

# The Effectiveness of Retelling Technique in Improving Vocabulary Mastery: A Study in the Second-Grade Students of MAN Lombok Barat

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## Abstract

This study aims to investigate the effect of using retelling techniques on students' vocabulary mastery among second-grade students at MAN Lombok Barat. A quasi-experimental research design was employed, involving two groups: an experimental group that received instruction through the retelling technique and a control group that was taught using conventional methods. The population consisted of all second-grade students, while the sample included two classes selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using pre-test and post-test assessments to measure changes in vocabulary mastery. The results indicated a significant improvement in the experimental group's vocabulary performance, with an average post-test score of 71.84, compared to the control group's score of 62.08. The paired sample t-test analysis revealed a t-value of 3.583, which is higher than the critical t-table value of 2.069, leading to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) and rejection of the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). These findings align with previous studies by Mursilah (2016), Nursanti (2014), and Fadilaturrahmah (2022), which also reported that retelling techniques enhance students' language skills, particularly vocabulary acquisition and comprehension. Moreover, this result supports the theoretical framework proposed by Idayani & Fitri (2021), who emphasized the effectiveness of retelling in creating a more interactive and student-centered learning environment. In conclusion, the retelling technique has a significant positive impact on students' vocabulary mastery. Therefore, it is recommended for English teachers as an engaging and effective strategy to improve vocabulary learning outcomes.

## Keywords

retelling, vocabulary mastery, effectiveness

## INTRODUCTION

English is a tool of communication between countries or internationally in various fields such as economics, science, education and others (Crystal, 2003). Therefore, mastering English brings many benefits to the speaker. Before learning a language, learners must master vocabulary which is the basis of a language as Rivers argues in Nunan's book entitled "Language Teaching Methodology: a Textbook for Teachers" he says that vocabulary mastery is so important in the success of learning a new language (Nunan, 1991). This opinion is in accordance with the opinion of Apgrianto et al. (2019), vocabulary is influenced by the language exposure students may receive. The more the students are exposed to the language, the faster they can master the language. Moreover, Farmasari et al. (2021), said that vocabulary is the first step needed not only for written learning, but the whole process of learning a foreign language.

In Indonesia, citizens' proficiency in English is low. Based on English proficiency index data released by the Education First English Proficiency Index (EF EPI) agency in 2023, Indonesia ranked 79th out of 113 countries. There are many things that cause low English language skills, one of which is a lack of understanding of English vocabulary. Low proficiency in language is caused by various internal and external factors, one of which is low vocabulary mastery. Based on Khaerati (2021), said that difficulties in understanding English come from two factors, namely internal factors such as lack of motivation, laziness, and lack of awareness of the benefits of learning English. Other external factors include pronunciation, low vocabulary mastery, reading skills, and others.

Each stage of learning in these skills, students' vocabulary acquisition is expected to continue to increase to facilitate learning. In accordance with the opinion of Nation, in his book entitled "Teaching and Learning Vocabulary", he argues that every vocabulary that is always inserted in every chapter of student textbook material is chosen with a lot of consideration before learning begins (Nation, 1990).

According to Elmahdi & Hezam (2020), teaching vocabulary in the context of English as a foreign language is quite difficult. A teacher is required to find teaching techniques, textbooks, and learning media that are suitable for dozens of students in one class. Adjustments to the school environment, the needs and levels of different students and limited facilities contribute to the problems in the teaching process

Moreover, Jihan (2022), added that the difficulty of teaching vocabulary as a foreign language is also seen from aspects such as pronunciation, spelling, grammar, and idioms that contrast with the native language is a big factor for students to master vocabulary. This opinion is in accordance with Harmer (1991), in his book argues that teaching vocabulary is more than just presenting new words to students.

In the process of improving students' vocabulary acquisition, teachers must be smart in choosing strategies and methods according to the problems in the classroom. Currently, the problems of school students are not only in the absorption of learning materials but simple activities as an effort to increase the absorption of learning materials, one of which is reading

Based on argument of Clay (2000), an educational psychologist from New Zealand in her research on early-stage reading learning, she highlights how important reading

comprehension is for readers of texts because reading is a problem-solving process. The more a person reads, the faster he understands the meaning or understands the information in the text

In the world of education, reading comprehension is a must-have for students to be able to absorb the subject matter well. In fact, students in Indonesia are experiencing a literacy crisis, their reading comprehension is lacking because they cannot develop reading habits and interest in reading (OCED, 2019; Wiranatha & Santosa, 2024).

According to the new PISA 2022 data announced on December 5, 2023, Indonesia's reading ranking rose from 74th in 2018 to 71st in 2022. Although Indonesia's reading ranking has improved, the score still shows that Indonesia's interest in reading is still below average. This is a big problem in every school in Indonesia, most students only read the subject matter when instructed by the teacher (Sukci & Fitriati, 2025). The absence of interest in reading and the development of reading habits from an early age are the main factors in this literacy crisis.

