

Improving the Reading Comprehension of Eleventh Grade Students at SMK Madyatama Palembang through the Use of the Keyword Method: A Classroom Action Research

Fadhilah Khairani^{*1}, Tahrur², Mulyadi³
^{1,2,3} Universitas PGRI, Palembang, Indonesia
e-mail: *1rcipao@gmail.com

Abstract

This study was to find out how much students' reading comprehension improved after the application of Keyword Method, as well as how involved the eleventh grade students at SMK Madyatama Palembang were in the learning process. Three cycles of classroom action research, or CAR, are used in the research procedure. This study is focused on improving the real condition of the English teaching and learning process to teach the improvement of the students' reading comprehension. The findings showed that there is a significant improvement of students' reading comprehension by using the application of keyword method. The students' improvement in reading skill as shown in cycle 1 was 23%, cycle 2 was 65%, and cycle 3 was 88%. It is concluded that the use of Keyword Method effectively improves the Eleventh Grade Student's Reading Comprehension at SMK Madyatama Palembang.

Keywords: *Improving, Keyword Method, Reading Comprehension*

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading provides the reader with new knowledge, fresh ideas, and access to new information. The more they read, the more effective people get at understanding what they read. According to UNESCO's survey in Central Connecticut University survey that Indonesia is second rank from bottom in the world in terms of literacy, which indicates that Indonesians have very little interest in reading (Devega, 2017). Data from UNESCO show that only 0.001% of Indonesians are interested in reading. In other words from 1.000 Indonesian only one person is the active reader. It shows reading interest of students are very low, which is really worrying.

There are some factors that makes students still lack of reading skills. One of them because English is not their mother tongue. It is supported by Dwijayani, (2019) Students' interest in reading is greatly influenced by their surroundings. As the writer's experience at SMK Madyatama Palembang in teaching reading in eleventh grade, students difficult to understand the meaning in the text while their read. Most of students also said that they also still difficult to find the main idea in the paragraph of the text. Based on the writer's observation and test at SMK Madyatama Palembang, the result of reading test at eleventh grade showed that most of the students got lower scores under the passing grade. The passing grade is 70. The writer found students' reading assessment who got score more than 80 were only 5 students

and other students got less than 70 from totally 26 students in that class. It means that many students got under the minimum passing grade.

According to Guthrie et al., (2007) students are capable improves slowly and their quality as readers declines if they have a low reading interest. It was the same as the writer's direct observation done previously where the writer reviewed the lesson by giving them some questions concerning reading comprehension, only few of them could answer those questions and the others tended to keep silent. Besides, most of the students feel bored of teaching method that given by the teacher who very monotonous. According to Wahyuningsih (2013), many teachers continue to employ teaching strategies that do not raise student engagement, focus, or craft for learning, makes a similar point. This makes learning boring for students.

There are many methods to make learning reading more effective apply in the class. One of them is by using keyword method. Keyword method is a mnemonic method that helps students to learn new material by connecting keywords with unfamiliar words so that they can remember them later. Besides, Nurgun Akar in Sukmawati, (2021) stated that keyword technique consists of associating the target word with a word that is pronounced or spelled similarly in the mother tongue, but is not necessarily related in terms of meaning and the learner may produce the visual image. This method helps students comprehend the text and can enhance their reading skills (Kurniawan et al., 1990). According to Dehn, (2008) stated that keyword technique procedure, as follows:

- 1) In the first stage, known as the acoustical connection, the student is given or chooses a concrete word (the keyword) that has the same sound as the stimulus word.
- 2) The student is then given a graphic of the term interacting with the relevant definition or response, or they can build one themselves. Instead than only discussing an image, educators should display the real picture when they are developing one.
- 3) Students are instructed to consider the keyword first while retrieving. Next, make an effort to remember pictures that include the term.

Based on the problem above, this research aims to find out the improvement of student's reading comprehension after being taught by using keyword method for eleventh grade students at SMK Madyatama Palembang.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research conducted at SMK Madyatama Palembang. It is located on Jl. Pertahanan III, Plaju, Palembang. This kind of classroom action research was used to conduct this study. The writer also conducted the research with collaborator to observe and assessing the writer while teaching in the classroom. She is an English teacher in SMK Madyatama Palembang. The subject of this research is the eleventh grade students. This research conducted On August 22rd until October, 24th 2023. The action research model that used by the writer is the classroom action research model according to Kemmis & Taggart in (Prihastuti, 2013). Three cycles are administered as part of the research processes. Four steps make up each cycle: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Before doing action research, the writer must prepare by conducting treatments or after identifying the context of the study topic. The writer prepared the materials that were used in the investigation. The writer prepared the reading materials, conducted a pre-test to assess the students' reading knowledge, created a lesson plan for the first cycle, and took field notes documenting the activities and responses of the students. The researcher developed a strategy and then carried out the treatment in line with it.

