

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DRILL METHOD IN ENHANCING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY

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ABSTRACT

An essential part of learning a language is expanding one's vocabulary, which helps students comprehend and communicate concepts clearly. However, due to little practice and uninteresting teaching strategies, many primary school pupils still struggle to remember and use new words. For young students to enhance their language ability and build their memory, repetitive and systematic practice is thought to be crucial. The drill method is used here as a teaching strategy that prioritizes ongoing practice and reinforcement. This study used a one-group pretest-posttest methodology using a pre-experimental design 32 fifth-grade students of SDN Pelem 1 Pare in the academic year of 2025/2026. These two factors beforehand and afterwards the treatment process, Tests of vocabulary were used to gather information. The findings demonstrated an improvement in the pupils' vocabulary mastery as evidenced by the higher post-test scores when compared to the pre-test results. The student achievements before and after the therapy was given differed significantly, according to statistical analysis using a paired sample t-test these findings suggest that the drill method is effective in enhancing elementary school students' vocabulary mastery.

Keywords: *drill method, vocabulary mastery, elementary students*

ABSTRAK

Bagian penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa adalah memperluas kosakata, karena hal ini membantu siswa memahami dan mengkomunikasikan konsep dengan jelas. Namun, karena kurangnya latihan dan strategi pengajaran yang kurang menarik, banyak siswa sekolah dasar masih mengalami kesulitan dalam mengingat dan menggunakan kosakata baru. Bagi siswa usia dini, latihan yang berulang dan sistematis dianggap sangat penting untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbahasa serta memperkuat daya ingat mereka. Metode drill digunakan dalam konteks ini sebagai strategi pembelajaran yang menekankan pada latihan yang berkelanjutan dan penguatan. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain pre-eksperimental dengan pendekatan one-group pretest-posttest yang melibatkan 32 siswa kelas V SDN Pelem 1 Pare pada tahun ajaran 2025/2026. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes kosakata digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya peningkatan dalam penguasaan kosakata siswa penguasaan kosakata siswa yang

ditunjukkan melalui nilai post-test yang lebih tinggi dibandingkan pre-test. Prestasi siswa sebelum dan sesudah perlakuan diberikan menunjukkan perbedaan yang signifikan, berdasarkan analisis statistik menggunakan uji *paired sample t-test* temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa metode drill efektif dalam meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa sekolah dasar.

Kata Kunci: metode *drill*, penguasaan kosakata, siswa sekolah dasar

A. Introductions

Vocabulary is a fundamental component of language learning that plays an important part in assisting pupils in comprehending and successfully expressing concepts. Without sufficient vocabulary mastery, students will face difficulties in strengthening more language abilities including speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Therefore, vocabulary becomes the foundation of English language learning, particularly in elementary school. In actuality, though, a lot of primary school pupils still struggle with language acquisition.

Students often forget new words easily, have trouble understanding word meanings, and lack confidence in using them in communication. A whole variety of reasons can trigger of this problem: limited practice, not sustained exposure and less engaging teaching methods you are using than previously. Most of the practice of using their knowledge, were just straight translations. But this has had

a counter-productive consequence. Consequently, students' vocabulary learning is low and has a direct effect on their overall language performance.

In elementary school contexts, these difficulties become more significant because young learners have shorter attention spans and require concrete and repetitive learning activities (Adi, Ifianti, & Astuti, 2024). If vocabulary learning is conducted only through memorization without sufficient reinforcement, students tend to lose interest and quickly forget what they have learned (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Therefore, it is necessary to apply appropriate teaching methods that are simple, structured, and able to support students' memory and engagement. One of the teaching methods that can be used to address this issue is the drill method. The drill method emphasizes repeated and structured practice, which helps students strengthen their memory,

improve pronunciation, and achieve better accuracy in using vocabulary. Through regular practice that increases accuracy and confidence, the drilling method has been shown to be helpful in helping pupils improve their speaking abilities (Abrar & Widiati, 2024). Even though drill is frequently seen as a conventional approach, prior research has demonstrated that it is still useful in enhancing students' vocabulary knowledge, particularly when paired with relevant learning resources. The drill approach uses organized, repeated practice to increase speaking fluency (Jinan, 2024). Additionally, using accompanying material is crucial to improving the learning process's engagement. Flashcards are one of the easy-to-use and efficient medium. Flashcards offer visual aids that make it easier for pupils to comprehend and retain terminology. Additionally, they are useful, reasonably priced, and appropriate for primary school pupils who learn best via tangible and visual experiences. Students in the fifth grade continued to have poor vocabulary knowledge, according to initial observations made at SDN Pelem 1 Pare. Many students