In order to address the issue of students' low vocabulary mastery and to foster a greater interest in reading, the application of retelling techniques in the learning process can be considered an effective approach for teachers to implement. According to Mursilah (2016), retelling is a method in which teachers provide a text to students, who then retell its content in their own words. This technique is commonly used to enhance students' reading comprehension and to create a more engaging classroom atmosphere by encouraging them to perform in front of their peers. Nursanti (2014) supports this view, stating that retelling provides students with the opportunity to present their understanding of reading materials orally, thus promoting active participation and interaction in class.

Furthermore, Idayani & Fitri (2021) explain that retelling involves conveying the results of reading through storytelling or informational sharing. This activity typically uses expressive language and intonation, making it easier and more enjoyable for listeners to understand the message being delivered. Fadilaturrahmah (2022) also highlights that retelling is an effective strategy for improving various aspects of English language learning, including vocabulary development and overall language skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

In practice, retelling places students at the center of the learning process. They are assigned to read a text carefully, write a summary of its content, and then present it to their classmates. In this process, students not only develop their comprehension but also engage in meaningful communication. Johnson, as cited in Tis'ah et al. (2023), explains that retelling is one of the most direct and interactive teaching techniques, where students actively respond to and discuss the information presented by their peers. This dynamic interaction contributes to a livelier and more participatory classroom environment.

Additionally, retelling allows students to interpret texts based on their own understanding, making the learning experience more relaxed and enjoyable. Regis-Onuohua (2021) argues that retelling helps students improve their ability to analyze and interpret reading materials effectively. While this technique is often applied using narrative texts, this study employs exposition texts as the reading material. Students work in groups to analyze the texts and identify unfamiliar

vocabulary, thereby enhancing both their comprehension and vocabulary mastery.

Motivated by these benefits, the researcher conducted a study titled *"The Effectiveness of Retelling in Improving Vocabulary Mastery: A Study on Second Grade Students of MAN Lombok Barat."* The purpose of this research was to investigate how retelling as a learning strategy impacts students' ability to understand and retain new vocabulary within the context of both fiction and non-fiction texts.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study was a quantitative research that employed a quasi-experimental method with pre-test, treatment, and post-test to determine the effectiveness of the retelling technique in improving students' vocabulary mastery. This type of research compared the achievement results of students from two groups: the control group and the experimental group (Shadish et al., 2002). This design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to observe the impact of the intervention in a relatively controlled educational setting, even without full randomization. The flow of this study began with administering a pre-test to both groups. After that, the experimental group received vocabulary instruction using the retelling technique as the treatment. At the end of the treatment stage, both the control group and the experimental group were given a post-test to measure the difference in vocabulary scores.

## Population and Sample

Population is the whole object involved in research, while the sample is part of the population (Creswell, 2012). This study used purposive sampling as a sampling technique to select research participants after considering certain criteria such as the number of students and the same average level of students' English language ability. Purposive sampling is typically used when a limited number of people have expertise in the area being studied (Sugiyono, 2016). The population of this study were all grade II students of MAN Lombok Barat in the 2024/2025 school year, totaling 201 students. The samples of this study were students of class XI SOS 3 with 25 students as the experimental group and XI SOS 1 with 25 students as the control group.

## Data Collection Technique

Data collection used as research instruments are pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was conducted at the first meeting, then the treatment was given at the second, third, and fourth meetings. While the post-test was conducted at the fifth meeting. The number of test questions is the same, namely 20 questions with an arrangement of 15 multiple choice questions and 5 fill-in questions.

## Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure in this study was organized into 3 activities: pre-test, treatment, and post-test.

### 1. Pre-test

This test is carried out on the first day of meeting at school. Students will be given a test containing 20 questions, consisting of 15 multiple choice questions and 5 fill-in questions. The questions given are all related to the exposition text listed. The pre-test was conducted to measure students' initial ability before treatment. The processing time is 60 minutes.

## 2. Treatment

The treatment was given on the second, third, and fourth meetings with an allocation of 60 minutes for each meeting. In the experimental group class, students were divided into working groups to increase class activity. Each group was given a different exposition text and asked to summarize the content of the given exposition text to be told in front of the class. In the process of summarizing, students were asked to collect some foreign vocabulary to be analyzed together and made into new vocabulary when telling the summary of the exposition text. For the control group class, the treatment given was different from the experimental group, the control group learned using conventional techniques as the teacher usually gave. The researcher instructed the student to memorize a number of vocabulary and look up their meaning without any additional activities.

