

Upgrading Students' Vocabularies

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UPGRADING STUDENTS' VOCABULARIES USING SMS (SEMANTIC MAPPING STRATEGY) IN POST PANDEMIC ERA

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Abstract: *In the post pandemic era, the students are supposed to have better knowledge. Many of them got learning loss because of distance learning (Engzell, Frey, & Verhagen, 2021). This study aims to upgrade the students' vocabularies using semantic mapping strategy (SMS). This classroom action research was conducted to the seventh grade students of SMP Plus Al Hidayah Parengan. The data is collected using test, observation, and interview. The results of study reveal that the average of students' scores who pass the grade in pre-test is 30%. In cycle I, it increases into 50%. It is more increased in cycle II in which the average of students' scores who pass the grade is 90%. It can be concluded that the semantic mapping strategy is able to upgrade the students' vocabulary mastery especially in post pandemic era.*

Keywords: *Students' Vocabulary, Semantic Mapping Strategy, Post Pandemic Era*

Abstrak: *Pada masa setelah pandemi usai, siswa diharapkan memiliki pengetahuan yang jauh lebih baik. Menurut pendapat Engzell, Frey, dan Verhagen (2021), kebanyakan dari siswa tersebut mengalami 'learning loss' atau kerugian belajar. Oleh sebab itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa dengan menggunakan strategi pemetaan semantik/semantic mapping strategy. Penelitian tindakan kelas ini dilakukan pada siswa kelas 7 di SMP Plus Al Hidayah Parengan. Data didapatkan melalui tes, observasi, dan interview. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa rata-rata nilai siswa yang melampaui batas ketuntasan sebanyak 30%. Pada siklus I, terjadi peningkatan nilai rata-rata siswa yang melampaui batas ketuntasan sebanyak 50%. Hal ini juga terjadi pada siklus II dimana rata-rata nya menjadi 90%. Berdasarkan hasil tersebut, dapat disimpulkan bahwa strategi pemetaan semantik mampu meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa terutama di masa setelah pandemic ini.*

Kata Kunci: *Kosakata Siswa, Strategi Pemetaan Semantik, Pasca Pandemi*

INTRODUCTION

Many countries have suffered from COVID-19 including Indonesian country. It causes the learning process in all school levels is conducted online. This condition drives students to get learning loss. Online learning cannot fully accommodate several educational values that are only able to be transmitted through face-to-face learning process (El Rizaq, 2021). Damanik and Sinaga (2022) state that teachers provide different performances in order to convey

the learning materials. However, there are several studies related to learning loss experienced by students in all school levels. Engzell, Frey, and Verhagen (2021) state that there is no progress made by students when they learn from home; it causes more learning loss in countries with weaker infrastructure or longer school closures. It is supported by Zhdanov, et.al (2022) who argue that learning loss occurs as a result of kids studying at home due to school

closures. It provides more impact on students from low economic families because they cannot afford tools needed. It also influences students who do not have internet connections (Djidu, et.al., 2021).

In the beginning of 2022, the face-to-face learning process starts to be carried out which is called learning in post pandemic era. There must be a transformation (Leach, et.al., 2020) including in the educational field. It is important to redefine the objectives of national education and create new goals which are in line with the new norms (Rahim, 2021). The educators of foreign language have to be creative in creating ideas and making its realization in the classroom teaching (Sari, Syarafah, & Mubarak, 2021).

English is as foreign language in developing country such as Indonesia. One of basic components of it is vocabulary. It is very important to learn vocabulary especially in understanding the English assignment (Ivone, 2005). Dakhi and Fitria (2019) explain that it is very important as a basis for communication, a reflection of social reality, emotion booster, and academic ability predictor. In other words, it can be said that vocabulary contributes to varied language skills.

The seventh grade students of SMP Plus Al Hidayah Parengan have low vocabulary mastery. They get so difficult to remember the words taught. They used to utilize Google Translate to find the meanings in the online learning. Semantic Mapping Strategy (SMS) becomes a proposed solution to overcome students' difficulties in learning vocabulary. A study by Reza and Azizah (2019) reveals that Semantic Mapping Strategy has significant effect on students' vocabulary learning result. Semantic mapping can be one of appropriate strategies in teaching

vocabularies of foreign languages. It helps students to find the relationships between the vocabulary words (Gaut, 2002). Moreover, Akbar and Yulitriana (2022) argue that semantic mapping facilitates students to create a brainstorming of the ideas and information. It becomes the reason to propose it as a solution to upgrade the students' vocabularies.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

This study is classroom action research. Mettetal (2012) describes Classroom Action Research as a method of finding out what works best in the classroom so that student's learning can be improved. This study aims to upgrade the students' vocabularies using semantic mapping strategy (SMS). Kemmis and McTaggart cited in Burns and Rochsantiningasih (2006: 22) state that classroom action research includes the stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection.

