



Utilizing Vocabulary Journals to Enhance Junior High School Students' Understanding and Employment of Vocabulary in Maluku Barat Daya



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Abstract

This research examines the utilizing of vocabulary journal in junior high school students. Vocabulary learning is crucial part in learning a language because it contains the basic knowledge to comprehend a language. Identified challenges primarily revolve around the strategies in classroom, the use of materials, and the vocabulary learning technique. Resource constraints encompass limited teaching materials and how to be more comprehensive in vocabulary learning. To address this challenges, the articles outlines the utilizing of vocabulary journals to comprehend the understanding and employment of vocabulary learning. Additionally, the article explores the best practices in utilizing vocabulary journal. This library research aims to contribute valuable insights to educator, policymakers, and researchers involved in the implementation of English language teaching and learning.

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1. Introduction

The first introduction to learning English as a foreign language lays the foundation for further language learning that can have long-term implications for academic and professional development. At this stage, students begin to develop basic language skills. They are introduced to simpler grammar, text, and

vocabulary, as well as strategies for reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English. Vocabulary is an important aspect of foreign language learning, especially at the beginning of English language learning. The purpose of learning vocabulary is to help students master the four basic language skills of the target language. According to Nation and Waring (1997), high school students must achieve mastery of 2500-3000 words to meet the requirements of university-level studies. Moreover, students must continue to acquire additional vocabulary in order to achieve in their academic endeavors. In order to enhance pupils' vocabulary, it is imperative for them to possess a well-defined vocabulary acquisition approach. Effective vocabulary acquisition tactics are crucial for students' linguistic progress in acquiring a foreign language, since they facilitate the comprehension of unknown terms.

.According to Oxford, Nation, O'Malley, and Chamot (1990), it is strongly advised that students utilize vocabulary acquisition methodologies in order to effectively acquire the target language. This is because children require significant motivation to independently enhance their vocabulary. Moir & Nation (2008) contend that students should possess the ability to discern which terminology requires acquisition and which can be omitted from their study. Furthermore, Hu (1999) discovered that pupils who possessed prior understanding of vocabulary exhibited superior abilities compared to those who lacked fundamental vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary Learning Strategies are crucial for junior high school students as they facilitate comprehension of unfamiliar words, enhance their lexical repertoire, and foster self-directed learning. According to Schmitt (2000), Vocabulary Learning Strategies have the ability to enhance learners' language acquisition by capturing their attention and facilitating the development of their vocabulary. Takac (2008) defines vocabulary learning techniques as distinct strategies employed during vocabulary learning activities in the target language. Furthermore, vocabulary learning strategies refer to the techniques that aid in the acquisition of practical language skills.

Asgari and Mustapha (2011) define vocabulary acquisition strategies as the sequential steps that learners go through when acquiring new terms. When students come across unfamiliar English words during their learning journey, they must make an effort to understand the words in order to comprehend the resources. According to Ruutments (2005), vocabulary acquisition strategies encompass not only the process of acquiring new words, but also the methods by which learners store these words in their long-term memory and effectively use and create them in the right context. This information is mentioned by Jurcovie (2006). According to Gu (2003), having knowledge of a word entails understanding its form, meaning, and how it is used in both receptive and productive contexts. Thus, it suggests that vocabulary-learning processes are not specifically tied to the understanding of new words, but instead encompass more extensive domains.

A vocabulary journal is a tool language learners use to help them develop and expand their vocabulary knowledge. It is a personal notebook or digital document where learners can record new words and phrases they come across during their language studies. The journal can be organized in different ways, such as alphabetically, thematically, or based on the level of difficulty of the words. Vocabulary journals typically include the new word, its definition, and an example sentence, which helps learners understand the meaning and usage of the word in context. Some learners also include additional information, such as synonyms, antonyms, and related words. Research has shown that keeping a vocabulary journal can be an effective strategy for language learners to improve their vocabulary acquisition. A study conducted by Al-Jarf (2010) found that Saudi EFL learners who kept a vocabulary journal outperformed those who did not keep a journal regarding vocabulary retention and recall. Similarly, a study by Wu and Ting Ting (2018) determined that vocabulary journaling can enhance learners' active engagement with new words and improve their vocabulary learning efficiency.

