IMPROVING STUDENTS’ VOCABULARY ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH WHAT COMES NEXT TECHNIQUE

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Abstract
Vocabulary is one of the important aspects to master a language. However, in SMA Tahfizul Qur’an Labbaik, vocabulary becomes an issue because most of the students are lack of vocabulary. Most of the students seem confused every time they want to speak in English directly in the classroom because they do not know the vocabulary. Therefore, as one of the English teachers on that school, the writer really wanted to solve this issue. In order to solve the problem, the writer chose What Comes Next technique (WCNT) to teach vocabulary. This study was set out in order to know how the implementation of What Comes Next technique improve students’ vocabulary to the twelfth-grade male students of SMA Tahfizul Qur’an Labbaik Pontianak in the academic year 2020/2021. This study was conducted in Classroom Action Research (CAR) in three cycles. The research subjects in this study were twenty twelfth grade male students. In collecting the data, the writer used field note, observation checklist, and students’ vocabulary test. The findings showed that using What Comes Next technique helped the students improve their vocabulary. Furthermore, using the What Comes Next technique also boosted the students' motivation. Students' enthusiasm and activity rates were also improved as a result of the technique. All of these things can be seen after each cycle. In summary, the writer absolutely recommends other English teachers to apply What Comes Next technique as one of various techniques in their teaching process, especially in teaching vocabulary and action verbs.

Keywords: What Comes Next; teaching technique; vocabulary; action verbs; classroom action research

BACKGROUND
As everyone knows, vocabulary is really important to master a language, not to mention English. Even in Indonesia, the country which English is not the native language, the students need to have good vocabulary. Learning English requires good vocabulary in order to do various activities in the class. According to the 2013 curriculum, the students must express or convey their thoughts in the context, correctly order procedure texts, and respond to agreement and disagreement arguments. In order to complete all of the activities, the students must at the very least be familiar with the vocabulary associated with those activities. Therefore, it is a must for the students to improve their vocabulary to master English. In the same time, the teachers also need to teach vocabulary to their students.

Vocabulary is a very important part of a language to be mastered by the students. Language itself is the form of expression which is constructed by words or as we known as vocabulary. Wilkins (as cited in Clouston, 2013) states that without knowing the vocabulary, there is nothing can be said. This means that
even when someone has the best grammar skill, it will be nothing if the person does not know the vocabulary well.

Vocabulary in fact is more than just a word. Barcroft et al. (2011, p. 571) state that vocabulary refers to every word in a language. Vocabulary also includes lexical chunks, phrases of two or more words, such as “Good afternoon” and “How do you do”. Phrases like these require more than one word but have a clear formulaic usage and make up an extraordinary portion of spoken or written language usage. In conclusion, vocabulary can be described as the words of a language which include single items and phrases or chunks of some words which group a particular meaning.

Schools and university students should learn four general types of vocabulary. Listening vocabulary, speaking vocabulary, reading vocabulary, and writing vocabulary are the four of them (Sunubi, 2013). Listening vocabulary is the words that the students understand when someone speak. Meanwhile, speaking vocabulary is the words that the students use when they speak to others. Reading vocabulary, on the other hand, is the words that the students know when they see those words in print. Lastly, writing vocabulary is the words that the students use when they write. In conclusion, those four types of vocabulary are very important to be mastered by the students in order to improve their English.

The teacher also must recognize the importance of teaching vocabulary. John Dewey (as cited in Bintz, 2011) states that vocabulary is very important because a single word is an instrument for thinking about the meanings. Without mastering vocabulary, the students will struggle in their thinking process. Therefore, vocabulary is critically important in mastering the language.

In order to teach vocabulary, the relevant and appropriate technique must be used. The teaching process would be successful if the teacher can effectively instruct their students and the students enjoy the learning progress. It would be easier for the students to complete their tasks if they have a good vocabulary. As a result, mastering vocabulary is essential for students. Given the importance of mastering vocabulary, it is detrimental to the students if they do not enjoy their studies and do not grasp the vocabulary. As a result, the teachers must select and implement the technique based on their students’ needs and level carefully.

