



## The Effect of Word Mapping Technique in Teaching Vocabulary

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**Abstract:** In teaching vocabulary, the Word Mapping technique is considered the one of appropriate and applicable techniques used by the teacher in the classroom, particularly in building up a large store of words in order to arrange a sentence. The objective of this study is to find out the significant effect of teaching vocabulary by using the word mapping technique. This study used a pre-experimental design where researchers only used one sample to be treated with the teaching using word mapping technique. A pretest and posttest were given before and after treatment made. The data were collected using tests where the scores of the tests were analyzed using paired-sample t-test computation. Then the result showed that teaching vocabulary using word mapping technique is effective to enhance students' mastery of English vocabulary.

**Keywords:** teaching vocabulary, word mapping technique, ELT

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**Abstrak:** Dalam mengajar kosakata bahasa Inggris, teknik Word Mapping dianggap sebagai salah satu teknik yang tepat dan dapat diterapkan dan digunakan oleh guru di kelas, terutama dalam membangun banyak kata untuk menyusun kalimat. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pengaruh dari pengajaran kosakata bahasa Inggris dengan menggunakan teknik Word Mapping. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain pra-eksperimental dimana peneliti hanya menggunakan satu sampel untuk diperlakukan dengan pengajaran menggunakan teknik Word Mapping. Pretest dan posttest diberikan sebelum dan sesudah perlakuan dilakukan. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan tes dimana skor tes dianalisis menggunakan perhitungan uji-t sampel berpasangan. Kemudian hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengajaran kosakata dengan menggunakan teknik Word Mapping efektif untuk meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata bahasa Inggris siswa.

**Kata kunci:** mengajar kosakata, teknik pemetaan kata, ELT

## 1. INTRODUCTION

English is a taught language in our country, and our government has made many efforts to promote it, one of which is the formal teaching of English at all levels of education, from primary school to university. English has long been considered a universal language that is globally active. People who learn English consider it a personal skill. As a result, many people today, especially students, need to be able to communicate in English. Teaching English as a second language for beginners is a challenging task for anyone. No matter what your background, or experience level, you will constant new challenges when teaching English as a

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second language. Like teaching other subjects, you'll find that every student learns differently (Nizami, 2021). The ability to communicate in English is a valuable asset for students. Students can improve their academic abilities and life skills by mastering English. Once students understand it, they will be well accepted by society.

English is the most widely used language in the world for communication. In the world, English is the international language. Therefore, it is very important for everyone to learn it. English is a foreign language in Indonesia, in particular. English is the most famous foreign language, and it is taught from elementary school to university. There are four English skills that must be mastered, namely Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. In learning English, we must be able to master these four skills. There are many parts of the English language that must be well understood to master these skills such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and others. Students are expected to absorb and keep up with the development of science, technology, and art by learning English.

The term "vocabulary" refers to a word or a group of terms in a language or knowledge of words, including their definitions, forms, and appropriate contexts for their use. In general, vocabulary is the knowledge of the meaning of words. Vocabulary is a list of words and their meanings, especially in books for learning foreign languages. Vocabulary is unique to a content area, as unique as a human fingerprint (Munir, 2016). Vocabulary has an important role in language learning to process. It will greatly help students in mastering language skills and be able to express ideas. Without vocabulary, one cannot communicate effectively and express ideas. It would be better if students know the meaning of vocabulary. The mechanism of vocabulary learning is still something to be mastered, but one thing that can be ensured is that vocabulary cannot be acquired instantly, at least for adult second language learners. Students are required to remember many types of vocabulary. This is because students will gain achievement when they can understand the meaning of the words. Nouns, verbs, and adjectives are the types of vocabulary that are always used by students in the classroom.

In teaching vocabulary, the learners should recognize their needs. This is important because words are of various kinds, which makes it impossible for the teacher to teach all of the English words. In this instance, teachers instruct their students to understand word meanings based on context. This is due to a number of factors. First, a learner needs to be familiar with a lot of words, to start. Second, learning English words is a necessary step in the cumulative process of meeting words. Third, the scope of word instruction needs to be constrained. Finally, knowing English words well also entails understanding a variety of elements of them, such as their meaning, form, and use.

