IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WORD MIXING TECHNIQUE FOR VIIC STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 5 DENPASAR IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/2014

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian tindakan kelas yang bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah teknik Word Mixing dapat meningkatkan kemampuan penguasaan kosakata siswa. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam dua siklus yang terdiri dari tiga sesi di setiap siklusnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan dua jenis data (data kualitatif dan quantitatif) yang dikumpulkan melalui tes dan buku harian peneliti

Hasil tes menunjukan bahwa kemampuan penguasaan kosakata siswa meningkat di setiap siklusnya. Nilai rata-rata siswa di pre-test ialah 65.30, 71.79 di posttest 1, lalu meningkat menjadi 81.13 di posttest 2. Peningkatan tersebut juga dapat dilihat melalui jumlah siswa yang lulus: 4 siswa di pretest, 18 siswa di posttest 1, dan 36 siswa di post test 2. Hasil dari buku harian peneliti menunjukan bahwa siswa memberikan tanggapan yang sangat positif terhadap pengimplementasian strategi Mind Mapping dan Star Chart. Berdasarkan hasil tes dan buku harian peneliti, dapat disimpulkan bahwa kemampuan penguasaan siswa kelas VIIC dapat ditingkatkan melalui pengimplementasian teknik Word Mixing.
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Kata Kunci: Teknik Word Mixing, Kemampuan Penguasaan Kosakata

Abstract

This study was a classroom based action research which aimed to find out whether Word Mixing technique can improve students' vocabulary mastery. This study was conducted in two cycles consisting of three sessions in each cycle. There were two kinds of data (qualitative and quantitative data) which were collected through tests and writer's diary.

The result of the tests showed that the students' vocabulary mastery was improved in each cycle. The students' mean score was 65.30 in pre test, 71.79 in post test 1, and improved became 81.13 in post test 2. It can be also seen on the number of students passing the test. There were 4 students passed in the pre test, 18 students in the post test 1, and 36 students in the post test 2. The result of writer's diary also showed that the students gave positive response toward the implementation of Word Mixing Technique. Based on the results of the tests and the writer's diary, it can be concluded that vocabulary mastery of VIIC students successfully improved by the implementation of Word Mixing technique.

Keywords: Word Mixing Technique, Vocabulary Mastery

INTRODUCTION

Teaching-learning English as foreign language in Indonesia has developed because of the importance of this language in the current global era. Therefore, language learning in Indonesia is directed to help the students to know themselves, their culture, and others cultures. Besides, language learning also helps the students to be able to express ideas, thought, and feeling. Reflecting from this phenomenon, one of the real steps that were taken by the government of Indonesia was rearranging the previous Competency-Based Curriculum (*KBK/KurikulumBerbasisKompetensi*) into the School-Based Curriculum (*KTSP/Kurikulum Tingkat SatuanPendidikan*).

The essence of KTSP is giving every unit of education to develop which based on the condition and the situation of the unit of education itself. Therefore, since the School-Based Curriculum was established in entire country, every school struggles to increase its students' competency in English. There are four skills of English competency that become the main point to be reached by the students, those are; listening, reading, speaking and writing. These four skills are used to respond or create a communication in social life. Therefore, English subject is directed to develop those four skills in order to enable the students to communicate in English in a specific level *(Permendiknas No. 24, 2006).*

Despite all skills in English subject that should be taught in school, there are also four other components of language that underlying those skills (Genc and Bada, 2005). Those components are grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and pronunciation. Those are the crucial things that should be mastered by students as the basic for mastering the four skills in English.

