

IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY OF GRADE X SMA N 1 SEWON THROUGH EXTENSIVE READING

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Abstract

As an element connecting the four language skills in EFL, vocabulary plays the most significant role in foreign language learning. In order to communicate well in a foreign language, students should acquire an adequate number of words and should know how to use them accurately and appropriately. However, there are still many of students who lack of vocabulary. One of the ways to improve students' vocabulary mastery is through Extensive Reading. Extensive Reading is purposely focused on students' reading as much as possible: not only in classroom but also out of classroom, as cited in Day and Bamford (1998, p. 4). This research aims to find out how Extensive Reading improves students' vocabulary mastery at grade 10 of SMA N 1 SEWON. The research question of this study is how does Extensive Reading improve students' vocabulary mastery? This research conducted Classroom Action Research. The subjects of the study were 33 students of X MIPA class 2 of SMA N 1 SEWON. In collecting the data, the researchers used some instruments, namely; pre-test, progress test, post-test, field notes and interview guidelines questions. The data of this study were qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative data were obtained from the field notes and the interview. Quantitative data were obtained from pre-test, progress test and post-test. The implementation of Extensive Reading in this research is by asking the students to read English story for 10-15 minutes in every meeting. The results showed that Extensive Reading can improve students' vocabulary mastery based on the increasing in students' vocabulary mastery and the changes in students' behavior. It was found out by measuring the mean score of the tests result. The improvement was also shown from the reflection of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. It is shown that the students know much new vocabulary. In addition, the activities made the students more enthusiastic in teaching and learning process.

Keywords: vocabulary mastery, extensive reading, classroom action research (CAR)

Introduction

Vocabulary has an important role for English as Foreign Language students. Without a proportional amount of vocabulary, students will find difficulties in their speaking, reading, listening, and writing. One of the ways to achieve

vocabulary mastery is by implementing Extensive Reading. From the preliminary observation, it was found that the students at grade X of SMA N 1 SEWON had difficulties in comprehending English text because of several reasons. Firstly, the students did not have willingness to read the text or even to do the task. It is because the students were unmotivated to learn. Secondly, the students had difficulties in understanding the meanings of unfamiliar words and mostly did not know the vocabulary in the text. Therefore, the students have lack of interest in reading because of their low vocabulary mastery. Furthermore, the teaching technique in the teaching and learning process of reading was still teacher oriented.

One of the ways to achieve vocabulary mastery is by implementing Extensive Reading. Through Extensive Reading, students can improve their reading ability and enhance their overall language proficiency. The results of the previous studies also show that Extensive Reading increases vocabulary knowledge. According to Gatbonton & Segalowitz (2005), Learners encounter the same words repeatedly in context, which result in vocabulary learning. Based on the research that has been done by Pazakh and Sultoni (2010), the vocabulary knowledge of the students had increased while they were participating in the Extensive Reading program for ten weeks. From the study of Nishino (2007), it can be concluded that Extensive Reading, unaccompanied by any analytic study or practice, can provide second or foreign language learners with the vocabulary necessary for reading. In addition, implicit vocabulary learning could occur through Extensive Reading as concluded by Hsueh-chao and Nation (2000). What makes this research is different from the previous studies is that the activities and the reading materials used by the researchers are more vary.

Therefore, the researchers employed Extensive Reading technique in order to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Based on the background problems stated previously, the research question formulated is "How does Extensive Reading improve students' vocabulary mastery?"

Vocabulary Mastery

Hornby (1995) defines vocabulary mastery as complete knowledge or complete skill of vocabulary. Mastering vocabulary is one of the students' needs in order to understand the language. It is widely accepted among researchers that the difference in students' vocabulary levels is a key factor in disparities in academic achievement. Bromley (2004, p. 3-4) states that vocabulary holds important roles in teaching-learning process. In line with Burton (1982, p. 98), vocabulary is needed by people to understand the meaning of words and it helps them to express precisely. Limited vocabulary mastery can give bad influences in the teaching-learning process of a language. Further, Krashen and Tenell (1983) stated that vocabulary mastery is also very important for the acquisition process. Acquisition depends significantly on the comprehensible input. The comprehensibility is dependent directly on the ability to recognize the meaning of key elements in the utterance.

Extensive Reading

Nuttall (2005, p. 127) described Extensive Reading as "the easiest and most effective way to improve students' skills and claimed that it is "much easier to teach students to read better if they are learning in a favorable climate". In

extensive reading classrooms, students read a “huge amount of very simple text. Thus, they can read smoothly, confidently and pleurably” (Waring & Takahashi, 2000, p. 6). Nuttall, Day and Bamford (2004) states Extensive Reading as a good strategy to improve reading proficiency, and build linguistic competence (e.g., reading ability, vocabulary, writing and spelling skills).

