

USING MAGIC SENTENCES TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY (CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH IN THE FIRST SEMESTER STUDENTS OF IKIP SILIWANGI BANDUNG)

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Abstract

In the process of learning a foreign language, vocabulary is one of the important language elements that must be mastered by the learners. The ability to understand the language depends on one's knowledge of vocabulary besides the other elements of language itself. In reality, most of the students in first semester at IKIP Siliwangi face some problems related to vocabulary mastery. To improve the students' vocabulary, most suitable technique is required for the students. This research used Classroom Action Research (CAR). The objectives of the study are: 1) finding out whether or not Magic Sentences technique can improve the students' vocabulary 2) finding out classroom situation when Magic Sentences technique implemented in vocabulary mastery. The finding was supported by the result of students' vocabulary scores. The average score of pre test was 61.14. After the implementation of Magic Sentences in every cycle, the students' vocabulary score were getting better, which aligned with the students' average score Cycle 1 in 67.30 and Cycle 2 in 80.24.

Keywords: Magic sentences; vocabulary mastery; CAR

I INTRODUCTION

The main point of English teaching is to develop the students' skill in reading, listening, writing, and speaking. In the process of learning a foreign language, the ability to understand the language depends on one's knowledge of vocabulary besides the other elements of language itself. Vocabulary is one of the important language elements that learners must master. Vocabulary is central to language and words are of critical importance to the typical language learner (Zimmerman in Huck in Coday in Kartikasari, 2010: 1). In reality, most of the students in first semester at IKIP Siliwangi face some problems related to vocabulary mastery. They tend to have low learning interest because of some factors : (1) the teaching materials are far from their surroundings; (2) the teaching techniques are monotonous; and (3) the class is dominated by the lecturer. The lecturer's activities to motivate the students in teaching learning vocabulary can be done in several learning techniques or using media. Based on the ideas above, the researcher is interested in conducting the research. The objectives of the study are finding out whether or not Magic Sentences technique can improve the students' vocabulary as well as finding out classroom situation when Magic Sentences technique implemented in vocabulary mastery.

II MATERIALS AND METHOD

2.1 VOCABULARY

Mastering vocabulary deals with learning words at the first. Learning words is a cyclical process of meeting new words and initial learning, followed by meeting those words again and again, each time extending knowledge of what the words mean and how they are used in the foreign language (Cameroon in Pujiningsih, 2010: 74). Murcia (2001: 285) states that vocabulary learning is central to language acquisition, whether the language is first, second, or foreign.

Another experts, Schmitt and McCarthy in Ilwana (2010: 9) state that traditionally, vocabulary has been seen as individual words, which could be used with a great deal of freedom, only constrained by

grammatical considerations. However, he also argues that vocabulary consists not only of single words; lexemes are often made up of strings of more than one word.

Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that vocabulary is a basic component of language. Vocabulary has an important role in every skill of language that individual should be mastered.

Hatch and Brown (1995: 370) mention two kinds of vocabulary; they are: Receptive Vocabulary, which is words that the learners recognize and understand when they are used in context, but which they can not produce. It is vocabulary that the learners recognize when they see or meet in reading text but do not use in speaking and writing.

Productive vocabulary is the words which the learners understand, can pronounce correctly, and use constructively in speaking and writing. It involves what is needed for receptive vocabulary plus the ability to speak or write at the appropriate time. Therefore, productive language can be addressed as an active process, because the learners can produce the words to express their thoughts to others.

According to Ur in Ilwana (2010: 11-13), there are five or six aspects of vocabulary, such as: pronunciation, which is what a word sound likes, while spelling is what it looks like. In teaching, teacher needs to make sure that both these aspects are accurately presented and learned.

Grammar of a new item, which will be taught if it is not obviously covered by general grammatical rules. An item may have some idiosyncratic way of connecting with other words in sentences. The changes like verb in tenses, irregular verb, plural noun, transitive or intransitive, etc.

The collocations, which is a typical of particular items are another factor that makes a particular combination sound 'right' or 'wrong' in a given context.

Meaning 1 that consist of: 1) denotation, 2) connotation, and 3) appropriateness

(2.1.1) Denotation

Denotation is the meaning of a word which primarily refers to in the real world.

(2.1.2) Connotation

Connotation refers to the association of positive or negative feelings a word evokes, which may or may not be indicated in a dictionary definition.