mispronounced words, struggled to recall their meanings, and lacked confidence while speaking English in class. These circumstances point to the necessity of an efficient teaching method that may enhance students' vocabulary knowledge through organized, repetitive practice that is supported by appropriate media (Adi, A., Ifianti, T., & Astuti, E. S. 2024).

Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine how well the drill approach improves the vocabulary knowledge of primary school pupils. This study specifically looks at fifth-grade pupils at SDN Pelem 1 Pare and compares their vocabulary knowledge before and after the drill approach was used. Educational institutions are expected to get beneficial knowledge from what was discovered in the investigation, pupils and upcoming researchers in enhancing primary school language acquisition. It is well acknowledged that mastery of vocabulary is essential to language learning because it allows students to successfully understand and communicate meaning in a variety of communication scenarios (Arihakam, 2023). A limited vocabulary repertoire often hinders students from developing other essential language

skills, including reading comprehension, writing, speaking, and listening (Schmitt, 2008). As a result vocabulary is the foundation for learning English as a foreign language, it starts to become even more important for students in elementary school. One teaching method that follows these principles is the drill technique. Drill practice gives pupils consistent, purposeful repetition, which enhances their learning results (Darmuki, Hidayati, & Verliana, 2022). This approach, which emphasizes repeated practice and reinforcement, can aid children in internalizing vocabulary, enhancing pronunciation accuracy, and developing language usage automaticity (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). When used properly in language classes, the drill method—which is sometimes seen as a conventional approach—remains applicable and successful. Additionally, prior research has shown that methodical repetition significantly improves students' vocabulary memory (Alqahtani, 2015).

B. Research Methodology

This research used a pre-experimental design with a one-group

pretest-posttest model and a quantitative methodology. By comparing the achievement of students before and after the therapy, this approach was used to assess how well the drill method improved students' vocabulary mastery. The research was conducted at SDN Pelem 1 Pare during the academic year of 2025/2026. The participants of this study were fifth-grade students consisting of 32 learners. The sample was selected using a total sampling technique, in which all students in the class were involved as research subjects. A vocabulary exam intended in determining student behavior vocabulary proficiency served as the study's instrument. The test consisted of multiple-choice and matching items that assessed students' ability to recognize word meanings, understand vocabulary in context, and use appropriate words correctly. The test was administered twice, namely as a pre-test before the implementation of the drill method and as a post-test after the treatment. The procedure of the research was carried out in three main stages. First, the to determine the student's starting level of

vocabulary competence, a pre-test was given. Second, the drill approach was used in several instructional sessions to provide the psychological treatment. During the treatment, students were engaged in repeated and structured practice activities, including pronunciation drills, word repetition, and vocabulary exercises supported by flashcards as visual media. Third, the post-test was used for assessing students at their level of vocabulary mastery following the intervention. The pre-test and post-test scores' significance values (Sig.) are both higher than 0.05, according to Table 2. This suggests that the distribution of the data is normal. The pre-test and post-test data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were utilized to calculate the students' an average performance scores, while a paired sample t-test was employed for inferential analysis to assess if the students' performances before and after the therapy changed substantially.

C. Results and Discussion

The way students pre-test and post-test scores were compared to determine the study's findings. The

post-test was given following the treatment, whereas the pre-test was carried out before to the drill method's adoption.

Table 1. Recapitulation of Pre-test and Post-test Results of Students' Vocabulary Mastery

No	Measure	Pre-test	Post-test
1.	Highest Score	75	95
2.	Lowest Score	30	65
3.	Mean Score	55.16	64.84
4.	Standards Deviation	25.61	26.07

The following table shows that following the execution of the drill approach, pupils' vocabulary mastery increased. The highest score increased from 75 in the pre-test to 95 in the post-test. Similarly, the lowest score also showed improvement, rising from 30 to 65. This indicates that not only high-achieving students benefited from the treatment, but also those with lower initial ability.