Unfortunately, English instruction in junior high school seldom offer explicit strategies for acquiring vocabulary, which would enable pupils to independently grasp the meanings of unfamiliar terms and expand their vocabulary. English teaching in the classroom mainly discussed vocabulary to understand the reading text and repeated some words after the teacher to check pronunciation. The vocabulary was also discussed before students did the task, such as answering comprehension questions, filling in the blanks, or writing simple sentences. The researcher observed that students need more vocabulary to help them participate in English. Students had no journals to write their vocabulary for further study at home. The researcher observed that what the teacher did with students was only to meet learning needs but not for long-term language learning. Another study by Heydarnejad et al (2017) examined the impact of digital vocabulary journals on EFL learners' vocabulary learning. They found that using digital journals increased students' motivation to learn new

vocabulary and improved their vocabulary retention and recall compared to traditional paper-based methods. Furthermore, research has shown that the organization of vocabulary journals can impact their effectiveness. For example, Tseng (2012) found that organizing vocabulary journals thematically (e.g., by topic or context) was more effective than organizing them alphabetically or randomly. This article aims to examine the effectiveness of using a vocabulary diary as a tool to enhance vocabulary acquisition and usage among Junior High School students in Maluku Barat Daya.

2. Method

This paper was written using the article analysis method. This strategy involves conducting extensive research by consulting relevant scientific sources, including books and journals published by both national and international publishers. The library analysis approach requires writers to carefully examine and locate reading materials that are pertinent or appropriate for the issues being discussed. In this scenario, the analytical technique is an appropriate and beneficial measure.

3. Result And Discussion

Using Vocabulary Journal to improve vocabulary knowledge and usage

A vocabulary journal is one of the useful strategies for improving students' vocabulary. It is a notebook in which learners record new words that they come across in their reading or listening activities. The purpose of a vocabulary journal is to help students remember and learn new words and track their progress in expanding their vocabulary. In students' vocabulary journals, they can write down the new word, its definition, and an example sentence that uses the word in context. In addition, they can incorporate supplementary details, such as the grammatical category, synonymous terms, and abbreviations.

Regularly reviewing their vocabulary journal helps enhance their learning and improve their retention of new words. Students can utilize their vocabulary journal to enhance their proficiency in employing the newly acquired terms in both oral and written communication tasks. In general, a vocabulary journal is a valuable instrument for anyone learning a language who desires to enhance their vocabulary and enhance their language proficiency.

According to this theory, learning takes place through the cognitive processes of encoding, storing, and retrieving knowledge. Upon encountering an unfamiliar term, students must initially store it in their memory by establishing associations with its meaning and context. Students can consolidate the information in their long-term memory through the process of studying and practicing it. Ultimately, students can access the material at the moment they require it for their writing or speaking endeavors.

A vocabulary journal can help students to apply these principles of cognitive learning by providing a structured way to encode, store, and retrieve new vocabulary. By transcribing the novel vocabulary, along with their corresponding definitions and contextual usage examples, students are effectively encoding the information into their memory. Through regular review of the journal, students are reinforcing the associations between the new words and their meanings, thereby facilitating the storage of this information in their long-term memory. Ultimately, through the utilization of words in their writing or activities, individuals are able to retrieve information and engage in the practice of employing it, so strengthening their learning.

Steps to create a vocabulary journal

Keeping a vocabulary journal can be a great way to improve your vocabulary knowledge and usage.

- Choose a format: Vocabulary journals can take many forms, such as a physical notebook, an electronic document, or a set of flashcards. Choose a format that works best for your learners and their needs. Choose a notebook or word processor to use as your vocabulary journal. You could also use an app or website specifically designed for vocabulary tracking.
- Set goals: Encourage learners to establish objectives for their vocabulary acquisition and to monitor their advancement in their notebooks. For instance, learners may establish a goal to acquire a predetermined quantity of new words on a weekly basis or to proficiently grasp a specific collection of vocabulary.

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pertaining to a particular subject. Establish a personal objective, such as acquiring a specific quantity of new vocabulary every week or enhancing your proficiency in employing words you are already familiar with in phrases.

- Record new words and phrases: Encourage learners to record new words and phrases they encounter during reading, listening, or explicit vocabulary instruction. They should include the word, its definition, and an example of how it is used in context. Whenever you come across a new word that you don't know, write it down in your journal along with its definition. You could also include an example sentence or other information about the word, such as its part of speech or synonyms Review regularly: Encourage learners to review their vocabulary journals.
- Review regularly to reinforce their knowledge of new words and phrases. Teachers can provide regular opportunities for learners to review their vocabulary journals and discuss the words they have learned. Review your vocabulary journal regularly. Quiz yourself on the words you've learned to see if you can remember their definitions and use them correctly in sentences. Use the words you've learned in your writing and conversations. This will help you reinforce your knowledge and get more comfortable using the words in context.
- Personalize the learning: Encourage learners to personalize their vocabulary learning by choosing words that are relevant to their interests and needs. For example, learners might choose vocabulary related to a specific hobby or profession.