According to the writer's observations when teaching in the classroom at SMA Tahfizul Qur'an Labbaik Pontianak, vocabulary had become a major issue because the majority of the students were lack of vocabulary. The students used to speak in Arabic for roughly twenty-four seven, but they are only allowed to speak in English during English class. As a result, the students tend to communicated fluently in Arabic but rarely in English. Moreover, the curriculum that used for teaching in SMA Tahtfizul Qur'an Labbaik Pontianak is 2013 curriculum. It demands the students to actively involved in the learning process. Even one of the school goals is to produce students that able to speak in both Arabic and English fluently. However, most of the time, the learning process was not as good as the curriculum expected. Sometimes the students needed stimulus or games to make them actively involved in the learning process. Most of the students did not aware that they should be active during the class as well. If this situation persisted, the teaching-learning process in the classroom would be ruined. While struggling to understand vocabulary, the students may not attain the basic competence of the learning. Even worse, the school target to produce students that fluent to speak in
both Arabic and English may not be achieved.

There are many activities for teaching vocabulary. Nation (2015) states that there are plenty of activities and techniques for the teachers to do in teaching vocabulary. From memorization to vocabulary learning strategies to guessing from context and more of the same. Those techniques have to be suited to the students’ language proficiency level, age, personal interest and cognitive growth. One of the techniques that can be used for the teacher to teach vocabulary is by using gestures. Gestures, according to Wickham (2012), are beneficial, entertaining exercises and vocabulary boosters. Acting out is what gestures imply. In gestures, a single step is acted out, but in mimes, multiple steps are acted out. Gestures are employed in a wide range of settings and for a variety of reasons. They are extremely useful for both teachers and students in making class instructions and activities simple, understandable, and interesting (Kita et al., 2017). Gestures provide a variety of opportunities for students to participate actively and pleasantly in class activities. Gestures can be highly useful for providing class directions, especially in large and hectic classrooms.

Other than making a class instruction, gestures also have a lot of functions. Gestures can also be used to teach vocabulary, improve pronunciation, practice dialogues, and, most importantly, as a game (Tellier as cited in Najeebullah et al., 2020). Gestures can also help to keep the class entertained and interested. For example, the teacher puts a few words or phrases on the board or uses flash cards or word strips to demonstrate them. The teacher then instructs the students to form pairs or groups and use gestures or mimes to act out the words or phrases. After that, the teachers will ask the students to go to the front of the class and instructs them to choose a word or phrase to act out with gestures or mimes (Macedonia & Kriegstein, 2012). In conclusion, gestures can help the teacher to teach vocabulary to the students.

What Comes Next technique is an English teaching technique that involves gestures. In the process of this technique, the students have to observe and guess the teacher’s gestures and re-do the gestures. This technique was found by the writer in Language Activity for Teenager book by Seth Lindstormberg. According to Lindstormberg (2010), What Comes Next technique is suitable for nine years old students and above in the level of pre-intermediate level. The time allocation to do this technique is around fifteen to thirty minutes, and forty minutes for the first time. This technique, in fact, is focused on teaching intensive reading and story-telling teaching. However, the writer wanted to use this as the technique in teaching vocabulary because this technique also involves story in it (intensive reading), the activity will be focused on reading vocabulary (reading both gestures and words in print). Also, the vocabulary in this research was be action verb, because action verb is one of the language features of a story text (reading text) can be acted out by the students.

According to Lindstormberg (2010), the teacher should prepare a set of stories which is likely to be interesting to the students. In terms of grammar and vocabulary, it should be present little that is completely new for the students. The story should be no longer than two sides of A4 paper double spaced. It also should be marked with slash mark where if the teacher pauses while reading it out, the students will have a good chance of guessing the rest of a word that comes next (Lindstormberg, 2010, p. 115). In order to use the technique, the procedure of
teaching by using What Comes Next technique must be set up. According to Lindstromberg (2010, pp. 115-116) there are seven steps to apply the technique; (1) Read the story out to the class and pause on the marked words then make the gestures of the words while the students will guess the vocabulary and fill the blank spaces; (2) After finishing the story, check that every student has got the gist of the story; (3) Ask the students to show some of the gestures and see if they can say what each gesture represented; (4) Ask if they can recall other ways in which the teacher helped them to guess what was going to come next; (5) Ask the students to take turns doing what the teacher just did in pairs; (6) Hand out the story sheet and give every student enough time to read their story first before doing the pair work; (7) After they finish, give everyone the gist of the story that they did not get initially.

