



Implementing Listen, Repeat, and Trace (LRT) Technique to Improve Students' English Vocabularies.

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ABSTRACT

This research explored the effectiveness of the Listen, Repeat, and Trace technique in enhancing students' English vocabularies. Employing the Collaborative Classroom Action Research, the researchers conducted this study in two cycles using pre- and post-tests to assess students' vocabularies enhancement. Each cycle consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection stages to investigate all 31 students at the eighth grade of one high school in Jambi Province, Indonesia. The results revealed a significant improvement of learners' English vocabularies after they received the LRT treatment technique. Moreover, the average score from both post-test in cycle 1 and cycle 2 significantly increased. The mean score of cycle 1 was 74.36 (14 students or 46% who passed Minimum Mastery Criterion), while in cycle 2 was 85.32 (25 students or 81 % who passed Minimum Mastery Criterion). This technique offered a pedagogical approach that goes beyond traditional rote memorization methods, providing students with a dynamic and engaging learning experience. Ultimately, the LRT technique promoted a positive learning environment by fostering student engagement and motivation. The interactive nature of the technique encouraged active participation and collaboration among students leading to better language learning experience. Thus, the educators are expected to implement the LRT technique as an innovative strategy to promote vocabulary development and enrich language learning outcomes.

1. Introduction

Language is an essential tool of communication in human life. Among the various languages spoken in the world, English has become the most important global language. English is not only used as the official language in many countries and international organizations, but it has also become the primary language in business, education, technology, and media communications. The significance of the English language reflects the cultural and economic dominance of English-speaking countries such as the United States and England. Mastering the English language provides significant competitive advantages, opening doors to new opportunities and possibilities in careers, travel, and interactions with people from diverse cultures. Furthermore, English also provides broader access to knowledge and global information sources through the internet, academic publications, and

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translated literature. Therefore, investing in learning English is a wise step in fostering intercultural relationships, expanding perspectives, and enhancing competitiveness in this global era.

Teaching English in a country whose first language or second language is not English is quite difficult. Teachers should struggle hard to teach the students. Unique challenges might be faced by the teachers, especially when the English vocabulary of the students is limited. In such contexts, educators face the daunting task of expanding the vocabulary of students who have minimal exposure to the language. The limited exposure to English vocabulary in everyday life, media, and education hampers students' ability to comprehend and express themselves effectively in English. This lack of vocabulary significantly impacts their language proficiency and overall communication skills. Understanding the characteristics of learners is importance when teaching English. Every student is unique, with varying backgrounds, learning styles, and language proficiency levels. Recognizing and catering to these individual characteristics can greatly enhance the effectiveness of teaching instruction. According to Krashen (2009), a renowned language acquisition theorist, understanding students' current language level helps teachers provide appropriate input that aligns with their comprehension abilities. By knowing students' starting point, teachers can tailor their instruction and scaffold new knowledge based on students' existing linguistic skills. When a student wants to say something in the second or target language, s/he will find words more struggle than grammar or pronunciation. Thus, the students employed several strategies to master the English vocabularies. Schmit (1997) proposed two strategies including discovery and consolidation strategies in which discovery allows the students to find the target word in a dictionary or guess it from the context. Meanwhile, consolidation include such collaboration with somebody else to help students denote certain lexicons.

Engaging certain strategies to enhance students' vocabularies in learning foreign language has been numerous topics discussed by previous studies. Adzillina & Hasanah (2021) exposed the use of multisensory methods including visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile (VAKT) principles in teaching kindergarten students. They denoted young learners master the vocabularies at their best when their teachers employ the multisensory method in the classroom. Meanwhile, using paper flashcards and digital flashcards as media in vocabulary enhancement for the first grade students of high school showed no significant differences (Hidayat, et al., 2025). On the other hand, Solehudin et al., (2024) investigated significant improvement in terms of students' motivation, engagement, learning outcomes, vocabularies, and listening ability when the teachers used the AI-generated songs as media of Arabic class learning process. Otoluwa et al., (2022) proved that story telling is effective to enhance young learners' English vocabularies. However, all the previous studies mostly involved young learners in kindergarten and primary schools. However, those studies measure the students whose classroom environment in quite sophisticated using multimodal. On the other hand, this current research involved junior high school students using the simple Learn, Repeat, and Trace (LRT) Technique and observed its effectivity through the results from pre-test and post-test.