Word Mapping technique is a technique that can improve the way of recording information, for brainstorming, supporting ideas, enhancing creative thinking and problem-solving, organizing ideas, and of course vocabulary acquisition (Pratama & Syafei, 2018). It is a good way to make students understand more about English vocabularies they will be learning because it makes it easier for them to share ideas in learning a large vocabulary. Usually, teaching vocabulary uses pictures to help students in awakening their imaginations to open their minds. After that, connecting the thought branches to the central image, then the branches use colors because colors make word mapping funny, enhance creativity, and have fun.

In teaching English vocabulary, the word mapping technique is considered the one of appropriate and applicable techniques used by the teacher in the classroom, particularly in building up a large store of words in order to arrange a sentence. Word mapping technique is a graphical tool for organizing and representing knowledge that shows the three elements of a definition which includes the category to which the word being defined belongs which can be discovered by the question “What is it?”, some characteristics of the main word that can be discovered by a question “what is it like?”, and some examples of the main word (the illustrations). The students need to have some understanding of what a definition is and how it works before they can give the meaning of a word in their own way by the use of the concept of a definition map or word map.

Based on the rational above, the teachers needed new teaching strategies to ease their students enhancing new vocabularies in English. One of the most effective techniques is the word mapping technique as it encourages students to consider the relationships among words. Through the active learning of word associations promoted by this technique, students gain a deeper understanding of word meanings as a result of expanding their conceptual vocabulary. Therefore, the researchers proposed the word mapping technique as a solution. The objective of this study is to examine whether teaching vocabulary using word mapping technique gives an effect to enhance students’ mastery in English vocabulary.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Teaching vocabulary**

Teaching is a process to give the students guidance to reach the goals. Teaching is a media for learning process includes behavior individual changes through pre-planned (Hakim, 2018). According to Rohania (2010)), teaching is showing and helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instruction in study something and providing with knowledge. Furthermore, teaching vocabulary regains an important place in the language classroom, the issues, principles and practice reviewed will become increasingly useful and significant.

Thornbury (2002)) states that in teaching vocabulary, there are many ways which can be used by the teacher in presenting the material. They are by using translation, explanation, synonym, antonym, and showing the real objects. By using translation, it is the easiest to where improve the meaning of difficult words. By using explanation, the ways where the teacher has revealed the words to the students and explain them. By using synonym, the teacher gives words which have same type and the same general meaning. By using antonym, the teacher gives words which have different meaning. Last by showing the real objects, the teacher shows picture and explains them about what happen in the pictures or things that are in the pictures. The last mentioned is the way how the technique of word mapping can be integrated to.

### **2.2 Strategies of teaching vocabulary**

Blachowicz & Fisher (2007) formulate some strategies to build student vocabulary. There are as follow.

a) Star

Providing explicit and direct instruction is one sure way to help students increase their vocabularies. The STAR model is the acronym for select, teach, activate, and revisit which provides a framework for teachers as they plan vocabulary instruction.

b) Discussion Starter stimulates class discussions

Discussion Starter stimulates class discussions about vocabulary that relate to a unit, topic, or theme. The discussion web also gives students the opportunity to consider their prior knowledge of the vocabulary terms and concepts.

c) Frontloading

Frontloading provides rich dialogue and experiences that allow students to develop vocabulary by accessing their prior knowledge before reading content. When students have the opportunity to use their prior knowledge, they exhibit an increase in vocabulary and content knowledge. In addition, students show their understanding as they interact with difficult content material. Frontloading has different name that is list and word wall strategy.

d) Word mapping technique

Word mapping technique is a technique to help students understand the meaning of words. Word mapping technique is referred to by different names, such as semantic mapping, concept mapping, and word clusters, and semantic feature analysis. The technique may be adapted to the nature of vocabulary instruction, the learning outcomes, and students' grade levels.