As mentioned by the writer above, there were seven steps to do What Comes Next technique. There were two stories that the writer used in the teaching process. Both of the stories were made by the writer. The stories were little similar theme to one and another but have different characters and storylines. In addition, by looking at the students’ level and their knowledge, it would be very hard for them to read the stories in full English version. Therefore, the writer decided to put the translation of the story. The blank spaces remained blank as well so the students still need to guess the vocabulary according to the step of the technique. The writer used all these steps as the procedure to teach action verb. The writer only focused on action verb in applying this technique since it would be easier to make the gestures based on action verb. Also, action verb is one of the language features of a story text which need to be mastered by the students. Therefore, in order to solve the problem, the writer chose What Comes Next technique (WCNT) to teach vocabulary. The reason why the writer chose the technique was because the writer had used this technique in his previous research in a pre-experimental study design and the result was, this technique could actively engage the students to learn and improve their vocabulary effectively.

The facilities in SMA Tahfizul Qur’an Labbaik Pontianak however, were good to support the students in learning English and improving their vocabulary. The school has a library that contained a big number of translated English dictionaries. The students could borrow the dictionaries before the class started. The writer told the students to bring dictionaries to the class in every meeting so that they can read and improve their vocabulary. However, it was too hard for them to improve their English vocabulary because they have a lot of activities outside the class such as memorizing the Qur’an, practice to give speech in Arabic and many more.

METHOD
Referring to the purpose of this research, the suitable research design would be classroom action research (CAR). CAR is one of the research designs that commonly used by the teachers in order to fix classroom issues that have been analyzed before. According to Burns (2010), CAR is a research approach which teachers may employ to examine a subject or area of interest relevant to their professional setting, with the goal of resolving specific and practical school issues. Moreover, CAR enables the teachers to trust on themselves to understand what is happening in their own classrooms and what should be happening
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(Nugent, Malik, & Hollingsworth, 2012), means that the one who exactly knows about the class condition is the teacher and only the teacher knows how to solve the issues in his or her classroom. Therefore, it was very suitable for the writer to choose CAR for solving his class issues.

There are some procedures that should be followed when doing CAR. Planning, action, observation, and reflection are the procedures. Planning includes recognizing a problem and devising a strategy for addressing it in order to enhance a specific aspect of the study context. Meanwhile, action refers to putting into practice what has been prepared at a previous stage as Burns (2010, p. 8) stated that the plan is a carefully thought one that comprises certain purposeful interventions into your teaching scenario that you put into action over an agreed length of time. The next is observation, which entails documenting the situation, actions, and opinions of individuals involved and rigorously observing the impact of the activity (Burns, 2010). The final step is reflection, which entails considering, assessing, and describing the consequences of one's actions in order to make sense of what has occurred and to gain a better understanding of the topic at hand. The following is the CAR process.

Figure 1: The Classroom Action Research Cycle

![Figure 1: The Classroom Action Research Cycle](source: Hall, W. & Keynes, M. (2005, p.5)

In this research, the research subjects were twenty twelfth grade male students of SMA Tahfizul Qur'an Labbaik Pontianak in the academic year 2020/2021. There were three cycles in this research because the writer wanted to make sure that all the issues in the classroom about vocabulary solved. The data were collected through field notes, observation checklist, and students’ vocabulary test. The qualitative data would be observed and analyzed by looking at the notes and observation checklist while quantitative data would be observed and analyzed by calculating and comparing students’ mean score in each cycle.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In order to fulfill the purpose of this research, the writer analyzed the students’ scores in each cycle by using individual score formula. After the writer calculated the individual scores, then the writer calculated the mean score of each cycle by using mean score formula. Finally, in order to know whether there was a
difference or not in each cycle, the writer used mean of difference score formula. All those formulas can be seen as follow.

