

## IMPROVING ENGLISH VOCABULARY USING VISUAL MNEMONIC TECHNIQUE

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### Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to increase English vocabulary using visual mnemonic techniques for seventh graders of junior high school. Several factors inhibited students from having difficulty memorizing vocabulary, lose motivation to memorize vocabulary and easily forgetting the vocabulary they had learned. This inhibiting factor could be overcome by using visual mnemonic techniques to increase students' vocabulary. This study used Classroom Action Research with a sample of 32 students. The research was conducted at SMP N 2 Kasihan, Bantul. Data was collected by observation, interview, pre-test and post-test with instrument field notes, documentation and tests at the end of each study in the entire cycle. Analysis of research data used quantitative and qualitative descriptive data analysis. The results of the study proved that the increase in the percentage of student scores continues to increase. This can be seen in the acquisition of pre-cycle values to the last cycle. The value obtained from the pre-cycle was only 15.93% then increased in the first cycle to 37.38% then in the second cycle there was an increase again. There was a very good increase to 95.75%, with the average student score in the second cycle was 85.31. The increase in student scores in the second cycle, the targeted presentation was 80% and the student KKM was 75. This level of achievement has proven that visual mnemonic technique helped students of SMP N 2 Kasihan, Bantul in increasing students' vocabulary remarkably.

### Keywords:

Visual mnemonic technique; English vocabulary



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## INTRODUCTION

In English language teaching, there are some skills that must be learned by students from elementary school to university level. The Ministry of National Education's goal in English lessons for junior high school students is that students can communicate in English in spoken and written form, which includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, according to the social context Depdiknas (2017).

Good and correct language skills for foreign language learners depend on how much vocabulary they have. Thus, without vocabulary, the learners will be demotivated to use the language Afzal Naeem (2019). This is one of the common factors experienced by many foreign language learners. The same thing was found among students in learning

vocabulary. Besides that, there are other inhibiting factors, examples of other inhibiting factors for students are lack of facilities, monotonous teacher teaching, students are lazy to learn to memorize vocabulary, students' memory is not good, and students do not have the motivation to start learning to memorize vocabulary as a basis for mastering English. The inhibiting factors mentioned above are the same as those encountered by students in learning English at SMP N 2 Kasihan, Bantul. This is a condition that can hinder the development of English for students, especially students in grades VII-B. The factors found by the researcher when conducting the observation activities described previously, the researchers were encouraged to carry out research activities.

The researcher developed the research theme of Improving English Vocabulary Using Visual Mnemonic Techniques for Class VII Students of SMPN 2 Kasihan Bantul. The model used is classroom action research (CAR). The model applied is that of Kemmis and McTaggart which consists of several cycles later that this cycle does not only take place once, but several times to achieve the expected goal. The use of this mnemonic visual technique is to make it easier for students to memorize English vocabulary. Mnemonics is way to help students remember and it is very useful to memorize vocabulary easily Susana Intan (2017).

Eric Jensen (1999) defines mnemonics as a method that can help to remember large amounts of information. From this understanding, he also shares the information into three elements, namely through the coding, selection and recall process. Here are some mnemonic techniques that are often used to help make it easier to memorize:

1. Techniques Acronym.

Acronym mnemonics are how to use the first letter of a group of sentences into a new one, example; NATO, abbreviation; North Atlantic Treaty Organization, WHO, abbreviation; World Health Organization, UNICEF, abbreviation; United Nation Children's Fund, etc.

2. Techniques Loci.

Loci or so-called location is a mnemonic which functions to associate the places or objects in the location that are trying to describe the things we want to remember. The use of this method requires that we have at least a high power of imagination because this technique is closely related to the power of imagination that we have created to simplify what we want to learn, example; To trigger a memory so you can remember a series of keywords you need in a speech, you can associate the foreword or opening with the door of your house. That was after the previous room. And from the series of your speech, you can end with the kitchen room as a closing word in your speech. The higher your imagination, the easier it is for you to easily remember many things you want to memorize.

3. Techniques Chunking.

This technique can be used to remember a lift. For example, if we are confused to remember a few bits of lift; then we can divide it into sections. An example of adoption to remember is 063248567388. To make it easier we can remember by dividing the numbers above into 063-248-567-388.

4. Techniques rhymes and songs.

This technique is usually used to help us remember words or notation colors in a song. An example is the song "twinkle; Twinkle, Little Star". Apart from that, we

can also calculate it with our imagination, by creating a picture of the colorful stars at night.