The researcher conducted a test before to starting the treatment. In this phase, students learn how to apply an action learning strategy to get better at reading. The writer also explains the purpose behind using the Keyword Method in study reading, gives assignments based on the material, and asks students to apply the Keyword Method while they read the content. The third step involved observation, during this the writer studied everything that was happening in the classroom and made notes about the teaching and learning process. The writer observed while students were instructed and acquired knowledge. Lastly was reflection. The writer applies the influence of the keyword approach that students have learned in class. If the action activity resulted in any advancement, the investigator may watch to see. Tests were employed by the writer to gather information for the observation. After that, the writer and collaborator talk about the findings, including the analysis and interpretation to conduct the next cycle.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

For the first cycle, the writer planned the activities to accommodate what was needed by students and the teacher and to create a new atmosphere in the teaching and learning process. There were 3 (three) meetings in each cycle. Three meetings for the treatment program and last meeting for assessment. The activities in each cycle consisted of planning, action, observation and reflection. The aim of this study was to find out whether applying the

keyword method, which is a useful teaching tool for English language learners, could enhance their comprehension of what they read. This study demonstrated the effectiveness of using the keyword strategy for teaching reading. The improvement in the kids' reading test scores from cycle 1 to cycle 3 can be seen in the table. This improvement was attributed to the teacher's improved classroom management. Another was that using the keyword strategy encouraged students to think critically as they learned to read. Thus, it was simple to ascertain the text's main idea. Additionally, the teacher was able to teach reading using the keyword method. From the first meeting to the third meeting, the students' test scores were improving. The students mean score, which improved with each encounter, served as evidence. The average reading test score for the students was higher than the standard minimum passing mark of 70.

Table 3.1 Improvement of Students' Reading Performance

No	Statement	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3	Improvement Percentage
1	Classical achievement	23%	65%	88%	58%
2	Students who meet the minimum requirements for completion	6	17	23	
3	Students who get a score below the minimum required for completion	20	9	3	

The writer concluded, from the preceding Table, that there was a significant difference in the classical performance in reading comprehension between Cycles 1 and 3, with Cycle 1 being 23%, Cycle 2 being 65%, and Cycle 3 being 88%. In other words, the success criterion can be completed, and by using the keyword method, students' reading comprehension of descriptive texts can be successfully improved, enabling them to meet the goal.

These are the lists of students' score in each Cycle. In Cycle 1, the highest score was 70 and the lowest was 10, and in Cycle 2 and 3 the highest score was 90 and the lowest score was 50. It can be seen the summary of students' reading improvement in Table 2.

Table 3.2 A summary of the students' progress in reading

Data	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
Classical Achievement	23%	65%	88%
Highest Score	70	90	90
Lowest Score	10	50	50

Students got high passing grade	6	17	23
Students got low passing grade	20	9	3

Based on the observation that the writer done before, the writer also found the improvement students' participation and improvements' activities in Cycles 1, 2 and 3. It can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3.3 The Increasing Participation of Students

The Result of Observation			Improvement	Improvement
Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 1 to Cycle 2	Cycle 1 to Cycle 2	Cycle 2 to Cycle 3
56%	66%	79%	10%	13%

Discussion

The final result showed that there had been significant improvements in the students' reading. It was also discovered that by applying the keyword method, the class could successfully follow the teaching and learning process. Throughout the teaching and learning process, students were attentive to their teacher. Additionally, they enjoyed reading and were excited about English, particularly when it came to reading.

The students in SMK Madyatama Palembang are very weak in English lessons. Because their vocabulary mastery is so low and they struggle to understand the words, many students fail short of the standard minimum passing grade. Students still occasionally struggle with text reading. Many times, students are so confused that they have difficulty understanding the meaning of what they read. It is the reason what almost all the students in the writer classroom got low score and cannot answer if the teacher asking the question. In this school, quite a few of students are able to read the text, but most of them struggle to identify the accurate information in it. For this reason, the research is crucial. Sometimes, when a teacher asks a student about the text, the student tries to conceal in order to avoid answer the question because they are too shy or nervous to speak in English and worry that their response will be incorrect.

After the writer applied the application of keyword method to the classroom, they motivation in reading increased. It is in line with the theory by Mikulecky & Jeffries, (2007) stated that reading is make you learn to think in the new language, develop a stronger vocabulary, and makes you relaxed with written English. So, the application of keyword method can improve students' reading comprehension. From the result of some previous study such as Sukmawati, (2021) said that the influence of using Keyword Technique can improve the students students'vocabulary mastery in he research. The other

research from (Sari, 2015) It supported by theories from M. I. Kurniawan, (2015) who stated the application of keyword method helps the students learn new information by connecting and then getting the result. According to earlier study by Alawiah, (2021) showed that both literal and interpretive understanding can be enhanced in students' reading comprehension when the Keyword Method is applied.

The keyword method is beneficial for improving reading comprehension, it could be concluded. The writer attempted to do research on "Improving Eleventh Grade Students' Reading Comprehension through the Application of Keyword Method at SMK Madyatama Palembang : A Classroom Action Research" for this purpose.

4. CONCLUSION

After the research on the use of the Keyword Method to teach reading comprehension to eleventh grade students at SMK Madyatama Palembang, conclusions show how it can improve reading comprehension according to the follows criteria:

1. The students were able to solve their problems in the reading comprehension especially in regarding identifying the text's main idea, general information, and specific information.
2. During reading the descriptive text, the students use the keyword method to expand their vocabulary.
3. There was a noticeable improvement in the students' reading comprehension in cycle 3.

It is concluded that the use of Keyword Method can improves the Eleventh Grade Student's Reading Comprehension at SMK Madyatama Palembang.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The article was put together by the writers. The first and second advisors made considerable revisions to the article. The publication was approved by the first and second advisors.

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