

Using the Riddle Technique To Increase Students' Vocabulary Mastery At Grade IX Of SMPN 1 Bengkulu

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine if using the riddle technique would enhance a student's vocabulary and response after using it. Classroom action research (CAR) was used. Grade IX.1 of SMPN 1 Bengkulu City, consisting of 34 students, was the subject of this study. There were two cycles in this research. The analysis of the observation checklists, field notes, and questionnaires has yielded qualitative data. In addition, quantitative data have been obtained on the students' pretest, post-test 1, and post-test 2 scores. Results show that students learn vocabulary more effectively using the riddle technique. It can be noted that the student score has improved. The student's average score on the pretest was 61.6, the average score for post-test one cycle 1 was 73.3, and the average for post-test 2 was 85.9. Furthermore, the questionnaire showed that students were interested and motivated in teaching and learning while implementing the Riddle game. Most students thought using riddles was an outstanding way to improve their language skills. The students were interested in learning vocabulary through riddles and agreed they could improve their language skills.

Keywords: *classroom action research, the riddle technique, vocabulary mastery,*

INTRODUCTION

Language is used in communications. The absence of a language does not allow communication between people, so they do not form good relations. Vocabulary is an essential element in the acquisition of a language. One of the linguistic features that affect the communicative process is vocabulary. In line with the statement from Ngusurukh (2021), vocabulary is the actual item to expand and achieve the four skills in English.

The speaker may find it challenging to communicate and cannot detect the speaker's message if there is a lack of vocabulary. Vocabulary mastery

considerably influences how speakers express feelings and ideas they want to express when communicating. Huyen and Nga (2003) state that listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills require comprehensive vocabulary acquisition. This statement aligns with Purba 2017, who argues that the ability to acquire four competencies of language significantly affects vocabulary skills. According to Ngusurukh (2021), it is necessary for teaching and learning English vocabulary because only if students understand the meaning of a word will it be practicable. The explanation above indicates that vocabulary is essential in acquiring English language skills and must be mastered.

Nowadays, vocabulary mastery is one of the problems in learning English. Even if someone is good at grammar, they must have an extensive vocabulary to be helpful excessively. Learning vocabulary is a fundamental element that should be learned at every grade level, apart from grammar. The more vocabulary students acquire, the better they can communicate, even when they have yet to develop a proper grammar form.

The researcher found a phenomenon in grade nine at SMPN 1 Bengkulu. Students needed help mastering English vocabulary. This case can be proven from classroom activities where students cannot respond appropriately to teacher questions in English. Then, the lack of vocabulary mastery can be seen in learning activities where students need to learn the vocabulary contained in the text. In dealing with this problem, a teacher needs a strategy to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Teachers can employ a variety of approaches to boost students' vocabulary in English teaching vocabularies, such as songs, sketches, stick figures, riddles, card games, wall cards, and puzzle strategies.

Considering the problem the students face in dealing with English vocabulary, riddles were chosen as the technique to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The riddle is a question or a sentence with meaning hidden behind it. It is just meant to be a fun riddle. Sometimes it is a puzzle that relies on puns. In other words, the riddle is an ambiguous statement or question in its own right, sometimes accompanied by some rhyme. There are rules that any player has to follow when playing the riddle game. Moreover, Zipke (2008:131) states that “a

riddle is a confusing question that turns into a joke, and the answers are surprising and unpredictable”. In addition, riddles are simulative and imaginative. The riddle game is about evidence of someone, thing, or place, which students are expected to guess according to the description given (Difa, 2020). The instructor can encourage learners to imagine the puzzle description to find the answer.

Riddles may help teachers and students create a more interactive classroom environment in which they can build active responses. Games stimulate the class atmosphere and give it a sense of excitement and amusement. Games will change the class dynamic, help the student study quickly, and help the brain learn more effectively. If students are interested in playing riddles, they will enjoy participating in the learning process and will be able to memorize words quickly and sufficiently. It can be concluded that games can help create a fun classroom atmosphere, generating students' self-confidence and reducing anxiety in language acquisition.

Some studies have shown that the riddles technique significantly improves students' vocabulary, such as those by Purba (2017), Lusiana (2018), Mina et al. (2021), Yuliarsih (2022), Rahmawati et al. (2022), Wahyuni et al. (2022), Parapat (2022) and Octaviarnis (2020). The study aimed to find how the riddle technique improves students' vocabulary mastery and the student's responses to the riddle technique applied in the classroom.