(2.1.3) Appropriateness

Appropriateness is useful for a learner to know that a certain word is very common, or relatively rare, or 'taboo' in polite conversation, or tends to be used in writing but not in speech, or is more suitable for formal than informal discourse, or belongs to a certain dialect.

Meaning 2, that consist of: meaning relationships (synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, co-hyponyms, superordinates, translation)

(2.2.1) Synonyms: items that mean the same, or nearly the same.

(2.2.2) Antonyms: items that serve as specific examples of a general concept; dog, lion, mouse, are hyponyms of animal.

(2.2.3) Co-hyponyms or co-ordinates: other items that are the 'same kind of thing'; red, blue, green, and brown are co-ordinates.

(2.2.4) Superordinates: general concepts that 'cover' specific items; animal is the superordinate of dog, lion, mouse.

(2.2.5) Translation: words or expressions in the learners' mother tongue those are (more or less) equivalent in meaning to the item being taught.

(2.2.6) Word Formation

Word formation is vocabulary items, whether one-word or multi-word, can often be broken down into their component 'bits'.

2.2 MAGIC SENTENCE TECHNIQUE

Magic Sentences technique is a technique that combines words from a table into some sentences. Magic sentences technique allows us to review not only the vocabulary and grammar structures, develop the ideas and creativity in a fun way. Another thing about this technique is that it facilitates many types of positive interdependence: role, goal, and reward. Positive interdependence comes in the form of role interdependence because students take turns composing and proofreading the sentences. Moreover, reward interdependence can be promoted as well (McCafferty in Asmara, 2006: 98-99).

2.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted by the first semester students at IKIP Siliwangi. The campus is located at Jl. Terusan Jenderal Sudirman no.3, Baros Cimahi Tengah, West Java. This research used Classroom Action Research (CAR). The concept used in this classroom action research is cyclical process adapted from Lewin in Rochanah (2009: 35). According to this reference, the core concepts of classroom action research consists of four components: (1) Planning the action; (2) implementing the action; (3) observing the action; and (4) reflecting. Then it is clarified by Kemmis and Taggart (1998: 11) that the four components are not statically interference one another. The decision that is carried out in a cycle is the following up of the previous cycle. The effects of holding the policy in a cycle rationalize the activities for the next cycle. It will occur again and again for the next cycles till the problems can be solved. The process includes the following steps.

2.3.1 PLANNING

In this stage, I firstly identified the problems referring to teaching and learning process in my classroom. In this case, the problems were related to the vocabulary mastery. After identifying the problems, I made a plan about what kind of action that will be carried out. Next, I prepared everything dealing with the planning such pre-test, preparing teaching aids and instrument for testing, and designing treatment.

I prepared two cycles that are expected to overcome the students' problem in vocabulary mastery. At the end of first cycle, I analyzed and evaluated the students' improvement and made a decision of the importance of applying the second cycle.

2.3.2 ACTION

I conducted the teaching activities step by step based on the lesson plan. I applied magic sentences technique in teaching vocabulary.

2.3.3 OBSERVATION

The activity is observing the students during the action and making notes in observation sheet such as: the student-student interaction, the student-lecturer interaction and anything they do during the teaching and learning process.

2.3.4 REFLECTION

After carrying out teaching and learning activity, I recited the occurrences in the classroom as the effect of the action to evaluated the process and the result of the implementation of magic sentences technique in teaching vocabulary. The evaluation gave advantages in deciding what I had to do in next cycle.

2.3.5 REVISING

The revision was aimed to improve the condition that had not been successful in the previous cycle. By revising the plan, it is hoped that the rest of problems could be handled in the following cycle. Statistical technique is used to find the mean score. The formula to find the mean as stated by Ngadiso (2013: 5-7) is follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

M	=	Mean score
$\sum X$	=	Total score
N	=	Total students

If the mean score increases, the students' vocabulary is considered improving.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The pre-test was conducted during October, 2017 by the researchers. It covered 40 students of the first semester. Based on preliminary observation, it was discovered that the factual problem is the students' low vocabulary mastery. In order to get authentic evidence, the researchers conducted a pre-test. It aimed to gain the score of the students' creativity in vocabulary mastery before treatment of the action. (The results of pre-test were presented in table 1).