e) Talk fast – talk a mile a minute

Effective vocabulary instruction includes exposing students to words multiple times using various methods. Talk Fast is a game that increases vocabulary knowledge through word play.

f) Synectic Comparisons

Synectic comparisons is a strategy for comparing content to an unrelated object. It causes students to think about vocabulary words in creative ways. In a Synectic comparison, the brain has to compare two things that aren't usually compared. In addition, the strategy requires the brain to create pictures as it searches for comparisons. As a result, students are more likely to retain the information.

g) Word sorts

Word sorts help students analyze words by looking for patterns. Grouping words according to similar attributes is an effective before reading strategy that activates prior knowledge of vocabulary words or phrases. It is especially useful for nonfiction material.

h) Vocabulary Notebooks/Journals

Individual vocabulary notebooks invite students to strengthen their word and internalize meaning for use throughout their lives.

From the explanation of several strategies to build students' vocabulary as stated above, the word mapping technique is one of strategies can be used for teaching vocabulary. Therefore, this research chose this technique for teaching to develop students' vocabulary.

### 2.3 Word Mapping Technique

Word mapping is a graphic rendering of the words' meaning. The mapping concept is a technique to represent the knowledge in graphs. The concept of mapping is introduced in

elaborating the knowledge of learners of the words. Word meaning instruction that helps learners fit new words into existing conceptual network and it is substantially more effective than having students look up words in a dictionary or read words in interesting and relevant context. Graves (2011) states that the word mapping technique is one of the most powerful approaches to teaching vocabulary because it engages students in thinking about word relationships.

The purpose Word Mapping technique is to promote the students' deeper understanding of words through depicting varying relationships between and among words. Word Mapping technique is a graphical tool for organizing and representing knowledge that shows the three elements of a definition which includes (1) the category to which the word being defined belongs which can be discovered by the question "What is it?", (2) some characteristics of the main word that can be discovered by the question "What is it like?", and (3) some examples of the main word (the illustrations). The students need to have some understanding of what a definition is and how it works before they can give the meaning of a word in their own way by the use of the concept of a definition map or word map.

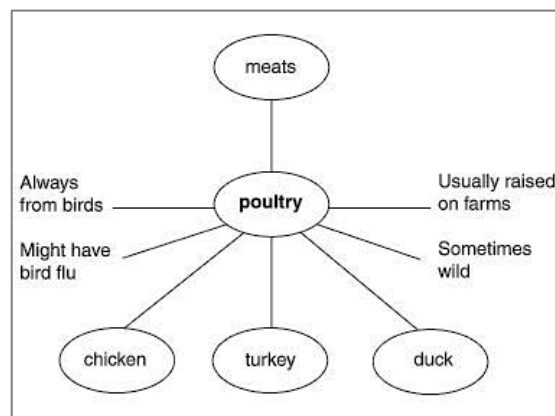


Figure 1. Word Mapping Example

In teaching vocabulary, the Word Mapping technique is considered the one of appropriate and applicable techniques used by the teacher in the classroom, particularly in building up a large store of words in order to arrange a sentence. Word mapping is an activity that helps bring into relationship among words in the text, and helps to understand by creating an associate network for words.

In the word mapping technique, the students refer to the context, their prior knowledge, and the dictionary to find the definition and the elements needed. Typically, it has the form of having the vocabulary word in the central portion of the graphic organizer, and three separate sections for the three main questions about the word that is linked to it. The use of word mapping techniques can increase students' vocabulary and it is often used for the most effective ways of integrating language skills in the language classroom.

Several studies have confirmed that word mapping technique is effective for teaching English vocabulary. Ronaghi et al (2015), for instance, studied about Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition which showed that a dramatic growth of the students' performance in

vocabulary learning due to the effect of word mapping technique, because the students who were taught based on this technique can enhance and improve their performance, for example in speaking skill. Then, Edy & Amiruddin (2019) also investigated word mapping strategy in increasing students' vocabulary mastery where the result showed a positive effect on student's vocabulary improvement. Furthermore, Gustinna's (2015) study examine teaching English vocabulary using word mapping technique. The research revealed that word mapping has a significant effect in developing students' vocabulary mastery of the tenth graders in the vocational school.