5. Visualization Techniques.

Objects and pictures not only can be used to give meaning and information, but they also can be used to the motivation and interest of the students. Using this method, a picture can be used to make the meaning of the word clear Lestari, Nia (2017:31). This means that you can learn new words with the help of pictures. Picture is as equivalent to the new word that we learn. For example, if we find it difficult to remember someone's name for several days or for a long period of time, but we do not forget the faces of people we have met. That is why the face image of a person is younger than the person's name.

To make it easier to remember words, names of people and things, we can use pictures as an aid to remember the new words we learn. Likewise, it can be emphasized by the same meaning in the Oxford dictionary, to imagine somebody/something; to create image of somebody/something in your mind. This technique is for attaching new words that students learn through pictures. In addition, pictures will also help motivate and attract students' interest. With these pictures students can easily understand the clear meaning of the new words they are learning.

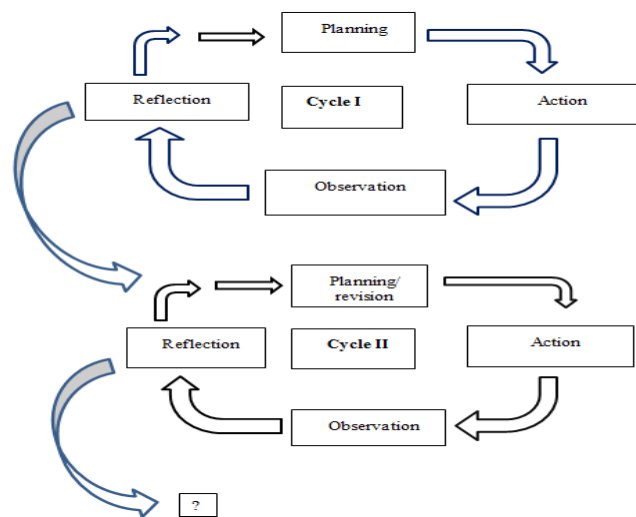
Vocabulary is the basic for all new language. Without learning the vocabulary, it is difficult to attain any language proficiency. Rohmatillah (2014) asserts that without learning the vocabulary communication in the second language becomes harder. Therefore, the researcher used the method of teaching these students with a technique called visual mnemonic technique. Setiani Lelawati, Selma D, Putri N Mailani (2018) said that teachers of young students should use some visuals in their teaching activities to facilitate their teaching. Basically, the research that has been carried out by Setiani, put more emphasis on the use of visual mnemonics as a creative method so that teachers are assisted in the learning system. What distinguishes this research on the use of visual mnemonic is not for teachers but for students. In addition, there is an addition to the word mnemonic visual technique which is also accompanied by various learning media such as picture cards.

With these learning media, it makes the learning atmosphere feel more fun, students don't get bored easily. On the other hand, students are motivated to learn because the lessons offered for students are kept away from monotonous learning. Mnemonic visual techniques are sought to improve student memory so that students can remember well and store the vocabulary they memorized in students' long memory. Students' memory is improved with picture cards. Picture cards help to enhance students' imaginativeness. Using pictures as an alternative to making it easier to remember each place (Science of geography) and the technique of using this image is also used by Paivio Allan (1994). He uses pictures very effectively in improving memory in the learning process.

## **METHOD**

The researcher used the classroom action research (CAR). The model applied is from Kemmis and McTaggart then that this cycle does not last only once, but several times achieved the expected goals. The research design used the Kemmis and Taggart (1989) model; the stages are (a) planning, (b) action, (c) observation, and (d) reflection. The

following diagram shows the process of the Class action Research that was conducted by researcher.



**Figure 1. Classroom Action Research**

This Classroom Action Research have a sample of 32 students This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Kasihan Bantul, precisely in Bantul, Yogyakarta. From the observations of researchers, this school has problems if students have difficulty memorizing English vocabulary. The object of this research was the application of the Cooperative learning Model using visual mnemonic techniques to improve students' memory so that students are easy to memorize and remember English vocabulary. The researcher conducted the research process with a collaborative system with the English teacher. The research conducted several times, depending on the achievement of the targeted results.