METHODS

In ninth grade, this study was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Bengkulu City. Classroom Action Research (CAR) was used. Researchers became actual teachers who teach students. Meanwhile, teachers act as observers who observe the activities of students and teachers in the classroom. The purpose of the action research is to investigate the improvement of students' vocabulary through the use of riddles. The model that Kemmis and McTaggart proposed included four steps: acting, observation, and reflection. This research is made up of data both quantitatively and qualitatively. Observations, field notes, and questionnaires were used to collect qualitative data. Quantitative data were included in the test.

1. Observation methods are used to collect data on the activities of researchers and students in teaching and learning. Observation sheets are filled up in class based on reality. Direct observations are the type of observation used in this study.
2. A field note is a personal record kept by a co-researcher that is written daily. Field notes help give information and recommendations for the teacher and student activities throughout the teaching and learning process.
3. After implementing a riddles technique in English language teaching, the questionnaire aims to gather data about students' responses. The researcher used the questionnaires proposed by Apriandari (2019).
4. This test determines the data research results and students' activity during teaching and learning. In this research, the following two tests are used.
 - a. Pre-test is done before implementing the actions. This is needed to measure students' vocabulary mastery.
 - b. Post-test is implemented after implementing the actions. The test is held at the end of every cycle.
5. The four steps of the Kemmis and Taggart model were used to reflect on and improve implementation during the initial cycle, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. Therefore, the second cycle has to be continued.

1. Planning

Planning was carried out to identify and diagnose the vocabulary problems of the students that occurred during the teaching and learning of English vocabulary by observing the activities during the class. The researcher prepared several items, like a lesson plan, materials, observation checklists, and field notes. Two meetings are held for each cycle. Then, conducting a test of vocabulary mastery by Riddle game in the last meeting.

2. Acting

The second step in classroom action research is to act. This stage is the implementation of the plan. As a teacher who defines teaching and learning techniques within the classroom, this step will enable the researcher to take action.

Researchers use lesson plans based on indicators and learning objectives that have been set.

3. Observing

During the teaching and learning process, an evaluation of all activities was carried out. Using the riddle, a researcher and a co-rater worked concurrently to observe the classroom activities of students and teachers.

4. Reflecting

Reflection has an evaluative aspect of affecting significant issues. From the observation results, the existing problem, and the cause of the problem, the researcher received feedback on vocabulary mastery and the learning process. If the result does not reach the desired goal, the researcher decides that the researcher needs to continue the research into cycle II.

This study included both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data were analyzed using the Gay and Arasian theory. Gay and Arasian (2000:145) define five steps: data management, reading and memoing, describing, categorizing, and interpreting. Sugiyono's (2015) formula was employed. It was mentioned in the vocabulary test scoring that the range from 0-100 by accounting for the correct response. As a result, the researcher seeks to get the proportion of the class that meets the minimal mastery level criterion (KKM) for the English subject to gain a score of 75, as modified from the school agreement at SMPN 1 Bengkulu City.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the research results and discussion based on the data. Quantitative and qualitative data were used to analyze the data. Quantitative data on vocabulary tests were taken from the average scores of students. Qualitative information has been derived from observations, questionnaires, and field notes. This research was conducted at SMPN 1 Bengkulu City, class IX with 34 students. Two meetings were held in every cycle. A post-test was carried out in every cycle

The Quantitative Data

Quantitative data are obtained from the student's examination results. The test results remain relevant for the topics taught and discussed in class during each cycle. The test is given at the end of each cycle. The results of student test scores are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The Students' Score of Pre-Test, Post-Test 1, and Post-Test 2

No.	Initial of Students	Pre-Test	Post-Test 1	Post-Test 2
1.	AOK	57	67	80
2.	ATF	68	80	87
3.	AHM	60	73	87
4.	AGS	72	80	93
5.	BNA	26	47	67
6.	CPA	68	80	87
7.	CR	31	40	67
8.	CAR	68	80	100
9.	DEJ	70	73	93
10.	DFZ	74	87	100
11.	FA	45	67	87
12.	FDS	48	67	73
13.	GAY	68	80	80
14.	HDP	60	73	80
15.	HFA	72	80	93
16.	JW	65	73	80
17.	KLA	70	80	93
18.	MIS	66	80	80
19.	MFR	48	73	87
20.	MAK	72	87	100
21.	MBK	76	87	100
22.	MFD	66	80	100
23.	MFM	62	80	93
24.	NOA	74	60	67