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

The research design used in this study is a pre-experimental design. Pre-experimental design is a design that includes only one group or class that is given a pre-test and post-test (Sugiyono, 2016). This one-group pre-test and post-test design was carried out on one group without a control or comparison group.

Table 1. Research Design

Sample	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
N=16	O1	X	O2

By using this design, the researchers treated treatments for one class. In this model before starting treatment, the class was given the result of the pretest (O1) of students' achievement before being given treatment (treatment). After that, the experimental class was given a treatment (X). Then, O2 is a post-test which represents students' achievement after being given treatment. This research design consists of one group that has been determined. The sample of this study used population sample since the number was limited. There were 16 students of the ninth-grade students of SMP Nusantara Palangka Raya in the academic year 2023/2024 take as the sample of this study.

Technique of data collection in this study was by providing a pre-test before treatment given, and a post-test after treatment given. The treatment itself is the teaching English vocabulary using word mapping technique. The instrument used for obtaining the data was a multiple-choice test covering 40 items related to describe words. To confirm the validity of the items, researchers have tested those 40 items using Pearson correlation where all items used for the research instrument are valid as depicted in the following.

Table 2. Item Validity Test Result

Item question number	R-count values	p-values	Decision
1	0.635	0.008	valid
2	0.549	0.028	valid
3	0.610	0.012	valid
4	0.770	0.000	valid
5	0.543	0.030	valid
6	0.556	0.025	valid



7	0.511	0.043	valid
8	0.629	0.009	valid
9	0.557	0.025	valid
10	0.618	0.011	valid
11	0.546	0.029	valid
12	0.597	0.015	valid
13	0.717	0.002	valid
14	0.607	0.013	valid
15	0.726	0.001	valid
16	0.695	0.003	valid
17	0.605	0.013	valid
18	0.566	0.022	valid
19	0.576	0.019	valid
20	0.657	0.006	valid
21	0.653	0.006	valid
22	0.688	0.003	valid
23	0.770	0.000	valid
24	0.674	0.004	valid
25	0.717	0.002	valid
26	0.543	0.030	valid
27	0.822	0.000	valid
28	0.501	0.048	valid
29	0.795	0.000	valid
30	0.760	0.001	valid
31	0.565	0.023	valid
32	0.524	0.037	valid
33	0.624	0.010	valid
34	0.553	0.026	valid
35	0.660	0.005	valid
36	0.546	0.029	valid
37	0.607	0.013	valid
38	0.546	0.029	valid
39	0.543	0.030	valid
40	0.566	0.022	valid

All R-count values are higher than the value in R-table = 0.497 (df=16). Therefore, those 40 items are statistically valid.

Table 3. Test instrument reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.960	40

Furthermore, the reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach Alpha resulting 0.96 as shown in the table 3, and it is categorized as reliable. As a result, the test instrument used for this research is valid and reliable.

#### 4. FINDINGS

The followings are results of this study which are described by pre-test and post-test achievement.

#### 4.1 Pre-Test

The following is the result of pre-test defined by the student's scores to know students' prior ability in the vocabulary mastery.

Table 4. Pre-test result

No.	Student Codes	Scores
1.	N1	47.5
2.	N2	70.0
3.	N3	85.0
4.	N4	60.0
5.	N5	60.0
6.	N6	82.5
7.	N7	60.0
8.	N8	60.0
9.	N9	60.0
10.	N10	87.5
11.	N11	47.5
12.	N12	65.0
13.	N13	50.0
14.	N14	70.0
15.	N15	70.0
16.	N16	70.0

Based on the scores obtained, the scores were then analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, maximum score, minimum score, and frequency of the experimental group's post-test scores. The following are the results of the analysis.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistic for Pre-Test

N	Valid	16
	Missing	0
Mean		65.31
Median		62.50
Mode		60
Std. Deviation		12.311
Variance		151.563
Range		40
Minimum		48
Maximum		88



In the table 5, it can be seen that the average (mean) pre-test score is 65.31, and the median is 62.50 while the mode is 60.00 and the standard deviation is 12.311. The minimum value obtained by students in the experimental class was 48.00, while the maximum value obtained was 88.00.