Additionally, the standard deviation score rose from 55.16 in the pre-test to 64.84 in the post-test. This increase shows that following instruction utilizing the drill approach, pupils' vocabulary mastery generally improved. Although the increase is moderate, it still reflects a positive

impact of the treatment on students' learning outcomes. The standard deviation of the score distribution increased little from 25.61 to 26.07. This implies that while overall performance improved, there was still diversity among students' results. Depending on their unique learning styles, pupils may have reacted differently to the therapy, as indicated by the rise in standard deviation.

Table 2. Result of Normality Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk	
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df
Religiusitas	.132	32	.168	.935	32
Agresivitas	.183	32	.008	.893	32

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The normality test was conducted to determine whether the data were normally distributed, which is a requirement for applying parametric tests such as the paired sample t-test. The pre-test and post-test scores' significance values (Sig.) are both higher than 0.05, according to Table 2. This suggests that the distribution of the information provided is normal. The paired sample t-test should be used for extra investigation as the data satisfy the expectation of normality.

Table 3. Hypothesis Test Result
Paired Samples Test

Pair	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
1	PRE TEST - POST TEST	-8.60750	18.66243	3.29908	-16.41002	-2.95898	31	.005

To ascertain if there was a significant difference between the students' vocabulary mastery ahead of and following the therapy, the paired sample t-test was employed. Based on Table 3, the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) is below 0.05. This suggests that the pre-test and post-test results differ significantly. To put it another way, the second hypothesis (H_1) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. It was determined that this indicates that using the drill approach improves students' vocabulary mastery in a statistically meaningful way. Students' increased post-test scores above their pre-test results attest to the beneficial effects of frequent, controlled experimentation on vocabulary acquisition.

Table 4. N-Gain Test Result

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.
					Deviation
X1	32	10.00	95.00	55.1563	25.60508
X2	32	25.00	100.00	64.8438	26.07323
Valid N (listwise)	32				

In addition, the N-Gain test result showed that the improvement of

students' vocabulary mastery was in the moderate category. This finding indicates that the drill method was effective enough in improving students' vocabulary, although there is still room for further improvement with the use of additional or combined teaching strategies. These findings are in line with the theory proposed by Richards and Rodgers (2014), which states that the drill method emphasizes repetition and reinforcement that can strengthen students' memory and improve language accuracy. Through repeated practice, students become more familiar with vocabulary and are able to recall words more easily.

Additionally, Alqahtani (2015), who emphasizes the value of ongoing practice in vocabulary development, is supported by the results. Drill exercises enable pupils to participate actively in their education and improve their retention of new vocabulary. For primary school pupils, who often learn best via repetition and controlled activities, this is especially crucial. The usage of flashcards as supplementary materials in the classroom also helped pupils get better.

Visual aids helped students understand word meanings more

easily and made the learning process more engaging. As a result, students were more motivated to participate in vocabulary exercises. Therefore, the study's findings show that the drill approach is a useful teaching technique for improving primary school learners' vocabulary comprehension. The improvement in students' scores, supported by statistical analysis, confirms that repeated and structured practice plays an important role in vocabulary learning.

D. Conclusion

According to the study's findings, it can be claimed that using the drill method improves students' vocabulary mastery. The improvement in pupils' results through the pre-test to the post-test is proof of this, as well as the results of the paired sample t-test which showed a significant difference between students' performance before and after the treatment. The use of repeated and structured practice in the drill method helps students to better understand, remember, and use new vocabulary. Additionally, using supplementary materials like flashcards helps make studying more interesting and

significant for primary school students as well (Schmitt & Schmitt, 2022).

Therefore, the drill method can be considered as an appropriate teaching strategy for improving vocabulary mastery, especially for young learners at the elementary school level (Zou & Xie, 2022). The use of a pre-experimental design with no a control group is one of the study's shortcomings, though. Future researchers are suggested to use more rigorous research designs, such as quasi-experimental or experimental methods, in order to obtain more comprehensive results. In addition, combining the drill method with other interactive teaching techniques is recommended to further enhance students' vocabulary learning outcomes (Lei & Reynolds, 2022).

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