The current researchers were pre-service teachers who teach in this school and engage with mostly students in the eight grade. Based on the observation and the result of diagnostic test given to these students, it was found that they had lack of vocabulary. They did not even know the meaning of many simple words such as 'open', 'close', 'sit down', 'stand up', etc. Another fact showed that most all of the students of the eighth grade at one junior high school in Jambi Province, Indonesia did not have any English dictionary, while they were not allowed to bring their phones to school. To address this issue, the researchers created an innovative learning technique called the LRT (Listen, Repeat, and Trace) technique and implemented it in the class. LRT was also implemented repeatedly

and continuously, supported by a specific instructional material called LRT Worksheets, which provide students with opportunities for continuous practice to master the language concepts taught and improve fluency and accuracy in English communication. The use of LRT specifically aimed at answering the only vital question; How can the LRT technique enhance students' English vocabularies? Thus, the implementation of LRT in this class was expected to increase students' vocabularies leading indirectly to their self-confidence, learning motivation, and their active engagement in learning activities.

1.1. The Concept of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is very essential since it forms simple sentences and plays significant role as the basic means to engage in a communication, particularly in foreign language learning in order to have clear meaning or meaningful interaction (Alqahtani, 2015; Fahmiati, 2016; Nation (2001; 2005); Maximo (2000); Read (2000; 2004); Gu (2003); Marion (2008); and Susanto (2016). The extent to how important vocabularies are that no one can learn a language without learning its vocabularies (Cameron, 2001). Students whose vocabulary size is deep are considered mastering more number of words than those who do not have (Schmitt, 2014). Pedagogically, effective instruction integrates auditory, visual, and kinaesthetic strategies to promote vocabulary acquisition (Marion, 2008). Vocabulary forms the foundation of language learning and plays a vital role in the acquisition of English. A rich and diverse vocabulary allows learners to understand and engage with the input they receive, enabling them to make sense of the language and communicate effectively (Krashen, 2009). Vocabulary provides the building blocks for communication and facilitates meaningful interactions among learners and their environment. By focusing on vocabulary, learners can grasp the nuances of language and express themselves fluently. In essence, vocabulary is the cornerstone of language learning, enabling learners to comprehend and produce language in meaningful ways, as emphasized by influential language acquisition theories.

Both knowledge of the concerned vocabulary and certain competence to make it accessible are essential elements to explain vocabularies to the students (Walters, 2004; Waring et al., 2013). One of many ways to teach vocabularies to the students is focusing on specific words and repeating or displaying them on the board (Mortensen 2011; Morton 2015). According to Nation (2001), the acquisition of vocabulary can be categorized into two types including the receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary refers to words encountered through reading and listening activities, allowing the reader or listener to understand and comprehend the words they have previously encountered or even encounter new words. Sasti et al. (2023) suggested that before having the extensive listening activities, teachers should have drilling vocabularies in prior to ensure that students have relevant and sufficient input. On the other hand, productive vocabulary refers to words that individuals use in their written and spoken language production after acquiring receptive vocabulary.

Pikulski and Templeton (2004) explain that vocabulary use primarily occurred during speaking and writing refers to as expressive vocabulary while the vocabulary comprehension encountered when we listen and read is known as receptive vocabulary. To further clarify the terminology, they introduce two additional categories: meaning or oral vocabulary, which combines listening and speaking vocabularies, and literate vocabulary, which combines reading and writing vocabularies. Thus, according to Pikulski and Templeton, there are four types of vocabulary, each corresponding to a specific language skill. They illustrate these concepts with a visual representation to enhance understanding.