No.	Initial of Students	Pre-Test	Post-Test 1	Post-Test 2
25.	NAI	66	60	80
26.	NRE	74	80	100
27.	NH	40	66	73
28.	NMJ	76	87	100
29.	PZR	51	67	80
30.	RAN	62	73	87
31.	SDT	76	87	100
32.	SOR	64	73	87
33.	ZNA	57	67	67
34.	ZFD	43	60	73
Mean		61.6	73.3	85.9

Table 1 shows that there is increasing in the student's vocabulary mastery. It can be seen from the mean value from the test (pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2). The mean pre-test score was 61.6, 73.3 for post-test 1, and 85.9 for post-test 2. A brief description of the data can be seen below.

Pre-Test

The pre-test was administered before the Classroom Action Research (CAR) to detect the students' competency and language issues. The pre-test consisted of 35 questions, 20 of which were multiple-choice and 15 matching. The proportion of students who passed the KKM test is shown in the table.

Table 2. Students who passed the KKM in the Pre-Test

No.	Score	Competences		Percentage (100%)
		Passed	Failed	
1.	75-100	3	-	8 %
2.	74-00	-	31	92 %
Total		34		100 %

According to Table 2, just three students, or 8%, met the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM); the remaining 31 students, or 92%, fell short. The most excellent score is 76, while the lowest is 26. It can be inferred that the vocabulary of practically all IX 1-grade pupils at SMPN 1 Bengkulu City still needed to improve and meet the Minimum standard requirements at Junior High School 1 Bengkulu City.

Post-Test 1

In post-test 1, there was an increase in student scores. I have got 15 questions for you. The post-test results revealed that the average class score increased to 73,3, representing 16 students who achieved minimum mastery Criterion KKM. According to the data in the table at the upper right-hand side, a student's percentage on this level is shown.

Table 3. Students who passed the KKM in Post-Test 1

No.	Score	Competences		Percentage (100%)
		Passed	Failed	
1.	75-100	16	-	47 %
2.	74-00	-	18	53 %
Total		34		100 %

According to Table 3, 16 pupils, or 47%, have met the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM). Meanwhile, the remaining 18 students, or 53%, fell short of the standard. The most significant possible score was 87, while the lowest was 40. It can be concluded that there is a significant increase in students' vocabulary mastery based on the student's scores.

Post-Test 2

There was an increase in student scores on post-test 2. There were a total of 15 questions. After the post-test, the class's mean score climbed to 85.9%, and 27 pupils met the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM). The table shows the proportion of students who passed the KKM.

Table 4. Students who passed the KKM in Post-Test 1

No.	Score	Competences		Percentage (100%)
		Passed	Failed	
1.	75-100	27	-	79 %
2.	74-00	-	7	21 %
Total		34		100 %

According to Table 4, 27 pupils (or 79% of the total) met the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM). Meanwhile, the remaining eight pupils, or 21%, fell short of the standard. The most significant possible score was 100, and the lowest was 67. The percentage of students who finish the KKM rises after cycle 2.

Chart 1. The Results of Students' Scores on Pre-Test, Post-Test 1, and Post-Test 2

