

Improving surgical residents' medical vocabulary mastery through seminars in English

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Abstract: *The objective of this research was to investigate the improvement of students' medical vocabulary mastery through seminars in English. The design used in this research was classroom action research that includes planning, action, observation, and reflection. The result of the study showed that Sig. is $0.000 < 0.005$, so there is a statistically significant difference in the average value of test scores before and after students participating in seminars in English. It shows that there was an improvement of the students' vocabulary mastery before and after the research.*

Key words: *English vocabulary, seminars in English, vocabulary mastery*

1. Introduction

Medical knowledge is constantly updated, especially with domestic and international scientific research. After learning specialized knowledge from domestic books and sources, medical staff need to supply knowledge from international documents and magazines to improve the quality of medical examination and treatment. Therefore, it can be seen that foreign language proficiency is currently very important, especially for young medical staff resources. Medical programs often integrate foreign language subjects appropriate to the training major. Thai Nguyen University of Medicine and Pharmacy, with the vision of developing into a key university with advanced, excellent and integrated training programs, has proactively introduced specialized foreign language courses (specialized English) into teaching for students from first year to post graduate. For this reason, to help students master specialized English and be able to apply it fluently in professional practice, teaching specialized English vocabulary is given top priority because without vocabulary, learners cannot be expressed using the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing.

According to Murcia (2001), vocabulary learning is central to language acquisition, whether first language, second language or foreign language. Doctors can be proficient in communicating with patients, reading and understanding professional documents in English or writing academic correspondence with other foreign doctors if they can master a lot of English vocabulary. within their field

of expertise. Since vocabulary is an important aspect of language, it appears in all language listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Mastering vocabulary is very important for students who study English as a foreign language, especially specialized English. Therefore, to improve vocabulary and create motivation and interest in learning specialized English, lecturers need to flexibly apply many teaching methods as well as create school subjects that are close to the reality of professional contexts. Research on improving the ability to master specialized English vocabulary used in expertise and professional practice on surgical residents is necessary and has scientific significance. Therefore, the research aims to investigate whether the surgical residents at Thai Nguyen University of medicine and pharmacy improve their vocabulary mastery through seminars in English.

2. Content

2.1. Literature review

2.1.1. Definitions vocabulary and vocabulary mastery

Hatch and Brown (1995) define vocabulary as a list or collection of terms exclusive to a language or a list of words used by individual language speakers. The alphabetical order is the sole mechanism at play because vocabulary is a list. Important considerations include the terminology that is chosen and the instructional strategies that are employed. According to Allen French (1983), understanding the meaning of words requires the process of learning in context. Understanding word meanings is a key component of second language proficiency and is one of the

main objectives of language acquisition.

Vocabulary, according to Burns and Broman (1975), is a person's or a class's collection of terms that are widely used and yet have significant differences. Developing a vocabulary is the most important aspect of learning any language. Acquisition of vocabulary is therefore necessary for success in learning English. A learner's ability to learn English cannot be guaranteed by a huge vocabulary, but having an inadequate vocabulary will hinder their progress. Nunan also emphasizes the value of language mastery in learning. According to Nunan (1998), one of the most crucial aspects of learning a second language is expanding one's vocabulary.

Being proficient in vocabulary has always been crucial to learning English. According to Lewis and Hill (1990y), pupils need to master vocabulary. For the sake of communication, grammar is more than just rules, especially in the beginning when pupils are eager to pick up the fundamentals. Students who lack a proportionate vocabulary in English will find it challenging to use the language.

The criteria of generalization (the ability to define words) and application (choosing an acceptable use for it) can be used to gauge a person's mastery of vocabulary. Furthermore, "Receptive and Productive knowledge may prove the only realistic way to measure depth of vocabulary knowledge," according to Schmitt and Mc Charty (1997). Words that students can identify and comprehend when they come across them in a context are known as receptive knowledge.

Furthermore, according to Madsen (1983), the goal of a vocabulary test is to gauge a student's ability to comprehend and produce words whether speaking or writing. It is possible to define vocabulary mastery as having a thorough understanding of the vocabulary and meanings of a given language.