Day and Bamford (2004) identified several benefits of Extensive Reading. The first benefit is that it can increase students’ reading ability. Secondly, Extensive Reading can increase interest and motivation. Thirdly, Extensive Reading can improve their vocabulary mastery. The fourth is that Extensive Reading also helps students in improving other language skills such as listening, speaking, and writing. The fifth is that Extensive Reading also facilitates acquisition. Most current theories of second language acquisition recognize the roles of language input and intake. Extensive Reading provides these necessities.

Method

This research was conducted as Classroom Action Research. Carr and Kemmis as cited in Burns (1999, p. 30) stated that action research is a form of self-reflective enquiry done by participants in social situations (e.g. teachers, students, school principals in educational situation) for improving their educational practices, and the situations. Kemmis and Mc.Taggart as cited in (Burns, 2010) stated that classroom action research includes four steps in a cycle, which are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. When a cycle has been implemented, a reflection will show whether the result has achieved the expectation or not. If the expectation has not been achieved, then the revision will be made on the next cycle. The cycle is depicted in figure 1 below.

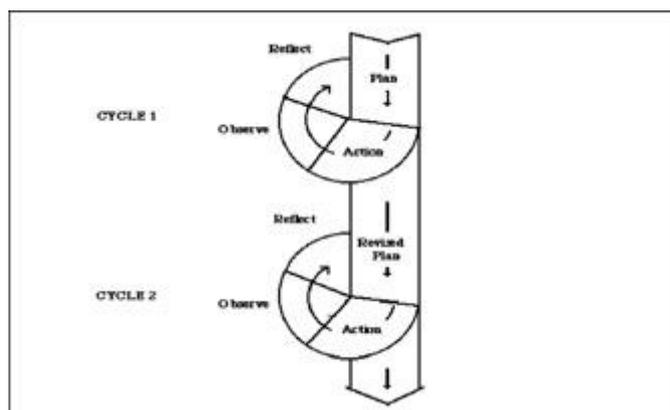


Figure 1. The classroom action research cycle

This research was conducted at SMA N 1 SEWON in January – February 2018. The participants of this research were grade X MIPA 2 students of batch from the academic year 2018/2019. To answer the research questions, the three instruments were used: observation sheet, tests, and interview guidelines. The researchers conducted observation, tests, and interview to collect the data.

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data. Qualitative data were taken from the result of the observation and the interview of both the students and the teacher. Meanwhile, quantitative data were taken from students’ test result namely pre-test, progress test and post-test. The scores were calculated to find out

students' average thoroughly. The mean score of pre-test would be compared to the mean score of post-test. After the tests had been done, the mean scores of students' pre-test in cycle 1, progress test and students' post-test in cycle 2 would be compared in order to see the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery through Extensive Reading.

Findings and Discussion

In this section the researchers will explain how Extensive Reading improves students' vocabulary mastery by presenting their tests result and describing the difference in their behavior.

Comparing students' tests results

In order to find out whether Extensive Reading really improves students' vocabulary mastery, the researchers used students' mean score of pretest, progress test, and posttest. The researchers only used 26 students' scores out of 33 because there were seven students who did not follow all of the tests given. By using the formula, the researchers found out the mean score of pre-test, progress test, and posttest as presented below:

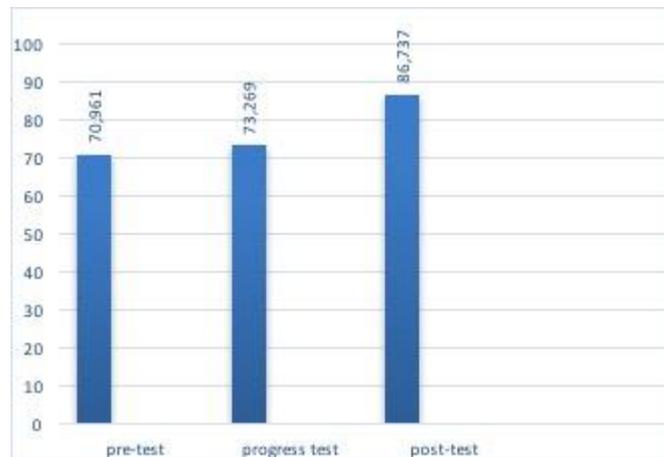


Figure 2: Results of Students' Tests

From the figure above, it can be seen that the results of each tests always increase. From the previous tests, the average score in the progress test increases by 2.5 from the average score in pre-test and the average score in the posttest increases by 13.46154 from the average score of the progress test.

