IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY THROUGH DICTATION METHOD

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DICTATION METHOD

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Abstract

Teaching English as a foreign language means that English is taught by the people because English is not their mother tongue or their native language. In teaching English or other languages actually people have to teach the four skills, they are listening, speaking, reading and writing. In other word, in teaching English as a foreign language and teaching English as a second language is not different. Indonesian people only learn English in the class or their school. Therefore, there are only some people who speak English. In Indonesia, English is taught as the first foreign language. As a foreign language, English is not used for daily communication. Vocabulary skills are very helpful for students in mastering English to the next level because English subjects are taught at the education level such as elementary school, junior high school, high school, and at university even in a group or organization. In this research, a method is needed to support students' vocabulary mastery. The researchers try to do research to improve vocabulary mastery through the dictation method. As known to all, dictation method is an effective way to review and test one's vocabulary. This paper introduces the theories that support dictation method and the effective strategies for applying it. Besides, this paper also explains how the teachers should do to help the students enhance enthusiasm and confidence for learning, stimulate learning motivation, reduce or eliminate their difficulty and take measures to improve their language skills, so as to raise the efficiency of memorizing vocabulary and achieve the purpose of increasing vocabulary.

Keywords: tefl, dictation method, vocabulary teaching

A.   Introduction

Vocabulary is a very important but difficult part of language, but the straits of English vocabulary study widely exists. So research on vocabulary learning has attracted the author's attention. Vocabulary is of primary concern in any second language system and ways of

vocabulary study are various, but achieving a good learning effect is not easy. So the research in this field shows significant meanings.

Currently, there are some thesis and books about how to improve vocabulary study. And some suggestions have already been made to tackle this problem. However, it is hard to find suitable methods. So as an English college student, the researchers of this paper expect to give some advice to English teachers through the experiment and analysis.

B.   Literature Review

Previous Studies

The first previous study is from Qu Tang who wants to know the effectiveness of dictation methods in teaching vocabulary. The method used by the author is experimental research and to get the data from students 2008 of Guilin University of Technology, China majoring gemology, 40 students of Class one as treatment class and majoring in telecom 45 students of Class two as comparison class. So, the total of his participants are 85 students. The result showed that the use of dictation method in teaching vocabulary, students can effectively develop students' memorizing words and properly use English vocabulary. This study focuses on the effectiveness of dictation method in teaching vocabulary at Guilin University of Technology while the recent research focused to describe dictation activities in teaching English at State SMPN 2 Bonang of Demak

The second previous study from Melawanti (2007:153) conducted a research at the fifth grade of SD Negeri Wonorejo 01 Karanganyar Demak found that dictation as a testing technique can be used to measure listening mastery of the fifth-grade students of elementary school.

The third previous study from Zakaria (2014) with the title "Use of Note-taking in Teaching Dictation to Improve Students' Listening Skills: Experimental Study at SMAN 2 JONGGAT Academic Year 2014/2015. Taken from the Journal of English Education Profession, University of Mataram. This study focuses on the dictation method (1) to find out whether the technique of using cloze dictation can improve students' listening skills. (2) to find out whether dictation has strengths and weaknesses in students' listening skills. (3) to find out what happens in a classroom situation if dictation is used to improve students' listening skills.

The next previous study from Kuo (2007:13) in his research entitled "Using Partial Dictation of an English Teaching Radio Program to Enhance EFL Learners 'Listening Comprehension" found that partial dictation effectively improved students' Listening Comprehension". She conducted a research to an intermediate-level class of 31 Taiwanese EFL university students. She further stated that a majority of students perceived that partial dictation effectively boosted their English listening comprehension.

The last previous study from Davis and Rinvolucri (1988: 122) found out that dictation can be very useful as a test by which to ascertain the pupil's progress in spelling, punctuation and pronunciation. They further stated that dictation is an activity which is suitable for a wide range of levels and ages, example texts for many activities, opportunities for students to create their own texts, and a variety of suggested correction techniques. Moreover, it normally turns out that in any average group of European teachers more than half do use dictation either regularly or from time to time in their teaching. According to them, dictation is an exercise which draws on the personal experience, attitudes and opinions of both teachers and students.

Review of Theories

1.   Definition of Dictation

According to Nation and Newton (2009:65) "Dictation has listening input and written output".