Among the four language components, vocabulary is argued as the most fundamental things that should be mastered by EFL learner (Chen and Hao, 2008). Katamba (1993) states that vocabulary is total number of words in which having a set of rules to combine them. Katamba also states that vocabulary is a list of words which is completed by definition or translation. Teaching vocabulary is important in order to enable the students to communicate using English. Communicate here is not merely speak in English, but also write and read in English especially comprehend every word in sentences using English. Vocabulary should be taught as one important aspect of English language components, in which it will determine the success of the four language skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking (Chen and Hao, 2008). In addition to that, mastering vocabulary will determine students' performance in target language. It directly contributes to the four skills mastery of English learning. Montgomery (2007) states that in order to be able to communicate in English, a person should master at least 2000 words. It means that the more vocabulary the learners have, the better they will perform the language.

Regarding on its importance, vocabulary should be also taught as important as the four skills taught at school. One thing that should be considered is the time allotment used in teaching vocabulary since it should be integrated with the other skills. Teacher should smartly choose the right time allotment and appropriate following activities in order to create a balance learning process. The balance learning process means that teacher can balance the three main activities in the learning process (pre-activity, whilst activity, post activity) to be beneficial for students. For example, to start the lesson teacher gives students a strong vocabulary building before going into the material explanation and task, so then at the end of the lesson students will have enough comprehension toward the material.

In the real implementation, teacher rarely emphasizes on the vocabulary building before starting a new lesson. Just like what the writer has observed in class VIIC in SMP Negeri 5 Denpasar. The English teacher started the lesson by

giving the students a long passage about the things in house without introducing the key vocabulary. Students confused and had no idea about the lesson, since they were new in junior high school and still have limited vocabulary stock. The class seemed to be teacher-centered and there was only a little participation from students. Overall, the class seemed to be difficult and boring.

The writer had done pre-test in SMP N 5 Denpasar on February 6th 2014. The result of pre-test showed that the mean score of students in class VIIC was 65.30 which can be categorized as moderate. Furthermore, based on the result of interview, the writer found that 74.36% students were confused in learning English because they did not know what are written in the English book. In other words, the students have a weak foundation in vocabulary mastery.

Regarding to the low ability in vocabulary mastery, it must be so challenging for teacher to vary the activities in the class. Therefore, the writer proposes one strategy that can be used in teaching vocabulary to EFL learners. This strategy is called "Word Mixing Technique". This strategy is used for helping students in VIIC SMP Negeri 5 Denpasar to improve their vocabulary mastery so they will feel more engage to the material being taught.

Word Mixing technique is a technique to improve vocabulary mastery in which students are asked to mix 2 or more words to make another new word that has different meaning (Katamba,1993). Cooper (2000) stated that word mixing technique is a technique that emphasized on the act of combining two free morphemes. The meaning of the new word combined must retain elements of both meanings and pronunciation of the two morphemes in order to be classified as word mixing.

Meanwhile, according to Molinsky and Bliss (2007), word mixing is a union of two or more words, either with or without a hyphen. It conveys a unit idea that is not as clearly or quickly conveyed by the component words in unconnected succession. Teacher can modify the technique by creating a game or quiz suited with the condition of students. There are some researches studied about this technique. The result of those researches showed that Word Mixing Technique is a good and easy technique to be learnt by students. Regarding to the researches about Word Mixing technique, the writer believe that this technique would be a suitable technique to improve the vocabulary mastery of VIIC students in SMP Negeri 5 Denpasar.

In order to use this technique, there are some steps that should be followed (Molinsky and Bliss, 2007):

a. **Step 1 – Introduction**
   In this step, teacher should firstly introduce the topic that is going to be learnt. Then the teacher gives the list of vocabulary items to students. Students are asked to find the meaning in Bahasa Indonesia.

b. **Step2 – Task**
   In the second step, the teacher must explain the way how to do word mixing. The teacher can divide the class into groups and ask every group to make new word mixing based on the vocabularies given as much as they can find. After that, the teacher should give examples of how to use those words in a sentence. In group, students should make sentences based on the words has mixed.

c. **Step3 – Evaluation**
   In the last step, the teacher and the students correct students' answer. This is also regarding on the assessment. Besides correcting students' answer, assessment can be done by doing post-test. It can be in form of multiple choices, making sentence-task, or both for checking students' comprehension.