Challenge yourself to use more complex vocabulary over time. As you become more comfortable with the words you've learned, start seeking out more challenging words to add to your journal. By following these steps and regularly using your vocabulary journal, you can improve your vocabulary knowledge and feel more confident using a wider range of words in your writing and conversations.

Example activity to use vocabulary Journal

Based on some studies, there are activities that can be employed by the teacher in vocabulary learning, includes:

1. Assign each student a new word to learn, either from a list of vocabulary words you have provided or by choosing a word that is relevant to the current lesson or topic.
2. Have the students look up the definition of the word and write it in their vocabulary journal, along with an example sentence that uses the word correctly.
3. In the next class session, have each student share their word with the class and read their example sentence out loud.
4. As a class, discuss the meaning of each word and provide additional examples of how the word could be used in context.
5. Throughout the week, have students practice using their new words in conversation or writing. For example, you could assign a writing prompt that requires students to use their new words in a sentence or paragraph.
6. At the end of the week, have students review their vocabulary journal and quiz themselves on the words they've learned.

The benefit of using a vocabulary journal

The benefits of using vocabulary journal can be seen as follows:

1. Personalized learning: A vocabulary journal allows learners to personalize their Vocabulary learning by choosing words that are relevant to their interests and needs.
2. Builds vocabulary retention: By regularly reviewing their vocabulary journal, learners can reinforce their knowledge of new words and phrases and I improve their retention over time.
3. Provides a record of progress: A vocabulary journal can serve as a record of learners' progress and can help them to see how their vocabulary has grown over time.

4. Encourages reflection: Through introspection of acquired vocabulary and its application, learners can cultivate a more profound comprehension of language and enhance their linguistic aptitude.

Teachers can encourage learners to keep a vocabulary journal by providing guidance on how to use the journal effectively. Teachers can motivate students to not only document the term and its explanation, but also to incorporate the word into a phrase or provide an illustration of its usage in a specific context. In addition, educators should regularly facilitate chances for students to present their vocabulary journals to their peers and engage in discussions about the words they have acquired.

4. Conclusion And Suggestion

1. Conclusion

Junior high school is an important stage for developing basic English language skills, including grammar, text, and vocabulary. Language learning strategies are a crucial part of English foreign language learning. Learners specific actions, behaviors, techniques, and steps to improve their progress in developing skills in a foreign language. Language learning strategies can be classified into cognitive, metacognitive, socio-affective, and memory-related technologies. Successful learners use a variety of strategies from different categories tod in language learning. The effectiveness of language learning strategies may vary depending on the task and the learner's level of proficiency. However, studies have consistently found that learners who use strategies have higher achievement levels and proficiency levels than those who do not. By using a range of strategies and being aware of their own learning preferences, language learners can become more effective and efficient in their language learning.

A vocabulary journal is useful for improving students' vocabulary knowledge and usage. It provides a structured way for learners to record new words and phrases, review them regularly, and practice using them in context. A vocabulary journal is based on the cognitive theory of learning, which suggests that learning occurs through the process of encoding, storing, and retrieving information. By writing down new words and reviewing them regularly, learners can strengthen their connections between the new words and their meanings, which helps to store the information in their long-term memory.

Teachers can encourage learners to keep a vocabulary journal by providing guidance on how to use the journal effectively and by providing regular opportunities for learners to share their vocabulary journals with their classmates and to discuss the words they have learned. A vocabulary journal provides several benefits, including personalized learning, building vocabulary retention, providing a record of progress, and encouraging reflection. By keeping a vocabulary journal, farmers can become more effective and efficient in their language learning and improve their language proficiency over time. Thus, it is important to use vocabulary journal as a tool for improving vocabulary knowledge and usage. By following the steps outlined in the text and regularly using a vocabulary journal, learners can become more confident in their ability to use a wider range of words in their writing and conversations.

2. Suggestion

The researcher intends to offer recommendations to the English teacher and other researchers in the following manner:

When instructing vocabulary, the teacher is anticipated to exhibit greater creativity and ingenuity in order to enhance their pupils' lexical proficiency and prevent them from becoming disinterested during the educational endeavor. Vocabulary journals can serve as an alternate instructional approach for enhancing students' vocabulary acquisition and expanding their lexical knowledge. This technique is recommended for further investigation by English teachers or other researchers seeking to do similar study or those with similar research challenges or interests.

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