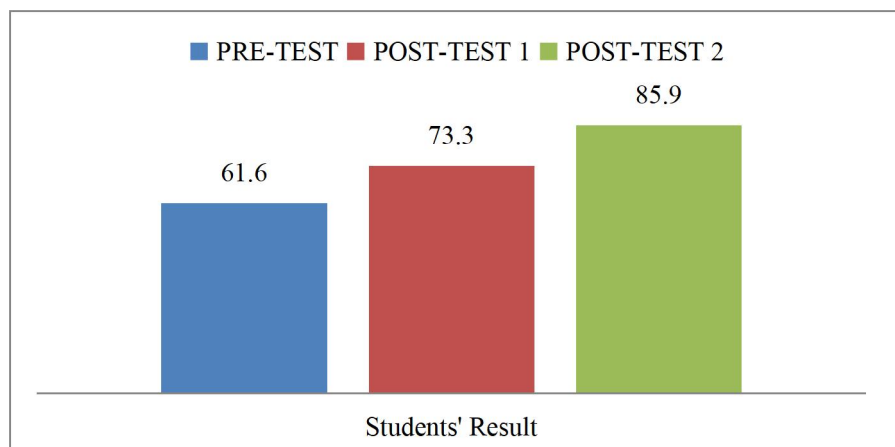


Chart 1 illustrates that adopting the Riddles approach boosts students' English Vocabulary Mastery on the Pre-Test, Post-Test 1, and Post-Test 2. It was evident from the average scores, which were 61.6 in the pre-test, 73.3 in the post-test 1, and 85.9 in the post-test 2.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was conducted after implementing Classroom Action Research (CAR). Closed questions have been included in this questionnaire. At the latest meeting, after students had been treated at the end of each cycle, a

questionnaire was presented containing ten questions. This questionnaire gathered students' views on implementing the riddles technique to increase their vocabulary. The result of the questionnaire analysis can be found here. The result of the questionnaire analysis is shown in the table below.

Table 5. Students are interested in learning vocabulary by using riddle technique

No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1	Yes	34	100
	No	0	0
Total		34	100 %

Based on the table above, all students were interested in learning vocabulary using the riddles technique. According to the data, 34 out of 100 students were happy with learning vocabulary using riddles.

Table 6. The students' agreement toward learning vocabulary using the riddles technique is more straightforward.

No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1	Yes	31	92 %
	No	3	8%
Total		34	100 %

According to Table 6, 31 students (92%) believed learning English vocabulary through riddles was simpler to execute in the classroom. In contrast, 3 students (8%) said "NO," indicating that utilizing the riddles strategy to acquire vocabulary is complicated.

Table 7. The student's obstacles in learning vocabulary

No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1	Yes	14	42%
	No	20	58%
Total		34	100 %

Based on the table above, 14 or 42% of students had obstacles in learning vocabulary. In contrast, 20 students (58%) did not have obstacles in learning vocabulary.

Table 8. The students agree that the techniques of riddles are a suitable tool for teaching vocabulary.

No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1	Yes	33	97%
	No	1	3%
Total		34	100 %

Based on the table below, 33 students thought using riddles to improve pupils' vocabulary was appropriate. In comparison, only one student (3%) stated that the riddle technique needed more appropriate media. It can be established that the riddle technique is a good one.

Table 9. The students' agreement toward if riddle technique will be (often) implemented in learning vocabulary

No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1	Yes	27	79 %
	No	7	21 %
Total		34	100 %

Table 9 revealed that 27 students (79%) agreed that the Riddles approach would be (often) used in vocabulary development. Furthermore, 7 students (21%) disagreed on whether the riddles strategy was frequently used in vocabulary acquisition.

Table 10. The students agree that learning the riddle method will improve their English language skills

No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1	Yes	34	100%
	No	0	0
Total		34	100 %

According to the table above, using riddles in teaching English vocabulary enhanced the English vocabulary of all students (100%).

Table 11. Students agree that the riddle technique is not very important in learning vocabulary

No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1	Yes	5	15 %
	No	29	85 %
Total		34	100 %

Based on the table above, 5 students, or 15 %, claimed that the riddle technique is not necessarily important in learning vocabulary. The students can use other techniques. In contrast, 29 or 85% of students said this technique is important to increase their vocabulary in English.

Table 12. Students' agreement about the riddle technique makes it easier to remember the vocabulary

No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1	Yes	31	92 %
	No	3	8 %
Total		34	100 %

Based on the data, 31 students (92%) agreed that using the riddles technique makes it easier to remember the vocabulary. In contrast, only 3 students (8%) disagreed. Using the riddles technique makes the students remember the new vocabulary more easily.

Table 13. Students' agreement about the riddles technique makes students relaxed and felt enjoyable in learning vocabulary

No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1	Yes	29	85 %
	No	5	15 %
Total		34	100 %

Based on the data, 29 students (92%) agreed that using the riddles technique made them relaxed and enjoyable during the process. In contrast, only 5 students (8%) disagreed. Using the riddles technique makes the students feel relaxed and enjoyable.

Table 14. Students agreement that the riddles technique can improve students' vocabulary

No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1	Yes	31	97 %
	No	1	3 %
Total		34	100 %

Based on the data, 31 students (97%) agreed that using the riddles technique can improve their vocabulary. In contrast, only 1 student (8%) disagrees that the riddle technique can improve students' vocabulary.