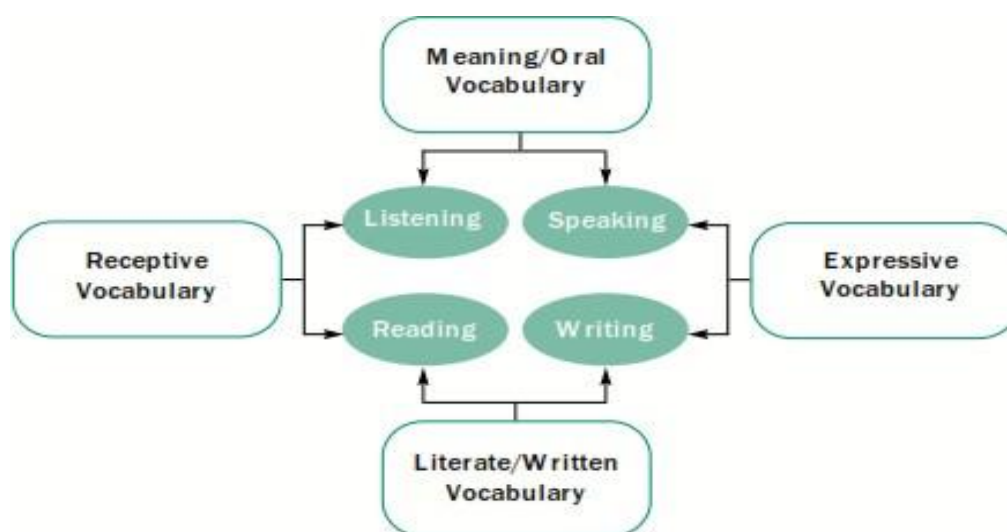


Figure 1. Relationship of the Eight Different Terms.

1.2. The Concept of LRT Technique

The LRT technique, which stands for Listen, Repeat, and Trace technique, is a language learning approach aimed at enhancing students' English vocabulary. This technique was developed to address the issue of low vocabulary retention among Indonesian secondary learners by implementing a structured and multisensory instructional model leading to engaging multiple cognitive pathways. This supports the Krashen's (2009) theory regarding the affective filter hypothesis, which pointed out that low-anxiety, interactive activities improve language acquisition. It is a brainstorming activity designed to enhance students' English vocabulary. According to Nation (2001), repeated exposure to words through extensive reading, listening, and meaningful practice helps learners internalize and retain vocabulary more effectively. Principally, the LRT technique is anchored by the drilling technique used to improve and enhance the students' lists of words through reading activities (Halimah, et al., 2022; Pellicer-Sánchez & Schmitt, 2010; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Rofi'ah & Huda, 2022; Waring & Takaki, 2003; Webb, 2007). Drilling relates closely to the repetition technique in teaching English new vocabularies to the students, particularly the young learners. according to Thorbury (2002), drilling activities should be implemented clearly and naturally in a classroom to ensure and ease the students grasping the words learned. Brown, Waring & Donkaewbua (2008), Chen & Truscott (2010), Horst, Cobb & Meara, (1998), Peters & Webb (2018), and Webb (2007) revealed positive enhancement of incidental vocabulary learning through repetition technique. In addition, Mulyono, et al., (2020) exposed that drilling technique was suitable in teaching English vocabularies particularly to the young learners. Meanwhile, Laily & Febrianingrum (2023) revealed that drilling activities contributed positively to enhancing students' vocabulary mastery.

Therefore, the current researchers modified the repetition technique into the Listen, Repeat, and Trace (LRT) technique to address the issue of students' lack of English vocabulary in the classroom, and to engage the students in targeted drills and exercises that involve repeated practice of a particular skill or concept. Matthews, Spratt, and Dangerfield (1991: 210) said that "A drill is a

type of highly controlled oral practice in which the students respond to given cue". The differences between LRT and the drill technique lie in the more structured implementation steps, the use of specific worksheets called LRT worksheets, and the involvement of multiple language skills such as listening, speaking, and writing. The words written on the LRT worksheet will be different and varied for each meeting depending on the materials taught that day.

In LRT technique, students are first exposed to target vocabulary through listening activities (Listen), that is teacher-led pronunciation exercises. Then, the students engage in repetitive practice by actively repeating the words or phrases after the teacher (Listen). This step helps reinforce pronunciation and internalize the vocabulary. The last step is writing the words on LRT worksheet given before the LRT activity started (Trace), which aids in memory retention and reinforces spelling. By incorporating auditory, verbal, and visual elements, the LRT technique provides a multi-modal learning experience that promotes vocabulary acquisition. Through consistent application of LRT, students have the opportunity to develop a stronger command of English vocabulary, leading to improved communication skills and language proficiency. Those are the steps involved in implementing LRT in the classroom. At the end of the semester, each student will have a small dictionary that consists of a collection of their completed LRT worksheets. This is particularly beneficial for students who do not own a dictionary, as they can use it anytime in the future.

