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### ENHANCING STUDENTS' RECEPTIVE VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE THROUGH WORD MAPPING STRATEGY

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**Abstract:** This study aims to enhance junior high school students' receptive understanding by utilizing word mapping strategies. This research employs a quantitative method with a quasi-experimental design. The study focuses on second-grade students in public junior high schools in Bandung, totaling 382 students spread across 10 classes. After randomizing the classes, class B was selected as the experimental class, and class A was the control class. The data collection techniques used in this study were a pretest and a posttest. The data analysis technique used in this study was a statistical analysis of Chi-Square to compare pre-test and posttest values. The results of the hypothesis test showed that the value of  $T_{\text{count}}$  was  $4 > 2.64$  ( $T_{\text{table}}$ ), then  $H_0$  was rejected and  $H_a$  was accepted, meaning there was a significant difference in receptive vocabulary mastery between students who used conventional learning techniques and word mapping strategies. Thus, teachers could use word mapping strategies to improve vocabulary learning for institutions, teachers, students, and future researchers effectively.

**Keywords:** receptive vocabulary, vocabulary mastery, word mapping strategy

#### INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is a crucial part of language development that has a big impact on pupils' ability to read, write, listen, and communicate effectively because it enables learners to properly understand and express themselves (Chen et al., 2019; Kulsum et al., 2023; Sakina and Astuti, 2024). Learning a language is vital for developing language competency since it can be tied to many parts of studying English, including speaking, learning, writing, and reading. But in reality, a variety of factors commonly lead to students losing interest in language study. Studies that were carried out (Kulsum et al., 2024) show that there are several types of problems consisting of a lack of student interest in learning English, lack of student motivation, not understanding grammar and pronunciation, laziness in memorizing vocabulary, and lack of supportive learning facilities.

Word mapping strategies (WMS) are a great method for helping pupils learn English efficiently. This strategy helps children improve their vocabulary and remember the terms

for a long time (Graves, 2012). In other words, the strategy will assist students in connecting the new words to what they already know. Students are encouraged to go from simple dictionary-like statements to more complex definitions that demonstrate relationships by expanding the definitions of words through word mapping: What is the category? What is the appearance of (property)? Which examples serve as illustrations?(Rezvani & Jabbari, 2016).

The primary prerequisite that aids language learners in their language studies is vocabulary. Words connect all of the language abilities that kids utilize, so language and words cannot be separated. Through vocabulary enrichment, they can improve their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Furthermore, all information and communications can only be accessed and transmitted verbally. Thus, words are crucial when learning a language (Firmansyah, 2016)

According to Ferreira (2017), only if students understand the meaning of several terms used in written or spoken texts will they be able to understand the content when speaking, listening, reading, and even writing. Being able to understand a large number of words is crucial for language learning and is the key to being proficient in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Additionally, possessing a sufficient vocabulary aids students in learning a foreign language and is a fundamental understanding to facilitate language acquisition

Regarding Terrazas Gallego et al. (2009), receptive vocabulary is the ability to understand a term when you hear or see it in a text. Receptive vocabulary refers to the ability to understand words without speaking or writing them down (Faraj, 2015). The ability of children to comprehend and accept the meaning of words without having to employ them in production is known as receptive vocabulary.

This study fills the gap in understanding the effectiveness of the word mapping strategy for enhancing students' receptive vocabulary mastery. While conventional techniques are widely used, there is limited research comparing their outcomes with the word mapping strategy. Additionally, studies have not thoroughly explored how the word mapping strategy supports deeper comprehension of word relationships, which is crucial for vocabulary development.

The research introduces a novel perspective by focusing on the word mapping strategy as a tool for improving receptive vocabulary mastery. Unlike conventional methods, the word mapping strategy emphasizes a systematic approach to word relationships, including synonyms, antonyms, definitions, and examples. This approach not only enhances understanding but also aids in long-term retention. The study also uniquely compares the word mapping strategy with traditional techniques to identify which method yields better outcomes in receptive vocabulary mastery.

The objectives of this study are threefold. First, it aims to evaluate the improvement in students' receptive vocabulary mastery when the word mapping strategy. Second, it seeks to analyze the enhancement of receptive vocabulary mastery achieved through conventional teaching methods. Finally, the study aims to determine whether there is a significant difference in the effectiveness of the word mapping strategy compared to conventional techniques in helping students master receptive vocabulary.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is a core component of language learning. Students will easily write and speak in English if they are rich in vocabulary. According to (Asyiah, 2017) Vocabulary is the collection of terms that a person, group of people, occupation, etc. uses.

Vocabulary is therefore necessary for students to inspire themselves to write, speak, read, and listen. There are some vocabulary definitions presented by some experts. Gairns and Redman (2012) and Wardani (2015) emphasized that vocabulary encompasses the entirety of words and their meanings, which are vital components of a language. Vocabulary serves as a fundamental element in all aspects of language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It consists of lexemes, the smallest distinct units in a language's meaning system, which include single words, compound words, and idiomatic expressions (Hassani, 2013).

