THE STUDENTS' INTERESTS TOWARDS THE USE OF SEMANTIC MAPPING STRATEGIES IN TEACHING VOCABULARY

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the students' interests toward the use of Semantics mapping strategies in teaching vocabulary and focuses on giving and explaining the direction. The researcher used qualitative method. Data were collected by conducting observation and giving questionnaire to the respondent to find out the students' interests toward semantic mapping strategies. The populations of this research were 14 students. In choosing sample, the researcher applied total sampling. The researcher chose class eight of SMP Plus Al – Ma'arif. The findings show that the students have high interest toward semantic mapping. There were 12 students (86%) were agreed, whereas two students (14%) were disagreed. It means that the students have positive interest toward the use of semantic mapping in vocabulary teaching and learning. One of the major factor that make the students interested in semantics mapping strategies is the interactivity. The strategies did not make the students feel bored.

Keywords: Interest, Semantic Mapping Strategies, Vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

Language is the most important part in the communication. It is the way to share our ideas, feeling, views and thought. It cannot be separated from human daily life. Every human has an ability to learn language, both native and foreign languages. One of the foreign languages for Indonesian is English. Crystal (2005) stated that as a foreign language, English is used as a tool of communication among countries particularly in political, social, educational and economic development.

As a foreign language, English is a communication mediator that can allow individuals to connect, communicate, and exchange data with other individuals around the world. Our world has become very global, and we must connect with other people. On the other hand, English is a fairly complicated language to learn and it brings its culture with it. It also helps people to face the challenge of the globalization. In Indonesia, English is learned by the students as the first foreign language. Indonesian government has taken step to introduce English language in the education's curriculum. English must be taught as early as possible because it is a compulsory subject taught since the early school.

English language skills consist of speaking, listening, reading and writing. In order to master all of these skills, we must firstly master the language aspect, namely vocabulary. It is because if we want to speak with another people, we have to know the vocabulary. It also applies when we deal with speaking, listening, reading and writing. In teaching students' vocabulary skills, we can embrace strategies that use the different type of vocabulary instructions in creating word context, content, meaning and application. According to Nation (2004), vocabulary is the basic access to a language. It is the foundation of a pyramid. Without words, there would be no language structures. Words are the building blocks of a language since they label objects, actions, ideas without which people cannot convey the intended meaning. According to Zulfandi (2011), vocabulary is one of the early literacy skills. It is important for children in order to be able to read. If the children have more vocabulary, it can be easier for them to understand and know about what

they read. Henceforth, if the students have more vocabularies, they can be easier to interact with other people. In addition, they can understand what other people speak and give their opinion easily.

The important role that this component plays has been emphasized in all different methods of language teaching. The quality of one's language depends upon the quality of his or her knowledge of vocabulary (Tarigan, 1982). The students' mastery of English vocabulary can be measured through the students' capability in using them in written and spoken. Emor (2012) states vocabulary is one of the important factors in all language teaching, because students must continually learn words as they learn structure and practice sound system. In addition, according to Nation (2004) cited in Zahedi (2012), words are the building blocks of a language since they label objects, actions, ideas without which people cannot convey the intended meaning. Knowing vocabulary means understanding how the words are put in different contexts and used differently.

Learning English needs interesting methods and strategies in order to make English learnings more enjoyable and interesting. Various methods and strategies can be used in teaching English vocabulary. One of them is semantic mapping strategy. According to Barcroft (2014) cited in Nilforoushan (2012), semantic mapping refers to an increased assessment of an object with respect to its context. With this in mind, this strategy can be used as a tool for discovering the conceptual relationship between vocabulary items.

Amoush (2012) in the Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business proposes another definition. He explains that semantic map is one type of graphic organizer. It helps students visually organize and graphically show the relationship between a piece of information and another. Zaid (1995), in this sense, states that the students who use semantic mapping manifest considerable improvement reading comprehension, written expression and vocabulary development.

In the teaching and learning process, semantic mapping strategy helps students to learn a new word by generating a map of associated terms or phrases that are identical to the new word. The procedures of semantic mapping for teaching vocabulary by Gunning (1992) and Buzan (2000) as cited in Phongploenpis & Supangyut (2018) consist of ten stages, as follows;
1. placing an image or a topic in the center;
2. using images, symbols, Codes, and dimensions;
3. writing keys for the topic;
4. putting each word/image as a category on its own line;
5. connecting the words using lines starting from the central;
6. making central lines thicker as organic, and flowing, then becoming thinner as they radiate out form the centre;
7. making the lines of the same length as the word image;
8. using a variety of colours throughout mind mapping;
9. using emphasis to show associations in the semantic mapping;
10. keeping the semantic mapping clear using redial hierarchy, numerical, or order outlines to embrace the branches.