2. Methodology

The researchers employed the Collaborative Classroom Action Research (CCAR) involving multiple parties, including the students, the researchers, and others who participated as a team in conducting research simultaneously. The researchers enhanced students' vocabulary mastery by implementing Listen, Repeat, and Trace (LRT) technique. Eventually, the LRT can be integrated into the warm-up, main, and closing activities in the learning process, however, the researchers applied LRT into the warm-up activity.

The Data collection used a mixed-methods approach: pre-tests and post-tests assessed vocabulary gains; qualitative tools included field notes, video recordings, and observer triangulation. LRT worksheets were introduced as structured tools for listening, repeating, and tracing target vocabulary. Meanwhile, the statistical analysis included descriptive statistics (mean scores, percentage pass rates) and thematic coding for qualitative data. The Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC) was set at 75%. Triangulation ensured data validity by cross-referencing quantitative scores with behavioral observations.

2.1. Context and participants of this study

Thirty-one eighth-grade students from one junior high school in Jambi Province participated, with informed consent obtained from all of them. Ethical approval was secured through institutional review. The researchers were pre-service teachers who taught in this school and have been engaged with the teachers, students, and other relevant stakeholders in this school. During the learning process, the researchers realized that the students had only limited vocabularies. Some of them did not have paper dictionary and it was impossible to look for the meaning of unfamiliar words in the internet because the school did not allow them to bring their cellphones. Thus, the researchers decided to modify a technique called LRT technique to facilitate the vocabulary enhancement during English learning. The researchers carried out the model of action research designed by Kemmis and

Mc Taggart. There were four stages completed using this model such as Planning, Acting, Observing, and Reflecting.