Dictation can be used to check accurate perception and comprehension as well as spelling. Dictation will be useful when it integrated well with the learning activities. It is a teaching technique which has proved extremely effective at all levels of instruction. It ensures attentive listening, trains students to distinguish sounds, enables students to learn to transfer oral sounds to written symbols, helps to develop aural comprehension and assists in self-evaluation. Dictation in predicting overall ability has some advantages. It is easy to create and relative easy to administer, but it is difficult to score.

The main purpose of dictation is to evaluate the students" proficiency about the language being learned through their listening ability. It means that when students do dictation, they do not only pay attention to the sound of the words that read by the teacher but also understand about the meaning and be able to understand the content. They are forced to pay a comprehensive attention to the passage dictated and write down what they perceived. Once they fail to concentrate on their listening, they will not able to make quick guess what they actually have to write. The students must concentration when they listen.

According to Brown (2004:225) dictation was described as an assessment of the integration of listening and writing, but it was clear that the primary skill being assessed is listening. Because of its response mode, however, it deserves a second mention in this chapter. Dictation is simply the rendition in writing of what one hears aurally, so it could be classified as an imitative type of writing, especially since a proportion of the test taker's performance centers on correct spelling. Also, because the test - taker must listen to stretches of discourse and in the process insert punctuation, dictation of a paragraph or more can arguably be classified as a controlled or intensive form writing.

2.   Theoretical Basis For Dictation Method

After 1960s, research into vocabulary learning strategies began to arouse the linguistics' interest in western countries. In recent years, considerable research has been done in the area of language study, but vocabulary-learning strategies have attracted relatively less attention. However, it does not follow that no achievement has been obtained. According to Qu tan (2012:1473-1474) there are some strategies that applied into vocabulary learning.

a.   Social Strategies

Social strategies involve students enlisting teachers to check their work for accuracy, especially flash cards and word lists, since these are commonly used for independent learning outside class.

b.   Memory Strategies

Most memory strategies involve relating the word to be retained with some previously learned knowledge, using some form of imagery, or grouping.

c.   Picture/Imagery Strategies

New words can be learned by studying them with pictures of their meaning instead of definition. Imagery has been shown to be more effective than mere repetition for reading passages and sentences, suggesting it should well be more effective for vocabulary too.

d.   Related Words and Unrelated Words

Likewise, new words can be linked to L2 words, which the students already know. Usually this involves some type of sense relationship, such as coordination synonymy, or antonym. Words association research has shown that coordinates in particular have very strong connective bonds these and other sense relationships can be illustrated with semantic maps, which are often used to help consolidate vocabulary.

The learner can also link words together that have no sense relationships. One first memorizes a rhyme like "one is a bun, two is a shoe, three is a tree." Then an image is created of the word to be remembered.

e.   Grouping

Grouping is an important way to aid recall, and people seem to organize words into groups naturally without prompting. Grouping words can be done in the way of writing the synonyms or related words together, or words can be grouped together in a very natural way by using the target words in sentences. Similarly, words can be grouped together in a story. The narrative chain method has been shown to be more effective.

Vocabulary means the total number of words that make up a language and accordingly, vocabulary learning strategies in earlier research refer to those techniques that help to commit those words into memory.

The brain of human is a treasure of memory. Memory is usually defined as retaining cognitive things in the brain for a long time, which is the key to learn and master English vocabulary. According to the forgetting curve proposed by the famous German psychologist Ebbinghaus, memory can be classified into short-term memory and long-term memory. Input information becomes human beings short memory through the process of study. If human do not review the input information in time, they will easily forget these information. However, timely review can develop short-term memory into long-term memory which will retain in brain for a long time. In other words, forgetting is a regular but also unbalanced thing. At the initial stage of memory, human beings forget input information very quickly, and then the pace gradually slows down. After a certain period of time, almost nothing could be forgotten. If the students do not review what they have learned in time, they can only master 25% of the knowledge. Therefore, according to the forgetting curve, teachers should give timely dictation to the students so as to develop short-term memory into long-term memory. And finally, students' vocabulary will be enlarged gradually through dictation method.

From above description we know that many strategies can be used to help students enlarge their vocabulary, however, dictation method, as one of the most common and traditional ways for remembering words, it is rare to be mentioned. It is an unforgettable way that is worth doing research on it.

3.   Types of Dictation

In determining the kinds of dictation as a testing device, the teacher should have a look at the material provided. To prepare which kind of dictation used, the teacher, as the examiner should realize the specific point to be gained in using each test. As a testing technique, dictation may be given in various ways.