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### **Kinds of Vocabulary**

Various experts have identified different types of vocabulary. Vocabulary can be categorized into two types, active and passive (Gairns & Redman, 2012; Dakhi & Fitria, 2019). Active vocabulary refers to words used in spoken and written communication, while passive vocabulary consists of words acquired through listening or reading.

According to Nation (2001), vocabulary in a text can be categorized into four types. The first category is high-frequency words, which constitute approximately 80% of the words in a text. The second category is academic words, which typically comprise around 9% of the text. The third category includes technical words, accounting for about 5% of the words. Lastly, low-frequency words comprise the remaining 5% of the text.

According to Harmer and Thornbury (2002), vocabulary can be classified into several categories. The first category is nouns, which refer to individuals, locations, or objects. Most sentences contain at least one noun, which can be divided into countable nouns (e.g., "cat," "Manchester," "Harry") and uncountable nouns. The second category is verbs, which express actions. Verbs are divided into lexical verbs (main verbs) such as "run," "jump," "sit," and "play," and auxiliary verbs (linking verbs) that serve grammatical functions, such as "will," "may," "can," and "could."

Adjectives form the third category and are used to describe or emphasize the characteristics of nouns, such as "lazy," "smart," "dark," "light," "black," and "white." Next are adverbs, which modify or enhance the meaning of other word classes or phrases, excluding adjectives and determiners that directly modify nouns.

Prepositions represent another category and are words or phrases placed before nouns, noun phrases, or pronouns to indicate direction, time, place, or introduce objects, such as "in," "at," "on," and "to." Conjunctions are words used to connect words, phrases, or clauses, with common examples including "and," "but," and "or."

The seventh category, pronouns, refers to words that replace nouns and refer to people or things mentioned in a conversation, such as "I," "you," "he," "it," and "this." Finally, determiners are words that modify, explain, or introduce nouns, with examples like "a" and "an."

### **Receptive Vocabulary**

Receptive vocabulary knowledge refers to the ability to understand a word when it is heard or read, while productive vocabulary knowledge pertains to the ability to use a word when speaking or writing (Maskor & Baharudin, 2016). It is said that vocabulary terms are first learned receptively by the student and can only be used productively following deliberate learning. According to Oberg (2012) As the student gains more vocabulary, receptive knowledge gradually transforms into productive knowledge.

Receptive vocabulary items are those that the students can identify and comprehend. On the other hand, productive vocabulary words are those that the student may use in their writing and communication. English language skills are categorized by Pignot-Shahov (2012) into both receptive and expressive (productive) knowledge competencies. According to him, speaking and writing abilities are the focus of productive knowledge competence, whereas listening and reading abilities are the focus of receptive knowledge competence.

### **Receptive Vocabulary Assessment**

Receptive vocabulary assessment is a crucial component in evaluating students' ability to understand and recognize words in a second language (L2). Nation (2001) outlines three methods for assessing receptive vocabulary, each with its own unique approach to measuring how well learners understand and process vocabulary.

The first method, the *Yes/No Test*, is one of the most common ways to assess receptive vocabulary knowledge. This test requires students to indicate whether they understand a particular word by responding with "yes" or "no" when presented with words or statements. The simplicity of this method makes it easy to implement, as it can be tailored to the learners' context, for example, by using sentences related to their daily lives. Despite its simplicity, this method has been criticized for its limited ability to assess depth of knowledge (Carter & McCarthy, 2014).

The second method is *Pictionary*, which combines auditory and visual input. In this test, students are presented with a word and three pictures, one of which corresponds to the meaning of the word. Students must select the correct picture, which tests their ability to associate the spoken word with its meaning visually (Nation, 2001). This method is particularly engaging and helps assess both recognition and recall of vocabulary.

Lastly, the *Selective-Comprehensive Assessment* is a more focused approach. Here, students are asked to define words or identify their meaning in specific contexts. This method allows teachers to assess a deeper understanding of words and their usage, as it involves not just recognition but also an understanding of meaning in context (Schmitt, 2000). This selective approach ensures that students are not simply memorizing vocabulary, but truly grasping its application.

These three methods—Yes/No Test, Pictionary, and Selective-Comprehensive Assessment—are useful tools in the teacher's toolkit for evaluating receptive vocabulary in a comprehensive way, addressing different aspects of vocabulary knowledge.

### **Word Mapping Strategy**

One tactic that will assist students in expanding their vocabulary and retaining new information over time is word mapping (Graves, 2016). According to Graves (2016), the word mapping strategy encourages students to actively investigate word relationships and expand their conceptual understanding of words to gain a deeper understanding of them. Strengthened by Beck (2012) that since word mapping encourages students to think critically and make connections between words, it is an effective method and one of the most effective ways to teach vocabulary. By using the word mapping strategy, students will be able to connect the new terms to what they already know, making it easier for them to remember them.