**Formula 1: The Individual Score Formula**

\[ X = S \times 4 \]

There were twenty-five questions in each test. In order to gain maximum score, the writer multiplied the total of right answers by four. After that, the writer calculated the mean score of each cycle. The result was 59.8 from the first cycle, 64.2 from the second cycle and 72.2 from the third cycle.

**Formula 2: Mean Score Formula**

\[ M = \frac{\sum X}{n} \]

In order to get the mean score of the test in each cycle, the writer divided the total of students’ individual scores by total number of the students, which was twenty. After calculating the mean score, the writer calculated the mean of difference between each cycle (cycle one-two and cycle two-three) by using mean of difference formula. The difference between the first cycle and the second cycle was 4.4 while the difference between the second cycle and the third cycle was 8.

**Formula 3: Mean of Difference Formula**

\[ MD = M2 - M1 \]


In order to ease the readers to see the score, the writer provided a table of the score (total individual score and mean score in each cycle). The following is the table of the score.

**Table 1: The table of the score**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Individual Score</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1196</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1284</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1444</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This research was undertaken to solve the issues of twelve grade students’ vocabulary in SMA Tahfizul Qur’an Labbaik Pontianak. The findings showed that
there were a lot of improvement in each cycle, since the mean score of the students’ individual score improved time by time. Even the students’ individual scores were improved in each cycle. It means that What Comes Next technique improved their vocabulary.

Everyone would know that this strategy is good for teaching vocabulary, especially action verb vocabulary, based on the findings of the study. This is might due to the fact that the technique’s method included gestures. Gestures assist students in infusing a whiff of multimodality into their learning process, which leaves a trail in their memory (Foster, 2009). In other words, by including gestures in the teaching practice, the teacher makes it easier for the students to remember the vocabulary. As a result, by using the What Comes Next strategy, the teacher makes it easier for the students to memorize the vocabulary.

Furthermore, gestures serve a variety of purposes in the teaching-learning process. The first role is for classroom control, such as starting and finishing the class period. Second, for evaluative purposes, such as error correction. Finally, there are expository goals, such as explaining new vocabulary items (Tellier, 2005). When teaching words to students, using gestures will help them understand the information better and remember it. Those functions, especially the last one for teaching vocabulary, are really beneficial in the teaching-learning process.

In addition, gestures in What Comes Next technique also made the students actively participated in the learning process. This was very good since before that, the students were not so active in English class because the lack of motivation. Based on the writer’s observation while teaching vocabulary by using this technique, students’ motivation, enthusiasm and activity rate were all improved drastically.

The findings of this study appear to be in line with those of prior studies on a variety of topics. There were two studies that used gestures in the classroom to teach vocabulary. Cohen and Otterbein (1992) performed the first one in an experimental study, which involved three groups. The results revealed that those who watched a video of someone illustrating with pantomimic gestures remembered considerably more words than those who did not. The findings confirmed the expert's argument that learners' memory may be improved by incorporating a variety of modalities into the teaching-learning process, one of which is gestures (Laufer, 2005). The gestures, according to the research, help students remember things better.

Tellier (2005) did another study that showed similar results. The results showed that using visual modalities (images and gestures) improved the memorization of the study participants. The use of gestures in vocabulary instruction was found to be beneficial in both studies. In agreement with previous two research, this study found that gestures help learners learn words more easily. As a result, What Comes Next technique is useful for teaching vocabulary since it incorporates gestures into the process and has a high impact on learners' vocabulary.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

According to the research findings and discussion in the previous chapters, the students’ vocabulary had significantly improved since the students’ individual mean score improved over time in each cycle. To put it another way, the What
Comes Next approach helped students expand their vocabulary. Gestures in the technique enhance students in memorizing new vocabulary by infusing a smell of multimodality into their learning experience. The technique also improved their motivation and activeness in learning vocabulary in the classroom. Their enthusiasm in learning English was improved as well. As a result, the What Comes Next method is useful in teaching vocabulary.

Referring to the discussion part, the students in SMA Tahfizul Qur’an Labbaik still need to improve their vocabulary outside the class because there are only few times for them to do it in the classroom. They need to realize that mastering English will be beneficial for their future. They also need to realize that English is just important as Arabic.

REFERENCES