Based on Molinsky and Bliss (2007), Word Mixing Technique's advantages are:

- Easy
  This technique is very easy for both teacher and students. For teacher, this technique is really helpful and easy to be applied. The media used in this technique is also not too complicated and cheap. On students' side, this

technique is very easy to be learned. They are asked to mix the words given and find the meaning in their dictionary. So, this is an uncomplicated and meaningful activity to do for learning.

- Interesting
  This technique is interesting, since this technique acquire them to mix words by themselves through such a game.

- Develop Students' Critical Thinking and Cooperative Work Skill
  Since students should work in group and quickly find the new mixing words, it will develop their critical thinking and their group work skill

- Enrich Vocabulary
  This technique of course will enrich students' vocabulary. At the beginning, teacher introduces some new vocabularies to students. Then students are asked to find other words by mixing the words. So, they will learn double amount of vocabularies or even more in just one meeting.

- Long Term Memory
  Students find the new words by doing experiment to mix the possible words. They must find problems because not all of the vocabulary has its meaning when it's mixed with other words. By facing success and failure in mixing the words, students will easily remember what vocabulary that they mix successfully.

Based on the mentioned background of the study, the research problem of this study were: (1) can the use of Word Mixing technique improve vocabulary mastery of students VIIC SMP Negeri 5 Denpasar in the academic year 2013/2014?, (2) How do the students of class VIIC SMP Negeri5Denpasar in academic year 2013/2014 respond the implementation of Word Mixing technique in improving the students' vocabulary mastery?

Based on the problem stated previously, the purposes of this study were: (1) to find out whether the use of Word Mixing technique can improve the students' vocabulary mastery of class VIIC at SMP Negeri 5Denpasar in academic year 2013/2014, (2) to know the respond of class VIIC students at SMP Negeri 5 Denpasar in academic year 2013/2014 toward the use of Word Mixing technique in improving the students' vocabulary mastery.

In relation with the study, there were several studies that can be used as the empirical review which had similarity to this study. The first study was from Chen and Hao (2008) which conducted a study about the correlation between compound awareness using word mixing technique and vocabulary acquisition. Cen and Hao found that there is a significant correlation between both.

There second study conducted by Zhang (2011). Zhang investigated the best way in memorizing English vocabulary among four strategies namely prefixes, words' root and suffixes, word mixing, pictorial mnemonic, and similar association in Shanghai students. The result showed that 43% students chosen word mixing technique as the best technique that helped the students easier to memorize English vocabulary.

Evi (2011) also conducted a study in using word mixing technique to improve students' vocabulary mastery in SMP Negeri 2 Singaraja. Evi found that students' mean score on vocabulary mastery in SMP Negeri 2 Singaraja increased.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Since the aim of the study was to improve students' vocabulary mastery, the design of this study was a classroom action-based research which was done through cyclical processes. Reason & Bradburry (2001) state that action research is simultaneously concerned with bringing about change in classroom or school, in developing self-help

competencies in organizational members and adding to scientific knowledge.

This study was conducted in two cycles consisting three sessions in each cycle. Each cycle consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection.

The subjects of this study were the students of VIIC in SMPN 5 Denpasar in the academic year 2013/2014 which were consisted of 39 students (18 females and 11 males). This class was choosen based on the result preliminary observation which showed that the students had problem in vocabulary mastery.

The instruments used in this study were (1) tests, (2) questionnaires, (3) the writer's diary. There were two kinds of tests used in this study. Those are (1) pre-test which was used to identify the students' problem in writing, (2) post test which was administered in the end of each cycle. The Post-test would reveal the degree of success of the technique.

The questionnaires used to determine students' response toward learning English especially vocabulary before and after the strategies were applied. The questionnaire used in this study was handed in the end of each cycle to investigate the response of the students after the strategies were applied. The questionnaire consisted of 7 items of multiple choices (1 item dealt with students' attitude, 2 items dealt with the role of the treatment towards the students' vocabulary mastery, 1 item dealt with students' motivation, and 2 items dealt with the writer's way in applying the strategy and 1 item for the relevance of the test).