The technique of data collection consisted of three techniques. Researcher observed the teaching and learning process of English, conducted interviews after class meetings, and exercise. The researcher made observations to monitor the teaching and learning process in the destination class. Observations were made at each meeting in Cycle one and Cycle two. In Cycle one there were three meetings and in Cycle two there were three meetings, so the researchers made observations in six meetings. The researcher used an observation checklist to make observations. Observations and observation checklists were carried out for one and a half hours during the teaching and learning process during the application of mnemonics. During the observation, the researcher collected data based on the aspects in the observation guidelines. They are teaching and learning in the application of mnemonics, teaching and learning processes in the application of mnemonics. Observations are made by observing the situation and condition of the class in the teaching and learning process.

The researcher sat at the back of the class and recorded teaching and learning activities and put a tick (v) on the observation checklist. For example: at the beginning of the lesson, the researcher observed and recorded how the teacher opened the lesson by asking some questions, how the students responded to the teacher's questions, how the teacher

explained the material related to the fictional story, and how the students answered the teacher's question about how many characters in the story and when, where is the story. In addition, the researcher put a check mark (v) in the column for each aspect in the observation checklist which shows students making improvements during the application of mnemonics in the teaching and learning process. Then, the information from the observation guide is recorded into the observation checklist and field notes.

The researcher conducted interviews with students and English teachers about how the activities in the teaching and learning process were. This interview was conducted after the teaching and learning process ended at each meeting in each cycle. The important thing is to pay attention to the aspects in the interview guide. For example, affective aspects of students in the application of mnemonics, cognitive aspects of students in the application of mnemonics, psychomotor aspects of students in the application of mnemonics, and the use of learning media (picture cards, picture stories) in the application of mnemonics. For the interview transcripts, the researcher interviewed the students based on the indicators in the interview guide during the application of the mnemonic. Information from the interview guide was recorded in the interview transcript.

The researcher used a test to determine the level of student achievement in the process of using picture cards (visual mnemonic technique). The test will consist of exercises one and exercises two. The results of the achievement exercises as an activity of student achievement in using visual mnemonic techniques to increase vocabulary in grade 7-b students Exercises one and exercises two in the form of four main skill exercises, the researcher asked students to do the teacher's instructions written on the paper given by the teacher to each student with a duration of 30 minutes.

The instruments of research consisted of field note, documentation, Exercises questionnaire, and interview. Field note, this instrument used to record all the activities using note during the process of learning. Documentation, Samples of documents was retrieved between the interview process with students and teachers, the location for taking documentation, and several other documents. Exercises, this practice question aims to obtain numerical certainty or the results of achieving student scores from each cycle that will take place. In the practice questions, there are two stages of practice for the first question and the second exercise. Questionnaire, questionnaire is a student's response to the learning process using visual mnemonic techniques which consists of students' impressions, challenges, and feelings of students during the learning process of applying visual mnemonic techniques. This questionnaire is structured in the form of questions that ask respondents to provide answers in the questionnaire. Questionnaire guidelines must be filled out by research subjects. Interview, interviews or can also be called oral questionnaires are questions posed directly by the researcher to the object to be studied. Interview was conducted with subject teachers and students who were the research targets.

Analysis of research data used quantitative and qualitative descriptive data analysis. Descriptive qualitative data analysis was used because the main data was in the form of mastery of English vocabulary which was processed through test questions and quantitative data. The result of data processing used quantitative analysis was then displayed in the form of numbers. To get real and accurate data, it is not enough to conduct

this research just once, compete several times. It depends on how the results are obtained from the exercises I and exercises II. If in the first stage you have obtained sufficiently good data, then efforts made to ensure that the research continues at the next stage so that the research results are achieved at a mutually determined score or target.

To calculate the improvement students used the formula used to measure students' memory skills, memorize vocabulary and interpret vocabulary is as follows.

$$\text{Student scores} = \frac{\text{Student acquisition score}}{\text{Maximum score}} \times 100$$

The result of the value acquisition at the end of the cycle is calculated the average value (mean) of all students. The formula for finding the average (mean) of single data according to Sugiyono (2007) is as follows.

$$Me = \frac{\sum Xi}{n}$$

Description:

Me

=  $\sum$

Me = mean (average)

$\sum$  = epsilon (total)

Xi = scor X, i-n

n = number of individuals

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section discusses about results of achieving the average grades of class VII-b students from pre-cycle, then to cycle I and cycle II. The results of the average value obtained were obtained by practicing questions in the form of exercises one and exercises two. What is tested on students is the level of memory, vocabulary memorization and students' ability to interpret vocabulary.