The students' tests result shows that there is an improvement in students' vocabulary mastery. It means Extensive Reading can improve students' vocabulary mastery. This is supported by Day and Bamford (2004) who stated that Extensive Reading can improve their vocabulary mastery. Students need to meet words or vocabulary in a context many times to acquire it. Extensive Reading is a good way to achieve it.

Students' behavior before and after the implementation of CAR cycles

Based on the activities in cycle 1 and cycle 2, the researchers compared the students' behavior before actions, after cycle 1, and after cycle 2 in table 1 below.

Table 1. Students Behavior before and after CAR Cycles

Aspects	Before the Cycles	After Cycle 1	After Cycle 2
Enthusiasm in reading	The students were not enthusiastic in reading English texts.	The students started to enjoy and comfortable with the Extensive Reading activities.	The students enjoyed the teaching and learning activities. They were interested and excited more in reading English story.
Comprehension difficulties	The students could not understand the story of the English text.	The students could guess the meaning of English words based on the context.	The students could understand even differentiate the meaning of English words in different context.
Higher participation rate	The students did not want to participate in the teaching and learning activities	Some students were still afraid and shy to involve in discussing activity.	Most of the students were active in the classroom. Moreover, they participate well in the teaching and learning process.

The table above shows that Extensive Reading can improve students' enthusiasm in reading. By choosing the reading material on their own, the students became more excited day by day. Extensive Reading makes the students wanted to read more and more. The evidence can be seen in the quotation below.

R: How's your reading today?

S: I like it Miss. The story was good. I want to read it again miss.

(Appendix 3/ Interview 2)

The excerpt above shows that the student enjoyed reading and wanted to read more and more. Moreover, the additional evidence below will show that Extensive Reading indeed could build students' motivation in reading.

R: Time is up. You can continue reading tomorrow.

S: ah... Too bad. Give me one more moment miss I almost done. Just a moment.

(Appendix 3/ Interview 5)

Extensive Reading also makes the students comprehend the reading text well based on its context. In this case, students did not need to always check their dictionary when they found unfamiliar words. By doing this, the students could read efficiently. It also helps the students in improving their vocabulary mastery. The evidence can be seen in the excerpt below:

R: How do you feel now after reading the English book several times?

S: I know more the meaning of the story more Miss.

(Appendix 3/ Interview 3)

The excerpt above shows that the student became understands the story that he reads. Even more another evidence is presented below:

R: How do you feel after reading the English book?

S: The first time I read it, I had no idea about the story at all miss. But after I read it for several times, I know the meaning of the unfamiliar words.

(Appendix 3/Interview 5)

Finally, Extensive Reading can also improve students' participation rate. Students became more active in the teaching learning process. Before the implementation of cycle 1 and 2, the students were shy and afraid to be involved in the classroom activities. However, after the implementation of the CAR cycles, the students participate well in the teaching learning process. The active participation of the students can be seen in the field notes below:

In the group discussion, every member of the group participates actively in discussing the materials given by the researchers. Everyone wanted to be involved in sharing his/her ideas.

(Appendix 2/Field note 5)

The evidence can also be seen in another field note below when the researchers tried to give reward for those who could answer the questions given by the researchers.

“Okay students, I will read question number one. Are you guys ready?” Then, all of the students yelled, “Ready miss”. After the researchers finished reading the question, all of the students were raising their hands. They participated in the teaching learning process actively.

(Appendix 2/ Field note 5)

The data above showed that Extensive Reading technique was successful in improving the students' vocabulary mastery. By giving a lot of reading materials, the students' vocabulary automatically increased.

Conclusion

In this research, the researchers implemented two cycles. There were two meetings on each cycle. It began on 23 January and ended on 20 February 2018. The activities in cycle 1 were implementing sustained silent reading, retelling the story to the whole class and writing a personal recount text. The actions implemented in cycle 2 were sustained silent reading, group discussion, vocabulary test, and giving rewards. The result of the tests, which were pretest, progress test, and posttest, showed that there was improvement in each test given by the researchers. The mean score of pretest to progress test was increasing and the mean score of progress test to post test was also increasing. The students' behavior before and after CAR cycles also shown that Extensive Reading can improve students' enthusiasm in reading, students' comprehension in reading, and students' participation rate. The students' behavior improved after the implementation of CAR cycles. Thus, it could be concluded that the Extensive Reading activities could improve students' vocabulary mastery by way of reading often, exercising in vocabulary assignment more and more, and working in group.

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