According to Oller (1979: 264), and source from the final project by Melawanti, Ika Ratna (2007) there are five types of dictation procedures that have been used in a variety of ways as testing techniques. Those five ways are elaborated as follows:

a.   Standard Dictation

Standard dictation is probably the best known. Students are required to write verbal sequences of material as spoken by a teacher or played back from a recording. The material should be presented at a normal conversation speed and is given in sequences that are long enough to challenge students' short-term memory.

b.   Partial Dictation

Partial dictation also called spot dictation. This type has a close relation with the standard dictation, but the students are given either a written version of the text or the spoken one. The written version has certain portions which are deleted. The students must listen to the spoken material and fill in the missing portion in the written version. It is easier to perform because more sensory information is given concerning the message; a partial written version and a complete spoken version.

c.   Dictation with Competing Noise

This type of dictation is rather difficult because the material is presented with adding noise. This kind of dictation drills the students to be used to everyday communication context where language is used in less than ideal acoustic condition; for example, we are trying to have a conversation in someone's living room when the television and air conditioner are producing a high level of competing noise or trying to hear a message over a public address system in a busy air station, etc.

d.   Dicto-Comp

This type of dictation is actually a combination of two forms, namely dictation and composition. Here, the teacher reads the whole passage three times and the students are only given chance to write their work after the teacher has finished the third reading. They should recall the whole story and write the story as a reproduction of what they heard.

e.   Elicited imitation

In this case, the students listen to the material, but instead of writing down the material, the students are asked to repeat it or otherwise recount what was said.

C.   Method

Research design helps the researchers to conduct the study in reference to the objective, the method of data gathering and analysis is the strategy to present the findings and conclusion.

Quantitative research is a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variable. These variables, in turn, can measure, typically on instrument, so that

numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedure (Creswell, 2009: 4). It means that quantitative research is one of type of research method based on numerical data analysis statistic. Therefore, the researchers chose a quantitative research because the result of quantitative data is in the form of statistical data. There are two types of quantitative research design, experimental design and non - experimental design. Experimental design is sometimes known as the scientific method duo to the popularity in scientific research where they originated. Non experimental research is sometimes equated with survey research and is very common in the social sciences. An experimental design is to test the impact of a treatment (or an intervention) on an outcome, controlling for all other factors that might influence that outcome also an experimental design follows a standard form: participants, materials, procedures, and measures Creswell (2009).

This research used d quantitative research because the data from the method was showed the score of students' vocabulary mastery.

D.   Finding and Discussion

This chapter presents the result pre-test and post-test of students. The pre-test was given before the treatment session. The purpose of this test was diagnosed students' initial abilities. In this research, the students were given a worksheet. In the worksheet, students were assigned to write down the vocabulary read by the researchers. The words were only read once and in a normal tempo. Then, the post-test was given after the pre-test. The purpose of this test was measured students' abilities after being given treatment. In this research, the students were given a worksheet. In the worksheet, students were assigned to write down the vocabulary read by the researchers. The words were read three times and at a slow tempo.

The test result was transferred into the percentage to find out the difference between pre-test and post-test in the ability to mastery students' vocabulary as follows:

1.   **Vocabulary skills of students before taught by using dictation method.**

The researchers gave a pre-test to the students before the treatment was conducted. The purpose of this test was diagnosed students' initial vocabulary ability. In giving score, the researchers used 40 items of words. There were 32 students in class who followed the pre-test. The total score for the pre-test can be seen in table below:

The Pre-Test Score

No	Students' Code	Score Pre-Test ΣX^1	Category
1	C-01	15	Fail
2	C-02	50	Fail
3	C-03	25	Fail

No	Students' Code	Score Pre-Test ΣX^1	Category
4	C-04	12.5	Fail
5	C-05	17.5	Fail
6	C-06	47.5	Fail
7	C-07	10	Fail
8	C-08	25	Fail
9	C-09	15	Fail
10	C-10	5	Fail
11	C-11	10	Fail
12	C-12	22.5	Fail
13	C-13	17.5	Fail
14	C-14	17.5	Fail
15	C-15	10	Fail
16	C-16	12,5	Fail
17	C-17	25	Fail
18	C-18	62.5	inadequate
19	C-19	12.5	Fail
20	C-20	72.5	Adequate
21	C-21	25	Fail
22	C-22	22.5	Fail