The writer's diary was used to observe the writer's activities, the students' response toward the activities, and writer's comments to explain the important things that happen during the action which cannot be obtained by tests and questionnaires.

After the subjects of the study were chosen, the interview, pre-test and questionnaire were handed to the students to reveal the more specific problem faced by the students.

The cycle 1 was begun by planning the actions, the material and instruments used for collecting the data. It was continued by action where the planning was realised. After that, observation was done to evaluate the teaching and learning process due to the strategies implemented. The last stage in cycle 1 was reflection which was used to analyse the students' problem, the strength and the weakness of the instruction, and the solution for the problems. The activities for the next cycle would also be determined at this phase by modifying the parts of action causing problem.

The data used in thi study were in form of quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were obtained from pre-tests and posttest. The quantitative data were analyzed descriptively. The students' mean score in the pre-test were compared with the mean score in the post-test in order to know the students' improvement in vocabulary mastery. The mean score of the students would be used as the indicator of this study. The formula is as follows:

$$X = \frac{\sum Y}{n}$$

$$(1)$$

The students' mean score would be categorized into some level. The table below is the criteria used to determine students' level in writing which was adapted from Evi (2011).

Table 01 The students' Vocabulary Mastery level criteria

Scores	Level of mastery
95% - 100%	Excellent
85% - 94%	Very Good
75% - 84%	Good
65% - 74%	Moderate
0% - 64%	Poor

Meanwhile, the qualitative data were obtained from questionnaire and the writer's diary. The result of writer's diary was analyzed directly from what the writer would be recorded during the class. The result of questionnaire which dealt with the students' responses toward Word Mixing Technique were analyzed

descriptively. It would be described in an explanation of students' intensity in choosing the answer in the questionnaire. The percentage of the questionnaire's result was calculated using the following formula:

$$\% = \frac{Number\ of\ items\ chosen\ by\ the\ students \times 100\%}{Total\ number\ of\ the\ students}$$

(2)

According to BSNP (2006), a learning process will be considered as successful if ≥85% of the students pass the target score. Regarding to BSNP (2006), the study was considered successful and stopped if the class success rate ≥ 85%. It means that ≥85% of the students can obtain the target score, ≥75 of the maximum score. It was based on the line of the passing grade used in the school where the study is conducted.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
### The Improvement of the Students' Vocabulary Mastery

As the numeric data had been obtained from the score that was gained from pre-test, post-test 1 and post-test 2, the writer presented the comparison of the students' mean score improvement in vocabulary mastery to see how much they improved from every cycle which can be seen through the following table and graph.

Table 02 The Students' Mean Score Improvement

TEST	MEAN (%)	CATEGORY
Pre-test	65.30	Moderate
Post test 1	71.79	Moderate
Post test 2	81.13	Good

Table 02 also had been converted to a form of graph as follows;

Graph 01 The students' Improvement in each cycle
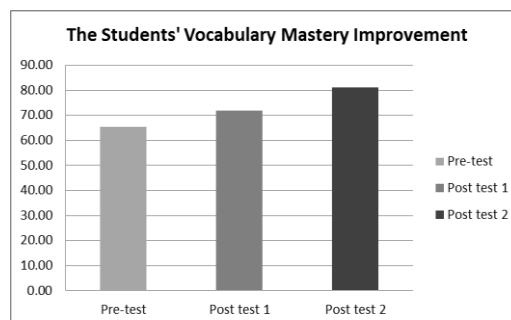
The problem faced by the students was identified through the preliminary observation conducted before two cycles were carried out in classroom. The table 4.4 and graph 4.1 show that the result of the Pre-test indicated that the mean score of the students in class VIIC of SMP Negeri 5 Denpasar was moderate. The students' mean score was 65.30 which could be categorized as moderate. Though it was moderate, the number of students who passed the test were only 4 students. The mean score was still below the standard passing score of the school in which the maximum score required was 75.