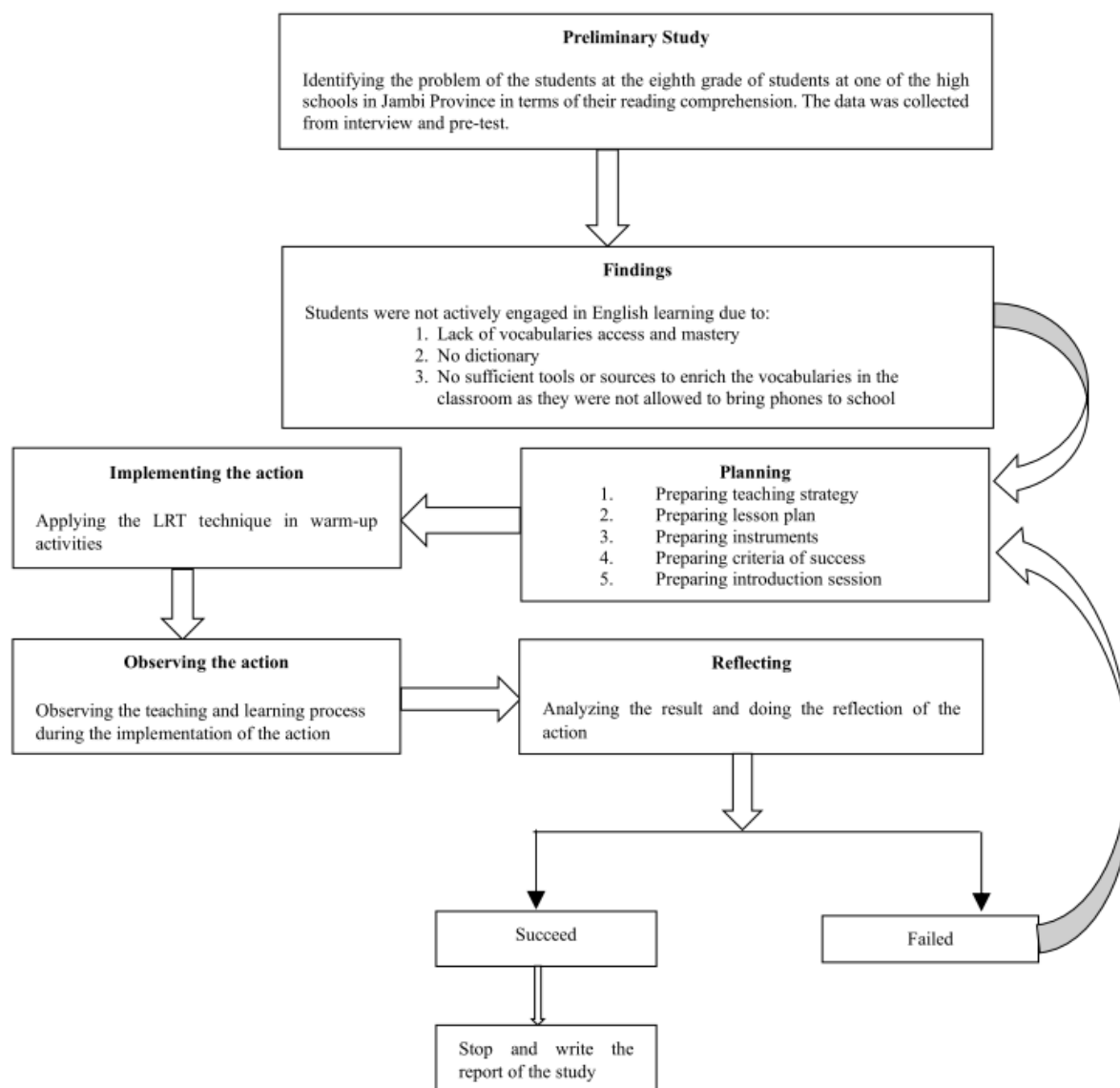


Figure 2. The steps of the study (adapted from Kemmis MC Taggart)

2.2. Planning the Action

At this stage, the researchers planned all essential aspects in teaching and learning process. The researcher did some steps started from preparing the teaching strategy, designing lesson plans, designing research instruments, and setting the criteria of success. The criteria of success were determined based on the criteria used by Djamarah and Zain (2006: 108): 1) If 75% of the students who participated in the teaching and learning process achieve the minimum, optimal, or even maximum score, then the subsequent teaching and learning process can move forward to address a new topic. 2) If 75% or more of the students who participated in the teaching and learning process fall below the minimum score (scoring lower than the minimum), the researcher must proceed to the next cycle.

Lesson plan is one of the most important things that must be prepared by a teacher before entering a classroom. Here, the researchers designed a lesson plan before conducting the action research to make the researcher easily control teaching and learning activities in the classroom, so that the purposes of teaching and learning process could be achieved well. The lesson plans contained learning activity, strategy, time allocation, material, and media and tools. There were some instruments used by the researcher in collecting the data during conducting the research. They were exercises and test, field notes, and video recorder. Each of the instrument helped the researcher to collect data in each certain way.

2.3. Implementing the Action

In this stage, the researcher applied the LRT technique to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The researcher taught the classroom based on the lesson plans designed. In each cycle, the students conducted all of the steps of LRT involving the teacher shared LRT worksheet, the teacher gave the instructions regarding to how to do LRT activity, the teacher displayed several words one by one on the projector screen, the teacher pronounced each word (listening stage), then the students should repeat after the teacher (repeating stage), after that, the students wrote each word on the worksheet (tracing stage). The last step was discussing the meaning of each word.

2.4. Observing the Action

A collaborator helped the researchers (teachers) to observe the condition of the classroom. The observer used the fieldnotes as the instrument to observe both the students and the researchers during the teaching and learning process. To ensure the validity of data collection, the researchers also used video recorder to record all the processes in the classroom. Therefore, the researchers had triangulation data by combining the results of the fieldnotes to the video recorder.

2.5. Reflecting the Action

Reflection was the activity to analyze, interpret and describe the data toward the implementation of the action. This stage aimed to know whether the action has been successful or not to solve the problem and whether it needed the second cycle or not to revise the plan. The data that have been collected was compared to the criteria of success.

2.6. The Technique of Data Analysis

The data from some instruments collected was analyzed qualitatively supported by the quantitative data from the pre-test and post-tests. In gathering and analyzing those data, the researcher used the technique of triangulation to strengthen the data and to cross check the data obtained from different instruments. The researchers used data triangulation as the data were obtained from various instrument

3. Results

Before implementing the actions, the researcher did preliminary study by interviewing the English teacher who teaches in the classroom and gave pre-test to the participants. The interview and pre-test were accomplished to get valid information about students' English prior knowledge. After doing preliminary study, the researcher started to apply classroom action research; planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The findings of this study demonstrate a significant enhancement in students' English vocabulary mastery through the implementation of the Listen, Repeat, and Trace

(LRT) technique. This classroom action research, conducted over two cycles, provides strong evidence that the LRT strategy positively influences students' engagement and vocabulary acquisition. The quantitative data derived from the pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2, combined with qualitative data such as field notes and video recordings, support the conclusion that LRT can be an effective pedagogical tool in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms.