No	Students' Code	Score Pre-Test $\sum X^1$	Category
23	C-23	75	Adequate
24	C-24	45	Fail
25	C-25	22.5	Fail
26	C-26	25	Fail
27	C-27	12.5	Fail
28	C-28	45	Fail
29	C-29	5	Fail
30	C-30	12.5	Fail
31	C-31	5	Fail
32	C-32	10	Fail
$\sum X^1$		777.5	

After getting the sum of pre-test score, the researchers found the mean of pre-test as follow:

$$Xo^1 = \frac{\sum X1}{N}$$

$$= \frac{777.5}{32}$$

$$= 25.08$$

The researchers consulted the mean of the pre-test to the table criteria of students' skill as follows:

Criteria of Mastery

Score	Letter Score	Category

90-100	A	Excellent
80-89	B	good
70-79	C	Adequate
60-69	D	Inadequate/unsatisfactory
<60	E	fail/unacceptable

Brown (2004: 287)

After getting the result of pre-test, then the score was transferred in percentage. The percentage formula was used to find the result of the students' vocabulary mastery, as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Base on the criterion, the students who are categorized "excellent" in the pre-test:

$$P = \frac{0}{32} \times 100\%$$

$$= 0\%$$

The students who are categorized "good":

$$P = \frac{0}{32} \times 100\%$$

$$= 0\%$$

The students who are categorized "adequate":

$$P = \frac{2}{32} \times 100\%$$

$$= 6.25\%$$

The students who are categorized "inadequate":

$$P = \frac{1}{32} \times 100\%$$

$$= 3.125\%$$

The students who are categorized "fail":

$$P = \frac{29}{32} \times 100\%$$

$$= 90.625\%$$

The Result of Pre-Test

The Score Level	Criterion	F	f (%)
90-100	Excellent	-	-
80-89	Good	-	-
70-79	Adequate	2	6.25%
60-69	Inadequate/Unsatisfactory	1	3.125%
<60	Fail/Unacceptable	29	90.625%

The table shows that there were 0 student (0%) getting excellent, 2 student (0%) getting good, 2 students (6.25%) getting adequate, 1 student (3,125%) getting inadequate, and 29 student (90.625%) getting fail. And the mean score was 25.08. It means that there was no a half of total number of the students that mastered vocabulary well before being taught by dictation method.

2.   **Vocabulary skills of students after taught with the dictation method.**

The researchers gave a post-test to the students after the pre-test. The purpose of this test was measured students' skill after being given treatment. In giving score, the researchers used 40 items of word. There were 32 students in class who followed the post-test. The total score for the post-test can be seen in table below:

The Post-Test Score

No	Students' Code	Score Post-Test ΣX^2	Category
1	C-01	30	Fail
2	C-02	75	Adequate
3	C-03	45	Fail
4	C-04	30	Fail
5	C-05	60	Inadequate
6	C-06	60	Inadequate
7	C-07	50	Fail

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No	Students' Code	Score Post-Test ΣX^2	Category
8	C-08	65	Inadequate
9	C-09	57.5	Fail
10	C-10	50	Fail
11	C-11	62.5	Inadequate
12	C-12	47.5	Fail
13	C-13	55	Fail
14	C-14	65	Inadequate
15	C-15	32.5	Fail
16	C-16	57.5	Fail
17	C-17	52.2	Fail
18	C-18	55	Fail
19	C-19	57.5	Fail
20	C-20	85	Good
21	C-21	52.5	Fail
22	C-22	22.5	fail
23	C-23	95	Excellent
24	C-24	72.5	Adequate
25	C-25	62.5	Inadequate
26	C-26	70	Adequate

No	Students' Code	Score Post-Test ΣX^2	Category
27	C-27	52.5	fail
28	C-28	80	Good
29	C-29	30	fail
30	C-30	50	fail
31	C-31	30	fail
32	C-32	42.5	fail
ΣX^2		1752.5	

After getting the sum of post-test score, the researchers found the mean of post-test as follow:

$$Xo^2 = \frac{\sum X2}{N}$$

$$= \frac{1752.5}{32}$$

$$= 54.77$$

And the percentage of post-test score as follows:

Base on the criterion, the students who are categorized "excellent" in the post-test:

$$P = \frac{1}{32} X 100\%$$

$$= 3.125\%$$

The students who are categorized "good":

$$P = \frac{2}{32} X 100\%$$

$$= 6.25\%$$

The students who are categorized "adequate":

$$P = \frac{3}{32} X 100\%$$

$$= 9.375\%$$

The students who are categorized "inadequate":

P $= \dfrac{6}{32}$ X 100%

= 18.75%

The students who are categorized "fail":

P $= \dfrac{20}{32}$ X 100%

= 62.5%

Table 4.5

The Result of Post-Test

The score level	Criterion	F	$f(\%)$
90-100	Excellent	1	3%
80-89	Good	2	6.25%
70-79	Adequate	3	9.38%
60-69	Inadequate/unsatisfactory	6	18.75%
<60	fail/unacceptable	20	62.50%

The table shows that there was 1 student (3.125%) getting excellent, 2 student (6.25%) getting good, 3 students (9.375%) getting adequate, 6 students (18.75%) getting inadequate, and 20 students (62.5%) getting fail. And the mean score was 54.76.