This study was carried out in two cycles. Its illustration can be viewed in figure 1.

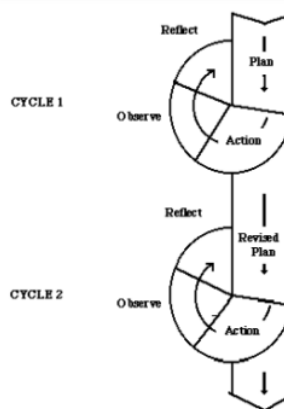


Figure 1. The cycles of classroom action research adopted from Burns (2010: 9).

The subjects of this study are the seventh grade students of SMP Plus Al Hidayah Parengan consisted of 10 students.

In post pandemic era, students' motivation to have face-to-face learning is low. Therefore, semantic mapping strategy is proposed to upgrade their vocabularies. The data is collected using test, observation, and documentation. Test is given to measure students' initial vocabulary mastery and calculate their improvements. The test is in form of multiple choice questions.

The observation is conducted to investigate the classroom learning process when semantic mapping strategy is implemented. Furthermore, documentation is conducted to record the students' scores in each stage and investigate their improvements. The lesson plan for each meeting is also documented to understand the learning steps.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this study, Semantic Mapping Strategy was implemented in two cycles. Test in form of multiple choices was given before treatments. It consists of 30 questions. Based on the result of pre-test, the average of students' scores who pass the grade in pre-test is 30%. The researcher found that their vocabulary mastery is low. In line with O'Brien in Mulyatiningsih (2011), classroom action research can be conducted when a group of people (in this case: students) get problem, then the researcher sets an action to overcome it.

In cycle I, it consists of four stages namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. In the planning stage, the problem is identified. The researcher creates the lesson plan in which Semantic Mapping Strategy is implemented. In the action stage, the researcher provides a word. Then, the students are asked to think of words related to a word given (Emor, Suhartono, & Riyanti, 2012). In the observation stage, the researcher observes the classroom learning process. Students are not allowed to use Google Translate as

in the online learning. They are allowed to open their dictionaries to find the meaning of words.

In the reflection stage, the researcher provides post-test for students. It is in form of multiple choices in which the questions are almost the same with the questions in the pre-test. The result of post-test in cycle I shows that the average of students' scores who pass the grade is 50%. In other words, half of them have not mastered vocabulary yet. After reflecting to the result of post-test, the researcher evaluates that it is important to carry out cycle II.

In cycle II, it also consists of 4 stages namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. In the planning stage, the researcher creates the lesson plan in which Semantic Mapping Strategy is implemented. In the action stage, the researcher provides a word. Then, the students are asked to think of words related to a word given. In this cycle, the researcher provides different central word.

In the observation stage, the researcher observes the classroom learning process. Students are not allowed to use Google Translate as in the online learning. They are allowed to open their dictionaries to find the meaning of words. In this cycle, the students are able to find words in semantic mapping faster than in cycle I. In the reflection stage, the researcher provides post-test for students. It is in form of multiple choices in which the questions are almost the same with the questions in the pre-test. The result of post-test in cycle II shows that the average of students' scores who pass the grade is 90%. In other words, almost all of them have mastered vocabulary.

Those results of post-test are in line with Nikijuluw (2017) who conducts a research which reveals that Semantic Mapping Strategy can be used to enrich the students' vocabulary effectively. Moreover,

they are able to understand the meaning of new words.

CONCLUSION

This study explains the use of Semantic Mapping Strategy (SMS) which is effective to upgrade the students' vocabularies. It consists of two cycles. The results of study reveal that the average of students' scores who pass the grade in pre-test is 30%. In cycle I, it increases into 50%. It is more increased in cycle II in which the average of students' scores who pass the grade is 90%. It can be concluded that the semantic mapping strategy is able to upgrade the students' vocabulary mastery especially in post pandemic era.

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