The questions tested to students were in the form of narrative texts. Students were asked to read narrative text. After reading according to the time allotted (about 3-5 minutes), then practice questions will be distributed next.

Narrative text was given in the lesson contains illustrations in the form of pictures to make it more interesting and increase students' interest in studying each narrative text that was distributed to students.

The overall results of the presentations and the average scores obtained by students during cycles I and II were very decisive for researchers to ensure that students' limitations in memorizing vocabulary can be improved or not only with the help of picture cards and narrative texts. In addition, researchers also use interviews as a support so that researcher can find out how the level of problems faced by students in memorizing vocabulary can be solved.

Researcher used visual mnemonic techniques and adapted to student learning. If so far students only memorized vocabulary in the form of sentence structures which eventually made students bored and no longer interested in learning to memorize vocabulary, but

now with visual mnemonic techniques students can see, feel, visualize and even touch memorized vocabulary because it is provided in the form of picture cards. All the above discussion uses data in the form of qualitative data. To find out the acquisition of increasing students' abilities in memorizing, remembering, and interpreting English vocabulary, as evidenced by the results in the form of the table below.

Table 1 the Average Score of Students

NO	DESCRIPTION	PRA-CYCLE	CYCLE I	CYCLE II
		EXERCISES I	EXERCISES I-II	EXERCISES I-II
1	Vocabulary memorizing score	25,84	24,53	24,84
2	Meaning vocabulary	17,34	19,53	28,13
3	Vocabulary visualizing	27,06	25,94	29,52

The increase in the percentage of student scores shown in the table above is the acquisition of pre-cycle scores until the last cycle. The value gain continues to increase, from the pre-cycle. When viewed from every aspect that is focused, namely, memorizing in the pre-cycle session there are 25.84 while the ability to interpret vocabulary is 24.53 and imagination power is 24.84 then increased in the first cycle to 17.34. While the ability to interpret vocabulary is 19.53 and the ability to imagine is 28.13. Then, it increased in the second cycle such as memorizing vocabulary increased to 27.06 meaning vocabulary increased to 25.94 and vocabulary imagination power increased to 29.52. Changes in the acquisition of scores shown prove a good improvement in the use of these techniques to make it easier for students to learn to memorize English vocabulary.

Table 2 Achievement of Minimum Mastery Criteria

DESCRIPTION	PRA-CYCLE	CYCLE I	CYCLE II
Minimum mastery Criteria	15,93%	37,38%	95,75%

The increase in the percentage of students' grades shown in the table above is the acquisition of pre-cycle scores to the last cycle. The value gain continues to increase, from pre-cycle only 15.93% then increased in the first cycle to 37.38% then in the second cycle, is an improvement cycle from the first cycle.

There is a very good increase to 95.75%, with the average score of students in the second cycle is 85.31. With the increase in student scores in the second cycle, the targeted presentation was 80% and the student KKM was 75. From the increase in grades in the second cycle which increased and reached the target value, the research process was ended on second cycle. Thus, the researcher concludes that students at SMP Negeri 2 Kasihan, Bantul have achieved the minimum criterion value of the expected value with the average score as shown in the table above. Students can use visual mnemonic techniques to become an easy and fun technique in learning to memorize vocabulary so that their vocabulary mastery skills continue to increase according to the learning they have learned.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion has proven that visual mnemonic techniques are very helpful for students in memorizing vocabulary; students feel that their memory becomes easier to remember the vocabulary they have learned, students feel challenged to be more creative in learning to memorize vocabulary

The value of students who have increased from each cycle are; 73 and began to increase in cycle II which was more targeted at 83. Of course, what was emphasized in the use of this visual mnemonic was the process of memorizing, interpreting, and using it in the practice of filling out test questions, prioritizing how well students were able to remember the vocabulary and vocabulary asked in the practice questions.

So, students quickly experience a good increase in English vocabulary. The results of the increase in grade 7-b students at SMP N 2 Kasihan, it indicates that student success has been achieved. It can be ascertained that the visual mnemonic technique is easy for anyone who wants to learn by using this technique. Teachers, students can use visual mnemonic techniques to make it easier to improve their foreign language skills starting with improving and having a large English vocabulary. Visual mnemonic technique makes it easier for anyone, quickly and already mastered English.

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