3.1. Preliminary Study

The researcher interviewed the English teacher who teaches in the to find out the information about the condition of teaching and learning English and the problems faced by the students in learning English. Based on the interview result, the researcher found out that the students often complain that English lessons are very difficult. They did not understand the information conveyed by their teachers or the meaning of English vocabularies or texts in the textbook or worksheet (*Lembar Kerja Siswa*). The result of the interview was in line with the pre-test result. The result of students' pre-test score appeared in table 1 below:

Table 1. Pre-test score

	Pre-test		Mean Score
	Number	Percentage	
Students who passed	2	6 %	
Students who didn't pass	29	94 %	29
Total	31	100 %	

The table above showed that the mean score of students' score is 29.19. It is really far from the passing grade that is 75. There were only 2 out of total 31 or 6 % of total 100% students who passed the passing grade. Meanwhile, the rest of them scored less than 75, the percentage is 94 %. It could be concluded that almost all of the students in that class had lack of vocabulary mastery.

3.2. Cycle 1

The reflection of cycle 1 was analyzed by the researchers based on the field note, video, and students' score of post-test 1. The result of cycle 1 could be seen in the following table.

Table 2. Post-test 1 score

	Post-test 1		Mean Score
	Number	Percentage	
Students who passed	14	45 %	
Students who didn't pass	17	55 %	72
Total	31	100 %	

Based on the table above, 14 out of 31 students passed the passing grade or 45% students passed the test 1. Meanwhile, the other 17 or 55% of the students did not pass the passing grade. Nevertheless, the results of the post-test 1 score had not met the criteria of success where 75% of the students should pass the passing grade.

Table 3. The comparison of pre-test and post-test 1

	Pre-test	Post-test I
Students who passed	2	14
Percentage	6%	45%
Mean Score	29	72

Based on the comparison of pre-test score and post-test 1 score, there is a significant improvement between pre-test score and post-test score 1, but the percentage of students who passed the passing grade is still lower than 75%. The results were in line with the field notes and video analysis which showed that almost half of the students were more active and were involved in learning activity. They looked more enthusiastic to learn and gave more attention to the teacher's instructions. Based on the discussion with the collaborator, the researcher revised the plan, and cycle 2 must be conducted.

3.3. Cycle 2

The field note, video, and students' score of post-test 2 were the instruments used by the researches to reflect the second cycle in implementing LRT technique to enrich students' vocabulary mastery. The field notes and the video showed that more than 80% of the students were enthusiastic to participate in teaching and learning process especially to engage with the LRT activity which was conducted in warm-up activity. In line with the field notes and video, the score of post-test 2 also showed an improvement.

Table Post-test 1 score

	Post-test 1		
	Number	Percentage	Mean Score
Students who passed	26	84 %	85
Students who didn't pass	5	16 %	
Total	31	100 %	

Table 2. The comparison of pre-test, post-test 1

	Pre-test	Post-test I	Post-test 2
Students who passed	2	14	26
Percentage	6%	45%	84%
Mean Score	29	72	85

Table 4 and 5 showed that students' second post-test increased. Many students passed the passing grade. 26 students of total 31 students or 84% out of 100% passed the passing grade. However, five students had not passed the minimal score. The result of post-test 2 had met the criteria of success in which if 75% of the students who participated in the teaching and learning process achieve the minimum, optimal, or even maximum score, the subsequent teaching and

learning process can move forward to address a new topic. Based on the reflection results above, the researchers and the collaborator discussed that they did not need to apply the next cycle as the second cycle had achieved criteria of success. The students could pass the passing grade and showed positive attitudes where they were more active to engage in English learning in the classroom.