In cycle 1, the students were given the treatment with Word Mixing technique. The result of the post test 1 showed some improvement in terms of the students' vocabulary mastery. After the strategies were implemented, it brought improvement 6.49% from 65.30% in Pre-test to 71.79% in Post-test 1.

From the result of the Post-test 1, it was found that 18 (46.15%) of the students achieved good level of vocabulary mastery, and 14 (35.90%) of the students achieved moderate level of vocabulary mastery. Meanwhile, 7 (17.95%) of the students was still in poor level of vocabulary mastery. It means that 18 (46.16%) students had passed the target score of the study as well as the standard passing score applied in the school. However, since the study required ≥85% students to achieve the target score, the writer continued the study by conducting cycle 2.

The improvement also occurred after the writer gave the treatment on cycle 2. From the graph 4.1, it can be seen that the students' mean sore was increased 9.34% from 71.79% in post test 1 to 81.13% in post test 2. It can be categorized as good level. The improvement occurred could not be apart from some modification done in teaching and learning activities in cycle 2. From 39 students who followed the test, 1 (2.56%) of students achieved excellent level, 8 (20.51%) of the students achieved very good level, 27 (69.23%) of the students achieved good level, and 3 (7.69%) of the students achieved moderate level. There were no students who were in poor level of vocabulary mastery. It means that 36 (92.31%) students had passed the target score of the study as well as the standard passing score applied in the school. Besides, the students' mean score in post test 2 was 81.13 which can be categorized as good. It means that the students' mean score had already met the standard score (75).

The Students' Responses Toward the Implementation of Word Mixing Technique

Based on the result of the questionnaires in implementing Word Mixing technique that were handed at the end of every cycle, it was found that the students gave positive responses as what can be seen in the result of the questionnaire that was handed in post-test 1 and post-test 2 in which each of the questionnaire consisted of 7 items (1 item dealt with students' attitude, 2 items dealt with the role of the treatment towards the students' vocabulary mastery, 1 item dealt with students' motivation, and 2 items dealt with the writer's way in applying the strategy and 1 item for the relevance of the test).

The result in of the questionnaire showed that the students gave positive responses towards implementation of Word Mixing technique. It means that these strategies can be accepted well because almost all of students said that they really liked the strategies.

From the questionnaire, it was also found that the students were motivated by the implementation of Word Mixing technique. The students implied that they liked the way the writer gave them project task because it was very challenging. The students also implied that they can understand the lesson from the summary that was done by the teacher in the end of meeting.

The result of questionnaire showed that the students loved the task given because it was very relevant to their level. This was the benefits of Word Mixing technique in which the project task can be modified to match the students' level.

The result of the questionnaire was also in line with the result of writer's diary. In each session in every cycle, all students gave very positive responses toward the implementation of Mind Mapping strategy and Star Chart. At the beginning of study, the students were still afraid to talk, give comments, and answer the writer's questions. Most of the students also could not concentrate well in learning and tend to be busy with their own business during the lesson. Gradually, the students showed big improvements since Mind Mapping strategy and Star Chart were implemented in the classroom. All of the students became diligent and focused well into their task. Most of the students also did not talking loud during the lesson.

From the result of the writer's diary of cycle 2, it was found that the students had a positive attitude toward the implementation of Word Mixing technique. It can be seen from the writer's diary which noted that the students showed an excitement in doing the task. The students were very interesting in doing the word mixing game and making sentences using new vocabularies that they learned.

Based on the result of questionnaire and writer's diary in cycle 1 and cycle 2, it can be seen that the students always showed their positive responses toward the technique. Even in the second cycle the number of positive responses was increase. In other words, Word Mixing technique is a good strategies

combination in teaching vocabulary because it brought a lot of benefits for the students and promote an interesting teaching-learning activity.