Table 6. Frequency and Rate Percentage of Pre-Test

Score	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
91-100	Excellent	0	0 %
81-90	Very Good	3	18.75%
71-80	Good	0	0%
61-70	Fair	5	31.25 %
51-60	Poor	5	31.25%
< 50	Very Poor	3	18.75%
<b>Total</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The table 6 shows that there were no students who scored 91-100 (excellent) or 0%. Furthermore, there were 3 students who scored 81-90 (very good) or 18.75%. There were no students who scored 71-80 (good) or 0%, then there were 5 students who scored 61-70 (fair) or 31.35%. Meanwhile, there are 5 students who are in the poor classification or get a score of 51-60 or 31.25%. Furthermore, 3 students scored <50 (very poor) or 18.75%. In conclusion, there are no students who get the excellent classification. Most students are in the sufficient, less and very less classifications.

#### 4.2 Post-Test

The post-test is to know the result of students' achievement after being given treatment. In specific, it is a result from students' scores after the students were given the treatment of teaching vocabulary using semantic mapping. The following is the result.

Table 7. Post-test result

No	Student Codes	Scores
1	N1	70.0
2	N2	90.0
3	N3	95.0
4	N4	75.0
5	N5	80.0
6	N6	85.0
7	N7	80.0
8	N8	70.0
9	N9	95.0

<b>10</b>	N10	92.5
<b>11</b>	N11	75.0
<b>12</b>	N12	80.0
<b>13</b>	N13	82.5
<b>14</b>	N14	92.5
<b>15</b>	N15	90.0
<b>16</b>	N16	92.5

Based on the scores obtained, the scores were then analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, maximum score, minimum score, and frequency of the post-test.

Table 8. Descriptive Statistic for Post-Test

N	Valid	16
	Missing	0
Mean		84,06
Median		83,75
Mode		80
Std. Deviation		8,702
Variance		75,729
Range		25
Minimum		70
Maximum		95

In the table 8, it can be seen that the average scores of post-test is 84.06, and the median is 83.75 while the mode is 80.00 and the standard deviation is 8.702. The minimum score obtained by students is 70.00, while the maximum score obtained is 95.00.

Table 9. Frequency and Percentage of Post-Test

Score	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
<b>91-100</b>	Excellent	5	31.25 %
<b>81-90</b>	Very Good	4	25.00%
<b>71-80</b>	Good	5	31.25 %
<b>61-70</b>	Fair	2	12.50 %
<b>51-60</b>	Poor	0	0%
<b>&lt; 50</b>	Very Poor	0	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The table 9 shows that there are five students who have the interval score of 91-100 (very good) or 31.25% and four students who have the score of 81-90 (very good) or 25%. Then, five

students achieved score of 71-80 (good) or 31.25% while two students have score 61-70 (fair) or 12.50%, and no student is in poor and very poor classifications. In the post-test, we can see the students' improvement after using the word mapping strategy. If before the treatment there is no student in the excellent classification, yet in the post-test there are 5 students reach the excellent classification. Again, if before the treatment there are 8 students in the poor and very poor classification, yet in the post-test there is none students left in this achievement classification. This means after the treatment all students showed an increase in their scores.

To decide whether the word mapping technique gives significant effect to students' vocabulary mastery, the following is the result of statistical analysis on paired-sample t-test.