## 3. Post-test

The post-test was conducted on the fifth meeting to re-measure students' ability in vocabulary mastery after the treatment was carried out. The post-test questions were the same as the pre-test questions with a total of 20 questions consisting of 15 multiple choice questions and 5 fill-in questions with a time allocation of 60 minutes.

## Data Analysis

1. Classifying student grades into categories, Azwar (2010), classifies grades into six categories such as:

Table 1. Score categories

No.	Category	Score range
1	Very good	80-100
2	Good	66-79
3	Fair	56-65
4	Low	40-55
5	Very Low	≤39

2. Calculating the average value of the experimental group and control group
3. Determine the standard deviation of experimental group and control group scores
4. Determining data results using t-test statistics

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data from the study, the learning outcomes were analyzed by comparing the scores of the experimental and control groups. The average value of the experimental group pre-test was 55.84, and it increased to 71.84 in the post-test, while the control group's average score was 55.68 in the pre-test and rose to 62.08 in the post-test. The standard deviation for the experimental group's pre-test was 7.985, and for the post-test, it was 9.154. Meanwhile, the standard deviation for the control group's pre-test was 7.080, and for the post-test, it was 9.129. A paired sample t-test was conducted, resulting in a t-value of 3.583, which is higher than the t-table value of 2.069, indicating a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores in the experimental group.

## Discussion

This study aims to identify the use of retelling technique in improving the vocabulary of second grade students of MAN Lombok Barat. The data obtained from the pre-test and post-test that have been analyzed show that there

is a significant difference between the class that uses the retelling technique and the class that does not use it. In the experimental group, students were directed to form groups to analyze, collect foreign words, summarize and retell the results of the analysis and the foreign words they found. The implementation of learning in this group is also an effort to increase activeness in the classroom as Hidayat & Sari (2019) argue, saying that group learning is very effective in making students enthusiastic and increasingly motivated in the learning process. On the other hand, the control group carried out learning with conventional methods that the teacher always gave, namely memorizing some vocabulary directly through the dictionary or can be called rote memorization. Based on Qu & Rahman (2024), classes that rely on memorizing vocabulary through dictionaries tend to develop slowly. This technique is considered boring and makes students quickly forget the memorized vocabulary.

In the pre-test and post-test of the two groups that have been analyzed, it was found that the average score of the pre-test in the experimental group is 55.84 and the control class is 55.68 which is not much different. On the other hand, the average post-test score of the experimental group that was treated by using retelling as a teaching technique scored 71.84 which is in the good category, while the control group that was taught with direct teaching where the teacher gave a collection of vocabulary to be memorized by the students scored an average of 62.08 which is in the fair category. From these results, it is evident that the use of retelling technique is effective in improving vocabulary acquisition. This is in line with Nation's (2001), which states that vocabulary acquisition can be improved through repeated exposure and meaningful use in context, as in retelling activities, which help strengthen memory and expand vocabulary. This is also supported by Besral et al. (2019), in their research showed that retelling activities not only strengthen students' vocabulary mastery, but also speaking and grammar understanding. The findings of this study support the idea that retelling can serve as an effective vocabulary learning strategy. This technique allows students to process the text more deeply by reconstructing it in their own words, which encourages active use of newly encountered vocabulary. In addition, retelling promotes speaking and listening skills, making vocabulary acquisition more dynamic and interactive. As students repeatedly engage with the same vocabulary items in varied contexts, their retention and understanding improve significantly.

Moreover, from the Paired Sample Test aimed at determining the significance resulted in a t-count of 3.583 and a t-table of 2.069. Because the t-count is greater than the t-table ( $3.583 > 2.069$ ) it means that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected. So the conclusion of this study is that there is a significant difference in vocabulary mastery of second grade students of MAN Lombok Barat before and after using retelling technique.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the retelling method is an effective approach to improve students' vocabulary acquisition and their engagement during classroom learning. The effectiveness of this technique is proven through the post-test results which show that the average score of students in the experimental class reached 71.84, which is classified as good. In comparison, the average

score of students in the control class only amounted to 62.08, which fell into the fair category. This difference indicates that the use of retelling techniques has a significant positive impact on student learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the results of statistical analysis through the t-test showed a figure of 3.583, which is significantly greater than the t-table value of 2.069. This strengthens the conclusion that there is a significant difference between the experimental and control classes, so the alternative hypothesis (Ha) proposed in this study is accepted. Thus, retelling technique can be recommended as an effective learning strategy, especially in improving vocabulary mastery and students' active participation in class.

Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that teachers use the retelling technique to improve students' vocabulary and class engagement. Future research may explore its effectiveness in other language skills and proficiency levels. Schools should also support teacher training to implement such interactive methods effectively.

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