The Use of Mentimeter to Teach English Vocabulary to 8th Grade in A Private School

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Abstract

English as a compulsory subject taught at various levels of education for students in Indonesia, one of which is at the secondary level. In carrying out English language learning, teachers should build an exciting classroom atmosphere to support the successful implementation of learning in the classroom. The use of media improves students' understanding of certain concepts that are difficult to explain in verbal language. One media used in teaching and learning is Mentimeter, an interactive web that can allow teachers and students to build interactions as a learning tool.

The study was carried out with the subjects of the 8th grade students at one of the private junior high schools in Cilacap. The research aims to identify the students' problems in learning English vocabulary and to use the Mentimeter application to improve the students' English vocabulary mastery. The research method used Classroom Action Research. The research shows that the main problems that arose in 8th grade students of one of the private junior high schools in Cilacap were a lack of understanding of English vocabulary and interest in the learning media used by the teacher. After using Mentimeter, the researcher found an increase in students' ability in vocabulary mastery.

Keywords: CAR, learning media, Mentimeter, vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

Every country cannot avoid the tight flow of globalization (Shobikah, 2017; Stiglitz, 2017). Technology and the ongoing development of the times will impact the life of the country from various aspects, including social, economic, political, cultural, and educational. Therefore, every country needs to be able to create networks in the era of globalization. Entering the market in the era of globalization requires everyone to have reliable abilities, especially in the field of communication (Purba & Siahaan, 2021). Mastery of the ability to speak English in this context is one of the requirements in mastering communication skills related to the determination of English as an international language. The importance of mastering English is supported by the current globalization, which brings the Asian Free Trade Area (AFTA) closer to being faced. Therefore, a thought or paradigm on the importance of English is needed (Shobikah, 2017).

Learning English is still applied at various levels of education for students in Indonesia, one of which is at the secondary level. In carrying out English language learning, it is necessary to have class management efforts (Dörnyei & Muir, 2019). Classroom management is a treatment that teachers can do to build a positive atmosphere in learning, one of which is active engagement in learning (NSW Department of Education, 2020; Putra, 2012)

Teachers run a vital role in successfully implementing the students' active engagement in learning. Teachers should build an exciting and not dull classroom atmosphere to support the successful implementation of learning in the classroom (Dörnyei & Muir, 2019). The use of media improves students' understanding of certain concepts that are difficult to explain in verbal language. The use of media is very dependent on the characteristics of the media and the ability of students or teachers to understand

how the media works so that they can achieve learning objectives.

One media used in teaching and learning is Mentimeter (Sirajudin & Hasan, 2021). Mentimeter is an interactive web that can allow teachers and students to build interactions as a learning tool. Available in various plans (Free, Basic, and Pro) with various price ranges, Mentimeter has user-friendly steps suitable for various levels of education. The author will focus on the free plan in this study, which allows multiple teachers to have unlimited participants.

The study was carried out on 8th grade students at one of the private junior high schools in Cilacap who have approximately the same average score to monitor the development of vocabulary mastery skills. Class 8 B was chosen because students are interested in learning vocabulary and have devices that can support research activities (mobile phones). In addition, grade 8 students also have difficulty mastering vocabulary in learning English at school.

Electronic learning media can be a means of supporting vocabulary learning in the classroom (Shastri, 2002). Mentimeter is a platform in the form of an interactive website that allows users to have a real-time interactive experience (Crump & Sparks, 2018). Mentimeter builds an audience interaction service provider used as an interactive learning medium (Iona, 2018). Mentimeter has several service plans, all of which require access to the Internet. The researcher chooses the free plan because various service educators and students can own and enjoy this type of service. Mentimeter provides easy access to instant feedback, collection, and processing of discussion results data.

With the support of Mentimeter, students can express their ideas on the same page anonymously. Mentimeter allows an increase in the participation of less active students in class. Students who lack ideas or have lower abilities could relate to their peers' responses and try to communicate their thoughts (Crump & Sparks, 2018; Rudolph, 2018).

Vocabulary is a set of words with a particular meaning in a language belonging to a person, nation, or group. Furthermore, the definition of vocabulary, which is one of the fields of knowledge in learning a language, has an essential role in students to acquire a language (Al-sobhi & Preece, 2018; Khan et al., 2018).