The Qualitative Data

To analyze the qualitative data, reference checklists, and field notes have been applied. Two cycles of the study, each consisting of 2 meetings and a posttest, were carried out. The observation checklist was created to learn about the instructors' and students' conduct and problems during the teaching-learning process on pre-, during, and post-teaching vocabulary. The following short description of the data can be found here. Please see below for a short explanation of the data.

The First Cycle

The observer saw that the students were interested in playing the riddle game during the first meeting, but there was still an issue with breaking the learners into groups, which made the class noisy. The students needed more focus, and they continued to need clarification on how to play this game. In this case, the teacher must learn how to run a class. The teacher should be able to handle this time effectively and efficiently. At that point, the students must bring a dictionary.

In the second meeting, the management of the class was increased. The teacher already knows how to divide and manage the groups, and the students make little noise. The observer found that the students were interested in following the teacher's instruction to play games through Riddle. However, still, some students still needed to concentrate on following the activities during the class.

The Second Cycle

The activity of the students was noted, and it shows very well that there is a satisfactory condition in class after implementing the Riddle game. The teacher's activity makes all the students active, so the atmosphere in the classroom encourages the students to follow the lesson. Using Riddle games based on research data is a way for students to memorize and retain vocabulary.

Discussion

To provide a more evident answer to research questions, this part is designed to discuss the findings. The first research question is how to improve students' vocabulary skills through riddles. It was found that students improved their ability to speak English using the riddle technique following the test. This is evident in the improvement of a student's score. The student's average score on the pre-test was 61.6. An average posttest 1 cycle 1 score of 75.3 was achieved following the implementation of the Riddle game. The average post-test 2 score was 85.9. It signifies that post-test 1 outperformed pre-test 1, and post-test 2 outperformed post-test 1. Students have responded well to the installation of the riddle game, and their results have improved as a result. Purba's 2017 study indicated that adopting a riddle strategy boosts vocabulary proficiency in primary school children.

Using a riddle game resolves to improve students' vocabulary attainment at SMP N 21 Merangin, by the findings of Wahyuni2022. According to Wahyuni, the average score on the pre-test was 52.5, 71,25 for post-test 1, and 88.3 for post-test 2. A similar finding was reported by Difa et al. 2020 who found that using the

riddle technique could improve pupils' vocabulary knowledge. According to Difa et al (2020), the use of the riddle technique not only increases students' speaking skills but also students' vocabulary mastery.

A second research question was to determine students' attitudes regarding using riddles in learning vocabulary. The writer found that, after distributing questionnaires, students responded to the riddle technique for improving vocabulary in different ways. The writer has been able to confirm that all of the students were impressed with this technique. In line with the finding from Apriandari (2019), the riddle technique had a positive effect on the students. Based on the data, all of them stated they were interested and agreed that learning vocabulary using the riddle technique can improve their English vocabulary. They showed enthusiasm to speak in the classroom and did all the assignments.

The students felt calm and joyful during the teaching and learning process in class. According to the findings of Purba (2017), student passion and excitement were increased. According to Purba (2017), using the riddle technique in the teaching and learning process resulted in good student responses. According to the research findings, the students' vocabulary increased, and most could answer the riddles fluently. Table 8's questionnaire also corroborated it, demonstrating that riddles helped students recall terminology. Furthermore, as indicated in Table 8, virtually all students believed the riddle approach was the best medium. Overall, the author believed that the riddle approach might stimulate students to acquire vocabulary and provide suitable learning material in the classroom.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

According to the study findings and debate, adopting the riddle strategy helps children enhance their vocabulary. According to their tests, their pre-test score was 61.6, 73.3 for post-test 1, and 85.9 for post-test 2. Furthermore, most students agreed that utilizing riddles to increase vocabulary knowledge was a good idea. All students were intrigued and agreed that adopting the riddle approach to study vocabulary may help them increase their English vocabulary.

Their eagerness to speak in class and complete all homework demonstrates this.

The study results showed that the students were relaxed and enjoyed the teaching and learning process in the classroom. After the research has been carried out, there are some suggestions. Including exciting learning material in the teaching, vocabulary is advisable for further research. The researcher recommended that teachers use the riddle technique in their teaching and learning process to improve the student's vocabulary skills since this method positively affected students. Providing students with curiosity, happiness, excitement, fascination, and more motivation and involvement in class, would make them want to learn new words even more.

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