedure for associating a foreign word with its English translation (Atkinson and Raugh, 1975). The keyword method is a technique (form of mnemonics) commonly used to learn vocabulary words. It takes unfamiliar information and makes it more meaningful and concrete and thus, easier to remember. When developing a keyword strategy you should follow the 3 R's: reconstructing, relating and retrieve (Mastropieri, 1988). The use of the 3R's is as follows:

(1) *Reconstructing*: Coming up with a keyword. Something that is familiar to the student, easily pictured, and acoustically similar (sounds like the word to be learned);

(2) *Relating*: Next, link the keyword with the definition of the new word in a picture; and

(3) *Retrieve*: Lastly, teach the learner the process of how to effectively go through the steps to remember the new vocabulary word and meaning.

Nation (2001, p.313) writes that the keyword method has been compared in experiments with: (1) rote learning; (2) use of pictures; (3) thinking of images or examples of the meaning- instantiation-context-the unknown word is placed in sentence context and the meaning of the word is provided; (4) added synonyms-

the meaning is accompanied by other known synonyms; and (6) guessing from context.

The key word method is an effective way it provides a meaningful visual image upon which to base memory for a new word's meaning. In addition, keyword method cans enhance memory and also creativity and the same time alleviate the frustration of their students.

Research Methodology

The research was carried out at faculty of language and art education department of English language at STKIP PGRI Blitar, East Java. The subject of this research is the first grade students. This research involves twenty students at the first grade. In this case the researcher used classroom action research, the spiral model as suggested by Kemmis and Taggart (1988) with the spiral some steps: (1) identification of the problem; (2) planning in action; (3) implementation of action; (4) observation and evaluation; (5) analysis and reflection. In collecting the data the researcher uses quantitative and qualitative data to know the enhancement student's vocabulary mastery. The research instruments of this study are consisted of tests, observation checklist, and a questionnaire.

Reseacrch Finding

The finding of the research shows that one of learning vocabulary through mnemonic keyword method can enhance vocabulary mastery to the university students. This can be seen from the result analysis of tests, observation checklist, and a questionnaire done throughout the research.

Based on the result of observation checklist and the field notes, the finding of the research shows that one of through keyword method can enhance students' vocabulary mastery. In the evaluation, it was noted that at the early stage of the research, the students were weak in vocabulary learning especially to memorize new word before use keyword method. The most common errors produced by the students when they found some difficulties to express and to respond something written and spoken in English even in a simple expression. Besides, the students do not have self-confidence to express their ideas because they are afraid of

making mistakes if unknown many new meaning and difficulties to know by heart. But after being treated with the keyword method they could recall or remember information/vocabulary more effectively and easily. It involves linking unfamiliar to be learned information with familiar already known information through the use of a visual picture or letter/word combinations

The theoretically, the enhancement was achieved because the students had been treated with keyword method above. The students make progress in their vocabulary learning with method applied. This can be seen from the mean score gained by the students in individual test and group test from cycle 1 to cycle 2 as illustrated in the table1 and 2. It was identified that after being treated with the keyword method, the teaching learning process become much better and brought a good impact to enhance vocabulary mastery to the university students.

Based on students' response toward learning vocabulary implementing of mnemonic keyword method was obtained through a questionnaire with 10 statements and given to 20 students of the first grade. The students' response in this study showed their opinions toward the use of mnemonic keyword method in learning vocabulary. The result of the students' questionnaire about their response to the use of mnemonic keyword method in learning vocabulary indicates that such vocabulary learning model brings good impact to the students in some aspects which are as follows:

1. The students had high motivation in learning vocabulary with the employed keyword method because promote work group and pairs work in which the students could learn from one another by sharing ideas among the members.

2. The students had a good a word meaning because the key word method is an effective way it provides a meaningful visual image upon which to base memory for a new word's meaning.

3. Students felt easier to learn new word using language picture , thinking image so they can memorize many vocabulary enjoyable

4. The students were contented to learn vocabulary through mnemonic keyword method. They can help broaden students' vocabulary mastery by means of speech and ultimately with reading and writing.

Based on result of quantitative data, the researcher constructed this study for two cycles. It was observed and evaluated to research the success and the failure of the action. Here, the research will end, continue or revise to next cycle based on the criteria of success.

In this step, the researcher gave explanation and detail guidelines. Then the researcher made up keywords to correlate with the vocabulary words from story and added a picture to a study sheet. After the students were introduced to the new vocabulary and definitions from story, the students are then brainstormed to create a keyword in the native language that has similarities in pronunciation with the foreign language. After the keyword is determined, the students associate those concepts with an image representing the actual meaning of the word.

In the reflection in the cycle 1, the researcher found some problems. Many students not yet use keyword and confusing when the researcher gave material. Then the researcher to continue this study in the cycle 2. In this study the researcher change the implementation of this method using quizzes and asked to find their own theme by group.. The students began to draw their own pictures to correlate to the vocabulary words from their theme. The students seemed to enjoy drawing pictures and creating their own keywords for the new vocabulary. After the students reviewed the newly learned vocabulary, they would receive a study sheet with the vocabulary word, keyword, and picture.

The result of the students' tests showed that before the action was implemented, the average score of the students in the pretest was 61.00. This score was lower than the minimum mean scoring prescribed (70.00) for the criteria of success of this research. However, the enhancement of the method was followed with individual and group test in the cycle 1 and in the cycle 2. Further discussion about the students' average score gained in every cycle and their vocabulary size out of 100 target was given are presented in table 1 and table 2

Table 1: Students Average Score in Individuals Work

No	Test	Achievement (mean score)	Remark
1	Pre test	61.00	**The minimum**
2	Post-test in cycle I	67.75	**means score**
3	Post-test in cycle II	79.75	**prescribed = 70.00**
4	**Vocabulary test of 100 target work**	**77-93**	**The minimum target word prescribed =75**

Table 2: Students Average Score in quizzes Group

No	Test	Group work (mean score)	Remark
1	**Cycle I**	**72.00**	**- Group work for drill**
2	**Cycle II**	**81.00**	**- Group work for crossword puzzle**

The result shown that the mnemonic keyword method worked very well in classroom. The enhancement of the method was followed with individual test and got mean score 67.75 in the cycle 1 and 79.75 in the cycle 2. In addition the enhancement of students' vocabulary mastery in group test averages by two letter grades, from 72.00 average to 81.00 average.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The enhancement of students' vocabulary mastery was shown by the students' mean score with individual test in the cycle 1, the students' score in vocabulary mastery increased to be 67.75. Though the mean score was increased, but it did not reach the success criteria yet. So, the researcher conducted the next cycle and the result of vocabulary test administered in the cycle 2 was enhanced until 79.75. It showed that the success criterion was enhancing significantly. In addition, this was also shown by the enhancement of students' vocabulary

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mastery in group test. It shown that the students' mean score was 72.00 in the cycle 1 and 81.00 in the cycle 2. In this result shown that the vocabulary mastery of the first grade students at STKIP PGRI Blitar was enhancing through mnemonic keyword method. The mnemonic keyword method can help the students with special needs develop a more extensive, impressive vocabulary. Furthermore, the mnemonic keyword method is a useful mnemonic aid which can help broaden students' vocabulary by means of speech and ultimately with reading and writing.

Based on the finding the implementations of mnemonic keyword method, some suggested are offered to both English lecturer and the other researchers. The English lecturer can use new technique or method to enhance mastery vocabulary for their students so the process teaching and learning more creative and enjoyable. For the future researchers the finding of this research project can be used as references in other lesson and carry out this method for other level at which this research is conducted or to strengthen the present result so that they are applicable for more classroom setting.

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