3. **The Result of Test**

There was the difference significant between pre-test and post-test. The table can be seen in table below:

The Result of Test

NO	STUDENTS' CODE	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GAIN
1	C-01	15	30	15
2	C-02	50	75	25
3	C-03	25	45	20
4	C-04	12.5	30	17.5

NO	STUDENTS' CODE	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GAIN
5	C-05	17.5	60	42.5
6	C-06	47.5	60	12.5
7	C-07	10	50	40
8	C-08	25	65	40
9	C-09	15	57.5	42.5
10	C-10	5	50	45
11	C-11	10	62.5	52.5
12	C-12	22.5	47.5	25
13	C-13	17.5	55	37.5
14	C-14	17.5	65	47.5
15	C-15	10	32.5	22.5
16	C-16	12,5	57.5	45
17	C-17	25	52.2	27.2
18	C-18	62.5	55	-7.5
19	C-19	12.5	57.5	45
20	C-20	72.5	85	12.5
21	C-21	25	52.5	27.5
22	C-22	22.5	22.5	0
23	C-23	75	95	20
24	C-24	45	72.5	27.5
25	C-25	22.5	62.5	40
26	C-26	25	70	45
27	C-27	12.5	52.5	40
28	C-28	45	80	35
29	C-29	5	30	25
30	C-30	12.5	50	37.5
31	C-31	5	30	25

NO	STUDENTS' CODE	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GAIN
32	C-32	10	42.5	32.5
The mean score		**25.08**	**54.77**	**29.69**

From the table above, it can be seen that the mean score of students in post-test was higher than that of the score in pre-test. In post-test the students' mean score was 54.77 and the students' mean score in pre-test was 25.08. The difference of students' pre-test and post-test score was 29.69. In other words, the students had good improvement in vocabulary skill after they were taught by using dictation method

Discussion

This section discusses the interpretation of the findings obtained from the statistical analysis results and also the description of the data obtained from the questionnaire based on the students' motivation towards dictation in improving students' vocabulary skills. Regarding the data collected by using the pre-test and post-test, it shows that improving students' vocabulary skills through dictation as a learning tool was very good. This was supported by the mean of students' pre-test and post-test scores. After being treated with the dictation method, the mean score obtained by the students increased from 25.08 to 54.77.

These data indicate that the result of the mean score of the post-test level of students was higher than the pre-test before being given treatment. Because at the time before the treatment, the researchers provided motivation and training for students in the form of a pre-test and there were still students who did not know the dictation, some only listened and did not write answers, and left the paper. However, after being given treatment by using explaining listening comprehension and giving some examples of word pronunciation and asking students to listen carefully and pay attention to the characteristics of slow speech, so that when the researchers gave the post test the students experienced an increase, the students had understood the listening comprehension material.

Based on the finding, the researchers found that there was a significant difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test. This means that there was a significant difference in the results of the pre-test before and after the teaching and learning process using dictation as a learning tool.

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Bonang of Demak have a very good listening comprehension so that students' vocabulary skills increase by using dictation.

In this research, the researchers concluded that the dictation method can improve students' vocabulary skills.

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E.   Conclusion

Memorizing words is one of the keys to learn English and also the most boring task for many Indonesian students. The writers of this paper appliy dictation method into vocabulary teaching so as to help the students to effectively memorize English words. And great achievements have been made through our efforts. Meanwhile, the writers realize that dictation should not be isolated. Instead, the teacher should make use of more methods to increase students' enthusiasm and improve their efficiency of memorizing words. And only in this way can the students properly use English vocabulary and improve their comprehensive capacity.

Of course, the expanding of vocabulary, on one hand, is a process of increasing the amount of words; on the other hand, it is a meaningful store tightly connected with the languages invented in modern science, technology, social and economic to express new things and new changes. So, to an English learner, the expanding of English vocabulary is endless.

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