Vocabulary plays an essential role in the running of a conversation. Conversations do not go well if people have limited vocabulary. People who are learning a language must be willing to learn vocabulary. It needs to be done to understand how to speak and communicate. It is not only fixated on grammar, functions, notions, or other things that have been designed and taught by the teacher but also word-for-word combinations (Alqahtani, 2015; Rohmatillah, 2014). In addition, mastery of vocabulary can increase one's self-confidence (Phan, 2018). In other words, the ability to master vocabulary is crucial for someone to master a language (Asyiah, 2017). Before this research, several studies have examined topics almost the same as the author's research topic. In the first study, Shin & Eom (2020) discusses the use of the Mentimeter interactive website in promoting real-time interactive class, but this research does not discuss the use of vocabulary in delivering material. The study stated that the research was conducted on 20 South Korean students using the Classroom Action Research method, supported by interviews with seven students. The results obtained by Minchul Shin & Wooyong Eom (2020) after undergoing the research process, namely the use of real-time interactive class tools and cloud tools (Google Meet and Mentimeter), are very helpful in building active participation activities in the form of collaboration and communication.

Wong & Yunus (2020) examine the level of effectiveness of using Mentimeter media in improving the written vocabulary skills of elementary school students, using the classroom action research method. This study indicates that the Mentimeter is a tool that can effectively improve students' vocabulary and writing skills. Wong and Yunus also recommend Mentimeter as an effective medium for learning. Wong and Yunus used elementary school students as research participants, while the researchers used junior high school students.

Musliha & Purnawarman (2020) explain that the Mentimeter as a Student Response System (SRS) could be trusted to eliminate fear for students in conveying responses. It is because Mentimeter conveys student opinions anonymously. This

research has similarities with the research appointed by the researcher, namely involving twenty-five junior high school students from Indonesia. The results obtained from this study are that the Mentimeter can be considered an effective tool in overcoming students' fears when responding.

To answer the first research question, the researcher applies the theory proposed by Shastri (2002) and Sirajudin & Hasan (2021) which explains the possibilities of the problems faced by students who study English as a second language. This theory is supported by Afzal (2019), who put forward a similar theory, i.e. the problems students face in learning vocabulary. Although using students with higher educational levels as subjects, the theory has similarities with this study. The similarity is that students are non-native speakers of English.

To answer the second research question, the researcher utilized the theory of vocabulary learning strategies by (Carthy & Michael, 1997), which was used in Laosrirattanachai et al., (2021). Schmitt adapted the concept of strategic learning vocabulary (VLSs), which explained that the approach in language learning to facilitate the learning process was carried out with an easy and comfortable approach. Then, Carthy (1997) divided VLS into two broad categories, discovery strategies, and consolidation strategies. This research used a sub-category derived from the consolidation strategy named cognitive strategies (COGs). COGs are vocabulary learning strategies that focus on skills and learning tools by writing examples on books, vocabulary lists, and media for learning vocabulary.

The supporting theory that can answer the second problem formulation is the theory that comes from Shastri (2002), Sirajudin & Hasan (2021) and Foil & Alber (2002) regarding the activities that can be done in teaching vocabulary in the classroom. Vocabulary learning activities are applied parallel to the text or reading because vocabulary is taught through actualization through a context, not only in isolation. Quizzes, as one of Mentimeter's features, are used to support the learning process conducted by the researcher. Quizzes, in the form of timed and scored system quizzes, are utilized as a tool to

motivate the students (Hill, 2019; Kapp, 2012; Skoyles & Bloxsidge, 2017).

However, from the background explained above, this study attempts to fill the gap from the previous studies by raising and answering two research question: what are the problems faced by the junior high school students in learning English vocabulary and to what extent did the Mentimeter application improve the learning process of the students' English vocabulary mastery?

METHODOLOGY

The research design used in this research is the design of Classroom Action Research (CAR). CAR design is a spiral model of learning. The researcher decided to use Classroom Action Research because of its appropriate goal: to determine what works best in the classroom so the researcher can improve students' learning experience (Kemmis et al., 1988; McTaggart, 1994). CAR design consists of 4 phases which are called Cycles (planning, acting and observing, and reflecting). The researcher implements 2 cycles. The study was carried out on 8th-grade students at one of the private junior high schools in Cilacap academic year 2021/2022, who have approximately the same average score to monitor the development of vocabulary mastery skills.