Before the intervention, a preliminary study involving interviews with the English teacher and a diagnostic pre-test revealed that students had a limited grasp of vocabulary, which hindered their ability to comprehend texts and participate confidently in learning activities. Only 2 out of 31 students (6%) passed the pre-test, with a mean score of 29. Following the application of the LRT technique in Cycle 1, student performance improved significantly, with 14 students (45%) passing the post-test and the mean score rising to 72. Although this fell short of the success criteria (set at 75% of students passing), it reflected meaningful progress. Additionally, observational data revealed that students were more engaged and attentive during lessons. They responded positively to the structured, repetitive elements of the LRT technique, which seemed to increase their confidence and motivation. In Cycle 2, further refinement of the teaching approach, based on reflection and feedback, led to even greater improvements. The number of students passing rose to 26 (84%), and the mean score increased to 85. Moreover, over 80% of students actively participated in learning activities, as evidenced by field notes and video documentation. This cycle achieved the predetermined success criteria and marked a substantial leap from the baseline established in the pre-test phase.

Thus, all the scores derived from the pre-test to post-test 1 and finally post-test 2, accompanied by a rise in the number of students achieving the passing grade from 6% to 84%, demonstrates the effectiveness of the LRT technique. The current findings align with existing literature on multisensory learning (Adzillina & Hasanah, 2021; Halimah et al., 2022), which suggests that engaging multiple senses (auditory, verbal, and kinesthetic) enhances memory retention and recall. In addition, the LRT technique aligns with Nation's (2001) principle denoting that frequent exposure to vocabulary in different circumstances strengthens retention. Meanwhile, the field notes and video recordings revealing that students were more attentive and enthusiastic in warm-up exercises aligns with Krashen's (2009) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which pointed out that low-anxiety, interactive activities improve language acquisition.

The success of the LRT technique can be attributed to several pedagogical strengths. First, the repetitive activity elements aligned well with auditory learning strategies, helping students internalize new vocabulary through repeated exposure. Second, the tracing component reinforced visual and kinaesthetic learning styles by allowing students to engage physically with the written forms of words (Adzillina & Hasanah, 2021; Halimah et al., 2022). This multimodal approach is supported by cognitive psychology, which suggests that multisensory input enhances memory retention and retrieval. Furthermore, the simplicity and structure of LRT make it especially suitable for lower-proficiency learners who benefit from clear, routine-based instruction. The repetitive nature of the technique helps reduce cognitive overload, giving learners the chance to focus on form and meaning in a manageable format. The technique also fosters positive learning behaviour, as seen in improved classroom engagement and student motivation.

4. Conclusions

The implementation of the Listen, Repeat, and Trace (LRT) technique has proven to be successful in improving students' English vocabulary. Through this research, it has been observed that the LRT technique effectively engaged students in active learning, enhancing their vocabularies. The repetitive nature of the technique helped students retain vocabulary items more effectively,

enabling them to build a solid foundation of English words. Additionally, the tracing component of the LRT technique contributed to reinforcing correct spelling and word formation. The multimodal nature of the technique allowed students to engage with the vocabulary through active listening, repetition, and visual tracing. This multisensory approach enhanced their ability to encode and retrieve vocabulary items, leading to improved retention and recall.

This study was small scale and was conducted only in one junior high school. However, this current research contributed to depicting several recommendations. First, teachers should incorporate a variety of engaging repetitive listening materials, such as audio recordings, podcasts, and videos. This might help students develop better listening skills and improve their comprehension of vocabulary items. Second, it is recommended to provide ample opportunities for students to practice speaking and repeating new vocabulary words in different contexts. Group discussions, role-plays, and interactive activities can be employed to foster a communicative environment where students feel confident in using the vocabulary they have learned. Third, incorporating technology-based tools, such as interactive vocabulary games or online platforms, can add an element of fun and interactivity to the learning process. By implementing these suggestions and continuing to refine the LRT technique, educators can effectively contribute to the improvement of students' English vocabulary. This research underscored the importance of employing innovative and engaging teaching methods that promote active participation and repetition, ultimately leading to better language learning outcomes.

Nonetheless, the study's design limits generalizability. The study was conducted in one school over a short duration, the results may not apply to different contexts. To build on the promising findings of this study, future research should consider research conducted over longer period to determine whether the vocabularies achieved through LRT technique are sustained and applied in future learning contexts. In addition, the future researchers should manage similar study with larger participant and across multiple schools to enhance the generalizability of the findings and help determine the scalability of the LRT technique. Moreover, investigating how LRT can be integrated with other language skills, such as grammar, reading comprehension, and writing, would provide a more holistic view of its role in language development.

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