2.1.2. The role of seminars in educational environment

Seminars play a crucial role in the classroom environment for several reasons, including improving active Learning, critical thinking, communication skills, collaborative skills and especially preparation for real-world situations. Participating in seminars, especially seminars in English helps students develop English skills that are valuable in various real-world situations through contact of clinical cases and medical problems. The ability to communicate in English effectively, think critically, and collaborate

with others are essential skills for success in many career paths. Moreover, seminars promote critical reading and writing skills as participants read a wide range of sources and synthesize data that serves the purpose of the seminar (Padgett, Keup, & Pascarella, 2013; Plymouth, 2011). They also help the participants to reinforce their vocabulary and terminologies in major subjects.

2.2. The study

2.2.1. Participants

Twenty-four surgical residents who are surgery post-graduate students from two classes participated in this study.

2.2.2. Research method

An action research with one cycle was applied in 4 months. The data collection instruments were Pre-test and Post-test which was based on the indicators in the theory of teaching vocabulary studied before. They were given to the students at the end of every cycle to measure the student improvement in their vocabulary mastery. The collected data were analyzed by SPSS software 22.0

2.3. Findings and discussion

The research was conducted in twenty-four surgical residents. The problem about the students' low medical vocabulary mastery and their low motivation in English for medical purpose also needed to improve. The researcher chose to coordinate with the department of Surgery to organize professional seminars in English to solve the problem.

The action research was implemented in several stages: planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The acting and observing was conducted in the same time. It was in the three meeting. The plan was designing the vocabulary tasks relating to the content of specialized subjects. The researcher combines the activity in seminars and drilling to improve the students' vocabulary mastery in surgery their motivation. After analyzing the observation result in the research cycle, the researcher did reflection in order to evaluate the teaching and learning process she did so far.

The findings of this study discuss effectiveness of participating in seminars in English in improving surgical residents' English medical vocabulary mastery.

The results of the pretest and post-test show that the average pre-test score is 55.9 and the average post-test score is 76.6. Maximum score of pre-test

is 71, maximum score of post-test is 92, Minimum score of the pre-test was 42, the minimum score of the post-test was 55. Then, the researchers continued to analyze the data using SPSS.

The following is test normality.

Table 2: Test normality

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Pre-test	.127	24	.200*	.935	24	.128
Post-test	.163	24	.100	.917	24	.051

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The table shows analysis of test normality. The Significance of the pre-test level was 0.200 and the post-test level was 0.100. The data is higher than 0.05 so the data is normal. As a result, the researchers continued to analyze paired samples

Table 3: Paired samples test

Paired Samples Test									
Mean		Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
Pair 1	Pre-test - Post-test	-20.6667	7.1181	1.4530	-23.6724	-17.6610	-14.224	23	.000

The results from the table shows that Significance is $0.000 < 0.005$, so the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is a statistically significant difference in the average value of test scores before and after students participating in seminars in English.

Based on the above statistics, the results of this study show that the improvement in Vocabulary Mastery of surgical residents can be expressed through an increase in the average pre-test score of 55.9 and the Posttest mean value 76.6. Finally, the results of Significance is $0.000 < 0.005$. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. This also means that writing seminar reports and participating in seminar reports in English are really effective in improving the ability of resident medical students to master specialized English vocabulary.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, Research data shows that organizing specialized reporting sessions in English has contributed to improving the ability of resident medical students to fluently use specialized English vocabulary. This is shown through the test scores

before and after the resident doctors attended specialized reporting sessions in English and wrote and produced reports related to the field of surgery. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that participating in seminars in English really contributes to helping surgical residents improve their proficiency in specialized English vocabulary.

Having concluded the result of the research, the research would like to propose some suggestion for English teacher, the institution of education, and also for the other researcher. The suggestions are described as follow:

- For Teachers

The teacher should be creative and be bright to select to design tasks and activities in seminars with the reports about surgical specialty. Therefore, post graduate students can learn vocabulary through clinical cases and reports in the seminars, so that it can increase their proficiency in using English for specific purpose in real contexts.

- For Students

The students should be active and motivated to learn English in medicine, especially in surgery. They learn not only to find great number but also to gain experiences and their knowledge. They can practice English in their job, everywhere and every time.

- For University

The education institution should support facilities to the teacher of the teaching. Especially, postgraduate studies department should carry out a lot of specialized seminars in English for postgraduate students to improve their competence in English for specific purpose.

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