In this research, the researcher utilized observation sheets, questionnaires, interviews, and formative tests about the participants' perceptions of learning English using Mentimeter. The researcher applied quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the data. Questionnaires, test 1, test 2, and test 3 data are treated by the quantitative method—the qualitative method processed data based on field notes and interviews. Firstly, the researcher collected the data during the observation stage through observation sheets and field notes. After collecting the data, the researcher coded the data to build an appropriate syllabus. Finally, the researcher presented the final data to consider Cycle I and II activities.

Furthermore, the quantitative data was based on the result of tests. The researcher conducted several formative tests (test 1, test 2, and test 3) in this research. The results of the formative tests were analyzed to get the average score. It was

compared to the students' first average on test 1 of learning English using Mentimeter and test 3.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
The Students' Problems with Learning English Vocabulary

Preliminary research was used to answer the first research question. This stage is crucial because it provides the foundation of classroom action research by identifying the authentic problems occurring in the classroom. A valid data collection was carried out through questionnaires, interviews, field notes, and test 1.

In carrying out this research, the researcher involved an English teacher as a collaborator to support the validity of the data. First, the researcher made observations while the teacher carried out teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Several things observed by the researcher include three sections that focus on students' behavior and abilities in the English learning process, such as students' behavior, student participation, and vocabulary mastery (Dźwigoł & Barosz, 2020). The researcher carried out the observation process when the teacher carried out English learning as usual.

Furthermore, the researcher distributed a questionnaire to identify students' perspectives on students' English learning process at school. The questionnaire was given to grade 8 students at SMP Pius Cilacap. The number of research participants, which consisted of 10 students, was taken based on the class division of 50% of the total number of students in the class due to school policies that adjusted the Covid-19 conditions. The research questionnaire holds five questions in the form of closed-ended questions and three open-ended questions. The close-ended questions focus on the personal assessment of students' interest and ability in learning English at school. Meanwhile, in the open-ended questions section, the researcher invited students to be able to state their opinions regarding the use of learning media used by the teacher in school.

Next, the researcher interviewed the English teacher and three students who volunteered their opinions. Based on observations, questionnaires, and interviews completed by the researcher, a picture of the situation in the preliminary research can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Preliminary research table

Table 1. Students' Score

Aspects	Description
Problem identified	1. Students' understanding and writing mastery were still low 2. Students show less enthusiasm for the learning media used by the teacher.
Indicators of perceived problems	Students' understanding and writing mastery were still low 1. experienced misunderstanding of the instructions given by the teacher 2. rarely answered the questions given by the teacher orally 3. wrote English words with many mistakes in spelling 4. faced difficulties in recognizing the words used 5. mean of test 1 was 44.91 of 100,0 Students show less enthusiasm for the learning media used by the teacher. 1. Some of them were busy talking to their friends 2. Some of them were busy with their phone and stuff 3. They seemed to be

	bored with following the teaching process
Causes	1. The teacher's learning media is not attractive in engaging the students
	2. Monotonous learning media is used
	3. Low mastery of understanding and writing vocabulary

The observation phase found that the 8th-grade English teacher carried out the learning process using PowerPoint presentation media and then worked on the questions in the student worksheets. Vocabulary teaching occurs during the English learning process. The teacher explained the material and spoke in English during the learning process. However, students were less able to understand the vocabulary spoken by the teacher. The teacher's absence of feedback supported it during the teaching process. Students were only silent when the teacher asked or instructed something. When the teacher gave instructions, students looked confused about what they should do because they did not understand the meaning of the words given to the teacher.

In addition, during the observation, the researcher found that students were less interested in the learning media used by the teacher. Through preliminary research interviews, students revealed that learning with PowerPoint as used by the teacher seemed dull and uninteresting. It is reinforced by students' behavior who show boredom during learning (playing on cell phones, being busy chatting with other friends, and being sleepy). A questionnaire distributed to students indicated a high interest in learning English.

Based on Table 4.1., it can be seen that the main problems that arose in 8th grade students of SMP Pius Cilacap were a lack of understanding of English vocabulary and interest in the learning media used by the teacher. The data presented in Table 1 are known based on in-class observations, questionnaires, and preliminary participant interviews.

It is supported by a theory derived from Afzal (2019), Shastri (2002) and (Sirajudin & Hasan, 2021)that vocabulary is a challenging skill, especially for non-native English speakers such as 8th graders at SMP Pius Cilacap. The difficulties faced by the students of SMP Pius Cilacap related to interpret the meaning of vocabulary and guess the meaning of words according to the context were caused by the traditional methods used by the teacher in the learning process. The traditional method includes the use of the mother tongue by the teacher during learning and the learning media applied. Furthermore, learning media can support students to get 'facilities' in the form of a pleasant atmosphere. Shastri (2002) stated that the exposure received by students in the form of an atmosphere and feeling of pleasure influenced the success of language learning.