The students' low vocabulary mastery could be solved by the implementation of Word Mixing technique. It was focused on the way how the students could easily remember some new vocabulary and multiply it by using word mixing technique.

Although the problems were solved successfully by the treatment, there were minor weaknesses need to be considered. First, some of the students were still confused in mixing the word. Some of the students still had mistake in combining the words together. Sometimes the students made meaningless word combination. To minimize this problem, the writer asked the students to bring their own dictionary and use the dictionary during the treatment. Every meaning of words' combination should be proven through the use of dictionary.

Second, the students still confused in making sentences using the vocabulary. They were still not confident in elaborating their sentences from the vocabularies given. This weakness could be related with their knowledge in tenses which became the second weakness. The students tended to write short sentences which had lack of details. Some of them also made incorrect grammatical sentences. That was why the teacher should help and guide the students to write well. In cycle 2, the writer urgently focused on the students' grammar. After mixing the words, the writer trained the students to use present tense through class discussion and revision time. This brought improvement to students. The students became more aware about what they needed to write sentences. They started to be confident to express their opinion although their sentence construction was still unorganized well.

Discussion and revision section were occured to help the students to learn from their mistakes in making sentences. In discussion section, the writer and the students discussed their mistakes in mixing the words, how to use the words in sentences, and how to fix the mistakes. Through revision section, the students were given time to fix their works. It was used to let the students to know their own problems in vocabulary usage and how to fix it. Therefore, for the later writing they would not repeat their mistakes again.

The results of reflection in cycle 1 showed that the writer should simplify the instruction and vary the topic used during the class. Based on that consideration, the action in cycle 2 was modified. The results of the reflection in post test 2 showed that the students gained better improvement. The students' became more active since the procedure of Word Mixing technique was modified into an inventor game. They also had better understanding in grammar as well as in the way the students made their sentences. Their better understanding and motivation automatically influenced their score. It could be seen from the results of post test 2 which was showed that 36 (92.31%) of the students passed the target score.

Other way to see the students' improvement was by observing their attitude during the treatment. Besides improving students' vocabulary mastery, it was also improving their attitude toward learning English. It can be seen on the results of writer's diary and questionnaire in the two cycles. The students were very interesting studied with the strategies. Since the writer asked the students to bring their own dictionary and worked with it, the students were really busy in using their own dictionary. In the pre-test, the students were very noisy in doing the task. There were only few of them who brought dictionary. After the writer asked them to bring dictionary, all of the students brought their own dictionary. They also started to be discipline in doing the task. They preferred to whisper to their friends, if they wanted to ask a favor related to the lesson. They were also active in giving opinion during the class discussion.

Based on the discussion above, the success of this study led the writer to formulate a conclusion. The

implementation of Word Mixing technique was proven to be effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery. The results of this study were in line with some theoretical and empirical reviews presented by the previous researchers toward the effectiveness of Word Mixing technique in supporting a better teaching-learning process.

In conclusion, the implementation of Word Mixing technique had successfully improved the students' vocabulary mastery of VIIC class at SMP Negeri 5 Denpasar in the academic year 2013/2014.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

From the comparisons of pre-test, post test 1 and post test 2, it can be revealed that the score of vocabulary mastery of the students of VIIC class in SMP Negeri 5 Denpasar was successfully improved. Based on the findings and discussion in previous chapter, it can be concluded that the implementation of Word Mixing Technique can improve students' achievement.

Based on the results of the questionnaire and writer's diary in implementing Word Mixing technique, it was found that the students responded that they were highly motivated. The results showed that the students' performance during the treatment was improved. The students were really motivated by the implementation of Word Mixing technique because it was very challenging and interesting therefore they loved to involve in class discussion. They loved the task given because it was really relevant to their level. Furthermore, Word Mixing technique was presented in form of game which made them really stick on the tasks given.

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