Table 10. Paired Sample T-Test Result

	Mean difference	Standard deviation	t	df	p value
Pretest - Posttest	-18.750	8.991	-8.342	15	.000

In the table 10, it can be seen that p-value = 0.000 which is lower than  $\alpha$  (0.05), then  $H_0$  is rejected or  $H_a$  is accepted. This is also confirmed by the results of the t-value = -8.342 that this value must be consulted with the t-table on the one-tailed test since it shows minus value (Fauzi, 2023). When to compare the t-value with the t-table in the one-tailed ( $t=1.746$ ;  $df=15$ ), the result shows t-value calculated is higher than t-table in which it accepts  $H_a$  or rejects  $H_0$ . This is to say that there is a significant effect of the word mapping technique in increasing students' mastery of English vocabulary.

## 5. DISCUSSION

In this study, the researchers showed that the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery can be assessed from the ability of students who can mention various kinds of vocabulary after being given treatment in the form of word mapping technique. From the findings, students' ability to master vocabulary has increased significantly. This shows that there is progress in students' vocabulary mastery. The students developed their vocabulary by using the word mapping technique, for example choosing the type of verb vocabulary such as, *play, run, write, sleep, fly, climb, drink*. Then choosing one of the verbs, namely drink, then the word drink is developed with various vocabulary related to the vocabulary drink such as, water, glass, clear, health, clean, and thirst. After that, students can choose vocabulary to be developed again and continue to develop vocabulary in order to master vocabulary. Then, in the post-test, students' scores increased which showed that after being given the treatment, students could improve their vocabulary mastery. After the result of the analysis, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference of students' mastery before being taught or treated with the word mapping technique and after being taught or treated with the word mapping technique. Thus, it can be interpreted that there is a significant effect of using the word mapping technique.

The results of the post-test showed that the use of word mapping technique was effective in teaching students' vocabulary acquisition. Most students were able to develop vocabulary which can help students improve their English vocabulary knowledge. The students felt

interested in learning the word mapping technique that can help them develop vocabulary. Learning with word mapping technique is considered fun for students. The students feel excited in following the learning in class. The word mapping technique encourages students to think of more vocabulary. During the learning process, the students actively mentioned the vocabulary they knew.

The result of this study is relevant to Ronaghi et al (2015) that the word mapping technique shows a dramatic growth of student performance in vocabulary learning. Students who are taught based on this technique can increase and improve student performance, for example in speaking, the word map strategy can increase students' vocabulary. This technique is suitable for all language proficiency levels and almost all languages such as Arabic, Persian, etc. In addition, the result of this study is also in line with Gustinna (2015) that the use of word mapping strategy contributes positively to students' vocabulary mastery. Further, this study also supports Edy & Amiruddin's (2019) study that the word mapping strategy is effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery. By the result of this study, it is important to note that learning with word mapping technique can make students easier to learn English vocabulary especially in the basic level. In addition, the provision of good treatment contributed positively to students' vocabulary acquisition.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Based on the data obtained from the research result and statistical analysis, it can be concluded that the word mapping technique has an effect in improving students' vocabulary mastery. This can be seen from the scores of students who have been taught the word mapping technique are higher than before being taught the teaching technique. The word mapping technique improves students' vocabulary mastery by developing vocabulary such as choosing vocabulary to be developed using the word grouping. The types of vocabulary chosen such as *ball, apple, rabbit, shoe, bed, bicycle, and flower*. Then, by choosing one of them to be developed, for example, *ball*, students can define various vocabularies related to the *ball*, such as *soccer, shoes, jersey, stadium, football field, supporters, and grass*. Then, by continuing such technique to develop other words students can develop various vocabularies related to the word selected. By doing this technique in teaching basic vocabulary, students can master various vocabularies of English faster.

As a result, the use of word mapping technique as implemented in this study was successful to enhance students' mastery. Moreover, the results showed that the process of using the word mapping technique help students develop basic vocabularies in addition to motivate them to memorize basic words. This means the use of that technique is very good and appropriate to be implemented in acquiring vocabularies of English especially for the students of Junior High School in the seventh graders.

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