How Mentimeter Application Improves the Students' English Vocabulary Mastery

Data collection was carried out within one month (Cycle I and Cycle II) from February-March 2022. On each Cycle, the researcher used two meetings; each meeting allocated 60 minutes (2 hours of lessons). Thus, the total meeting required by the researcher in this study was four meetings. It happens because it adjusts the student's learning materials (recount text) schedule that the subject teacher has set.

The researcher divided the learning structure into three parts: the opening, the main activity, and the closing. In Cycle I, the researcher first introduced the Mentimeter and how to use it.

The researcher uses text displays and choices or quizzes in this first cycle of research by teaching students how to use a Mentimeter. The teaching method used is carrying out a series of individual and group learning that is carried out alternately. Activities implemented are the repetition of the vocabulary pronunciations, timed and scored reward quizzes, body gestures, and actions games to teach verbs, and taking notes in books.

The closing activity was to fill out a quiz using Mentimeter. Students were provided with five questions in the form of a verb quiz in English in which they must translate the words into Bahasa. Each student finished working on one question; the Mentimeter will display the points earned by students and the order of positions from the highest according to the points collected. At first, the researcher only presented

a set of quizzes to be played. Unexpectedly the students liked the quiz very much, so they asked the researcher to conduct a second round of quizzes. The researcher provided ten quiz questions as a closing activity in total. To collect research data, the researcher asked the students to fill out test 2 with the same structure and content as test 1.

The researcher observed the overall research activity by taking pictures, recording class conditions, paying attention to the students, and analyzing observation sheets and field notes. In addition, the researcher also took into account the increase in the average result of test 1 to test 2. Based on those things, the researcher can conclude that students' enthusiasm in the second meeting is more significant than in the preliminary research meeting. It was shown that when the researcher asked something, more students responded to the question. In fact, like what happened in the second meeting, the students were very enthusiastic about retaking the quiz.

The atmosphere created became more controlled and relaxed. Some students who initially paid less attention to learning during pre-research (chatting with other students, laying their heads on the table) became more focused on learning after the research was carried out. Mentimeter keeps students curious. This curiosity triggers students to understand the learning material, encourages them to continue to excel on the points they get from the quiz, and makes them more careful in writing vocabulary.

However, some problems were still appearing in this cycle. teaching activities were completed in a closed room far from the reach of internet signals. Some students still like to chat with other students when the researcher is not using the Mentimeter media. Besides that, there are still many students who miswrite vocabulary, for example: "*re call*," "to recalling," and "*borow*." Some students did not understand the words or instructions given by the researcher in the teaching process.

The observation shows that many things still need improvement in implementing action research on Cycle I. The researcher realized that several problems need to be solved in Cycle II. The choice of place for teaching activities needed to be considered because the Mentimeter requires

a sufficient internet connection. Even though the class atmosphere was active, the researcher needed to pay attention to students who stayed quiet and made some noise during the learning process. They did not say a word and responded while the researcher asked something. In addition, more vocabulary must be applied in class, verbally or delivered in written form in learning.

The planning stage in Cycle II was based on the reflection results produced by Cycle I. Based on the results of reflection, it was found that 1) students still had difficulty understanding the teacher's words and instructions due to a lack of vocabulary mastery, 2) some students still made mistakes in writing vocabulary, 3) although there has been an increase in student enthusiasm, there are still other students who are just silent, without giving a response, but the researcher also found 4) some students are busy talking to other friends so that it makes the class environment noisy.

The researcher used the simple past tense to recount text in the main activity. First, the researcher asked the students to form groups of two randomly. After the group formation was completed, the researcher explained to the students that this time, students would learn with a verb guessing game. The researcher explained how the game was played. One by one, the group came to the front of the class and then took two papers written with verbs. The group's task is to demonstrate or mention other words as clues. The group's order that gets a turn first is randomized with the 'spin the wheel' feature available in Mentimeter. In its implementation, the students seemed to enjoy this activity. They found it challenging to describe clues in English. They described the word as mixed Bahasa and English. The next activity is the researcher explains the meaning and examples of verbs in the past tense used in recount text. In Mentimeter, three words are presented (work, build, write), which require students to choose the past tense as the correct answer. After the researcher revealed the correct answer, the students responded enthusiastically. Then the researcher elaborated the explanation of the answer.