By acknowledging that semantic mapping strategy is theoretically promising to teach vocabulary, this research is, henceforth, interested in addressing the issue of "How do the students' perceive towards the use of semantics mapping strategy in teaching vocabulary?"

METHOD
The researcher used qualitative method because it focuses on description and explanation. Data was collected by giving questionnaire to the respondent to find out the students' interests toward semantics mapping and observation. The populations of this research were 14 students from class eight of SMP Plus Al – Ma'Arif. In choosing sample, the researcher applied total sampling.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
In collecting data, the researcher used instrument namely questionnaire. In the questionnaire, there were some statements related to the students' interests towards the use of semantic mapping

strategy in teaching vocabulary at the second grade students of SMP Plus Al-Maarif. The results of questionnaire analysis are divided into five items and thoroughly presented in this section.

Item 1
Table 1 presents the results of the questionnaire in regards to the effectiveness of using semantic mapping strategy to learn vocabulary.

Table 1. Using semantic mapping strategy really helps the vocabulary learning

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly agree	9	64%
2	Agree	5	36%
3	Strongly Disagree	-	-
4	Disagree	-	-
	Total	**14**	**100%**

As seen in Table 1, the majority of the students (64%) strongly agrees that semantic mapping strategy helps them in learning vocabulary. Then, the remaining five students (36%) agree and none of them (0%) disagrees or even strongly disagrees. This has concluded that semantic mapping strategy is helpful to make vocabulary teaching and learning easier and effective.

Item 2
Table 2 shows the questionnaire results regarding the statement about vocabulary learning motivation using semantic mapping strategy. The students were asked whether or not using semantic mapping can add their spirit or motivation in learning English vocabulary.

Table 2. Semantic mapping can boost motivation to learn English vocabulary

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly agree	13	93%
2	Agree	1	7%
3	Strongly Disagree	-	-
4	Disagree	-	-
	Total	**14**	**100%**

As shown in Table 2, there are 13 students (92%) strongly agree, one student (8%) agree, none of the students (0%) disagrees and strongly disagrees. This clearly shows that the use of semantic mapping in teaching vocabulary boosts students' motivation to learn English vocabularies.

Item 3
In this questionnaire item, students were asked whether or not semantic mapping strategy makes them even more creative in their vocabulary learning process. The results are thoroughly summed up in Table 3.

Table 3. Semantic mapping makes students' even more creative

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly agree	8	57%
2	Agree	5	36%
3	Strongly Disagree	-	-
4	Disagree	1	7%
	Total	**14**	**100%**

Most of the students strongly believe that semantic mapping strategy has helped then to be more creative in learning vocabulary. It can be seen from the percentage in Table 3 showing

that 57% of the students think that way. Only one student who thinks that the strategy has nothing to do with the creativity. However, it can be concluded that semantic mapping makes students' even more creative in learning English vocabulary.

Item 4
In this questionnaire item, students are asked to give opinion regarding the negative impact of semantic mapping technique in their vocabulary learning process. Their responses are wrapped up in Table 4.

Table 4. Using semantic mapping techniques makes it difficult
for students to learn vocabulary

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly agree	-	-
2	Agree	-	-
3	Strongly Disagree	5	36%
4	Disagree	9	64%
	Total	**14**	**100%**

Table 4 shows that most of the students believe that by using semantic mapping in teaching vocabulary does not make them difficult to learning vocabulary. The data presents none of student (0%) strongly agrees and agrees supports it, five students (36%) strongly disagree, and nine students (64%) disagree.

Item 5
Item 5 also asked students about the drawback of the semantic mapping implementation into their vocabulary learning. Table 5 clearly shows their thoughts dealing with this issue.

Table 5. Learning vocabulary using semantic mapping is not interesting.

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly agree	-	-
2	Agree	-	-
3	Strongly Disagree	9	64%
4	Disagree	5	36%
	Total	**14**	**100%**

The table above indicates that none of student (0%) strongly agree and agree, nine students (64%) strongly disagree, and five students (36%) disagree. This means that teaching vocabulary through semantic mapping is interesting and does not make them feel bored at all.

CONCLUSION
Based on the research results previously presented, this study concludes that the students have positive interests toward the use of semantics mapping strategy to learn vocabulary. One of the factors that encourage the students' positivity is that semantics mapping is an interesting strategy and does not make them feel bored in learning English vocabularies. Another interesting fact about the students' interest is that this learning technique improves the students' creativity and learning motivation.

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