Table 1
Result of Pre-test

ISSUES	INDICATORS
Students' vocabulary mastery	<p>Low achievement in vocabulary</p> <p>Difficulty to express ideas using appropriate vocabulary and grammatical form.</p> <p>Does not know vocabulary elements.</p> <p>Using mother tongue expression</p>
Classroom situation	<p>Not alive atmosphere.</p> <p>Low participation of students.</p> <p>Limited practice.</p>

Table 2
Result of Cycle 1

Issues	Indicators
Students' vocabulary mastery	<p>Active in doing the vocabulary task, brave to tell the ideas in group</p> <p>They have effort to learn vocabulary elements.</p> <p>Sometimes they are still using mother tongue expression.</p>
Classroom situation	<p>Alive, crowded in conducting the group work.</p> <p>Enjoyable for various types of activities related to vocabulary mastery.</p>

Table 3
Result of Cycle 2

Issues	Indicators
Students' vocabulary mastery	<p>Students showed improvement in vocabulary mastery.</p> <p>Students' self-confidence was increased.</p>

	Students were not afraid of making mistakes. They know vocabulary elements.
Classroom situation	More alive The enjoyment in doing the vocabulary task.

The improvement of the students' ability can also be seen from the results of the students' pre-test and post-test which were done in every cycle. The average score of the pre-test was 61,14, the average score of the Cycle 1 was 67,30, the average score of the Cycle2 was 80,24. All the data showed that the improvement of writing achievement from cycle to cycle was significant.

Table 4
Pre-test average score

No	Explanations	Scores
1.	The highest score	67
2.	The lowest score	53
3.	The average score	60

Table 5
Pre-test average score

No	Writing element	Average score
1.	Pronunciation and Spelling	62,47
2.	Grammar	60,82
3.	Collocation	60,57
4.	Meaning	60,90
5.	Word Formation	60,92
Average score		61,14

Table 6
Post-test average score in cycle 1

No	Explanations	Scores
1.	The highest score	75
2.	The lowest score	65
3.	The average score	70

Table 7
Post-test average score in cycle 1

No	Writing element	Average score
1.	Pronunciation and Spelling	68,37
2.	Grammar	67,37
3.	Collocation	67
4.	Meaning	66,85
5.	Word Formation	66,92
Average score		67,30

Table 8
Post-test average score in cycle 2

No	Explanations	Scores
1.	The highest score	85
2.	The lowest score	76
3.	The average score	80.5

Table 9
Post-test average score in cycle 2

No	Writing element	Average score
1	Pronunciation and Spelling	80,67
2	Grammar	80,25
3	Collocation	80,15
4	Meaning	80
5	Word Formation	80,12
Average score		80,24

From the result of pre-test, I found that the result of students' vocabulary was under average and still far from what was expected. The finding was supported by the result of students' vocabulary scores. The average score was 61,14. The score of the students indicated that the students faced many problems in vocabulary mastery.

After the implementation of Magic Sentences in every cycle, the students' vocabulary score were getting better. It can be seen from the result of students' average score Cycle 1 was 67,30 and Cycle 2 was 80,24. It also influenced the students' interest during the lesson.

Before conducting the research, the teaching-learning process was not alive as the teacher used to apply the conventional technique. The students show low participation on vocabulary class. The condition after the implementation of the research was showing improvement. The atmosphere of the class more was more live as there are many interesting activities. The student gave attention to the lessons they were very active to conduct the activities and dominated the activities. Enjoyable for various types of activities related to vocabulary mastery. No more lecturers' domination.

IV CONCLUSION

Having conducted the research in using Magic Sentences to improve students' vocabulary mastery, it can be drawn some conclusions as follows: The improvement of students' vocabulary mastery can be identified from the improvement of vocabulary achievement. It shows that there is a comparison between the students' vocabulary mastery during the intervention and the performance criteria of success. The improvement was also observed from several aspects of the composition they produced. Students showed improvement in vocabulary mastery. Students' self-confidence was increased. They were not afraid of making mistakes. They also know vocabulary elements. They were motivated in joining vocabulary class. The atmosphere of the class more was more live as there are many interesting activities. The student gave attention to the lessons they were very active to conduct the activities and dominated the activities. Enjoyable for various types of activities related to vocabulary mastery.

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