Before ending the learning process, the researcher asked the students to divide the class into two groups. The group had to compete by writing as many V2s as possible for 3 minutes.

The classroom atmosphere was delightful because the interaction between students was well established. They discussed what they would write and how to spell it correctly.

After that, the researcher provided a quiz containing five questions. This quiz required students to choose a verb in the past tense (V2) according to the verb (V1) displayed. Next, the researcher asked students to fill out a formative test (test 3) and a questionnaire as supporting data for the study

From the observation sheet and field notes, it could be seen that the class atmosphere has changed significantly. The students who were previously busy talking to other students are now more focused and calmer. Meanwhile, the previously silent students desired to get involved even though they were still shy. Through the implementation of group activities, students could fill each other's situations. In addition, the frequency of students asking the researcher about instructions also decreased. It can be a good sign that students increasingly understand the vocabulary used or spoken during the learning process.

Table 2. Students' score on the formative tests

Table 2. Mean of the Scores

Name	Score		
	Pre-research	Cycle I	Cycle II
A	41.82	76.36	83.64
B	81.82	90.91	96.36
C	18.18	50.91	67.27
D	63.64	76.36	89.09
E	47.27	58.18	72.73
F	52.73	69.09	76.36
G	63.64	69.09	74.55
H	40.00	65.45	81.82
I	18.18	38.18	49.09
J	21.82	38.18	74.55
Mean	44.91	63.27	76.55

Score improvement from preliminary research – Cycle II: 70%

Furthermore, based on the results of test 3 that students have carried out, students show an increase in the ability to understand and write vocabulary as much as 70% from test 1. The average increased from 44.91 on test 1 and 76.55 on test 3 on a scale of 1-100.

Based on the results of observations made by the teacher and researcher, several reflections were obtained: 1) students' ability to understand vocabulary in learning increased, 2) students who in the previous Cycle paid less attention to lessons and were busy talking with other friends, are now more focused and calmer, 3) students who previously were silent, did not provide feedback, now participate more actively in learning.

The teacher and researcher concluded that the use of Mentimeter as a learning medium could improve the ability to understand vocabulary and make the atmosphere in the classroom alive. Mentimeter forces students to continue to generate curiosity. This great curiosity then fosters students' desire to continue learning.

In conclusion, the series of cycles in action research went well—the problems found in Cycle I can be overcome in the learning process in the second Cycle. In addition, the use of the Mentimeter has a good role in increasing students' understanding of vocabulary.

In analyzing the use of Mentimeter to improve students' vocabulary comprehension skills, the researcher applied the theories proposed by Carthy & Michael (1997), Laosrirattanachai et al. (2021) and Shastri (2002) to Cycle I and Cycle II activities. These activities include repetition of the vocabulary pronunciations, timed and scored reward quizzes, body gestures and actions games to teach verbs, and taking notes in books.

In this study, researchers applied timed and scored reward system quizzes that could motivate students four times (Hill, 2019; Kapp, 2012; Skoyles & Bloxsidge, 2017). Timed and scored reward system quizzes can stimulate students' curiosity to be higher. In the systematic quiz on Mentimeter, the questions' answers will appear immediately after the timer ends. Answers that appear directly after the questions will bring valuable benefits to students (Skoyles & Bloxsidge, 2017).

CONCLUSION

The students' problems in learning English vocabulary in one of the private junior high schools in Cilacap are the low ability of vocabulary mastery and the low engagement of students in learning English in the classroom. The researcher applied a series of action research to answer the second research question. Action research was conducted according to the theoretical design of Kemmis and Taggart. The research applied four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Action research at the school was carried out in 2 cycles, with four meetings. At the end of each Cycle, the researcher gave test 2 and test 3. From the analysis of test 1, test 2, and test 3, the researchers found that using a Mentimeter could improve vocabulary understanding in 8th-grade students. The researcher uses text displays and choices or quizzes in this first cycle of research by teaching students how to use a Mentimeter. The teaching method used is carrying out a series of individual and group learning that is carried out alternately. Activities implemented are the repetition of the vocabulary pronunciations, timed and scored reward quizzes, body gestures, and actions games to teach verbs, and taking notes in books. After the students succeeded in using Mentimeter, the researcher found an increase in students' ability in vocabulary mastery by as much as 70%.

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