Additionally, by mapping the words, students are able to expand their definitions. The vocabulary mapping approach was created to help students progress from basic dictionary-like statements to more intricate definitions.

### **The Goals of Word Mapping Strategy**

According to Graves (2016), the word mapping strategy serves several goals in vocabulary development. First, word mapping is a visual organizer that promotes vocabulary growth. The target word is placed at the top or center of the organizer, and additional information – such as its dictionary definition, synonyms, a sentence or phrase from the text, associations, word clues, examples, or various word forms – is branched out from the central word.

Second, students can use word mapping to learn and retain vocabulary more effectively. By visually mapping terms, students enhance their understanding of words and their meanings. Third, this strategy utilizes a graphic representation, also known as a "graphic organizer," to help students visualize the relationships between words and concepts. Fourth, word mapping can be applied to both teaching new words and expanding or clarifying the meanings of familiar ones. Finally, this technique assists students in creating definitions, understanding broader concepts, and identifying synonyms and antonyms, thereby deepening their vocabulary knowledge.

### **Teaching Procedures of Receptive Vocabulary by Using Word Mapping Strategy**

Teachers can give the pupils an introduction to the word mapping strategy. Then teachers can explain the subject they will be studying, its purpose, how it connects to similar things they have done in the past, and when they will apply this tactic (D'Arcangelo & Marzano, 2005) said that the purpose of the introductory phase is to help students attach meaning to new terms they are learning. This initial stage of learning involves associating past experiences with a new term by illustrating or assuming the word students learn. In short, the teacher tells to the students about the word mapping strategy to enhance their vocabulary while collecting words that students do not know in the text (daily English books) then relates the words to their experience to understand deeper about those words.

Next, teachers can inform the students that this strategy is designed to assist them in learning unfamiliar vocabulary. Using a word map can help them visualize different aspects of a word. The comparison stage is intended to help students differentiate the meaning of the new word from other words they already know or are currently learning (Marzano, 2010). Students begin to know the meaning of one word and try to differentiate the closest meaning from the previous one. In any case, the teacher begins to show the student an example of how to develop a word and the closest meaning by using the word mapping strategy from those words that have been collected at the first stage.

Once the teacher has exemplified the use of a word map, students proceed to construct their own. The purpose of the third phase is to enhance the breadth and diversity of associations between the target term and other terms that are either closely related or interconnected, utilizing word mapping as a strategic tool (Graves, 2016). After students finish their world map, there will be a review and refinement. This enables students to refine and deepen their understanding of the words represented in the map.

## METHOD

This study employs a quantitative methodology. This study used a quasi-experimental methodology. Quasi-experiments are those in which participants are assigned to groups, but not at random (Creswell, 2012, p. 309). Furthermore, as defined by Cohen et al. (2012, p. 282).

The population of this research is 382 junior high school students, and the sample is 41 students from the second grade. The sampling technique of this research is probability sampling. According to Creswell (2012), in probability sampling or random sampling, the researcher chooses the participant (or units, such as school) as the sample randomly so that every individual has the opportunity to be the participant or to be chosen from the population. In this research, there are ten classes as the population and the writer used the random technique for choosing the classes that got the opportunity as the sample. After randomizing the classes, it is gotten that B class as the experimental class and A class as the control class.

Pretests and posttests are necessary to assess the extent of students' receptive vocabulary through the use of the word mapping strategy. Both tests were validated before conducting the research.

The hypothesis of this study examines the effectiveness of the word mapping strategy in enhancing students' receptive vocabulary mastery compared to conventional techniques. The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) states no significant difference between the two methods, accepted if the t-account is less than the t-table. In contrast, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) posits a significant difference, accepted if the t-account exceeds the t-table. This study aims to determine whether word mapping improves vocabulary learning outcomes more effectively.

The data analysis technique used in this study is statistical analysis non-parametric. After the pretest and posttest data are collected, then normality tests, comparative tests, and hypothesis tests (*Chi-Square*).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Data Presentation

**Table 1. The results of pretest and posttest in the experimental and control class**

Types of test	Scores	Class	
		Experimental	Control
Pretest	Lowest	35	35
	Highest	70	70
Posttest	Lowest	60	50
	Highest	90	75

Table 1 presents the pretest and posttest scores for both the experimental and control groups. In the experimental group, the pretest scores range from a minimum of 35 to a maximum of 70. The posttest results reflect an improvement, with the lowest score

increasing to 60 and the highest reaching 90. In contrast, the control group initially recorded a minimum pretest score of 35 and a maximum of 70. Following the posttest, the lowest score rose to 50, while the highest score increased to 75.

**Table 2. Average scores of the experimental class and control class**

Types of test	Experimental	Control
Pretest	51	52
Posttest	77	62

Table 2 illustrates that students who were taught vocabulary through conventional methods also demonstrated improvement. The lowest score increased from 35 to 60, while the highest rose from 70 to 90. Furthermore, the average student score improved from 51 to 77. However, the class utilizing conventional techniques exhibited only a modest increase. The difference between the highest pretest and posttest scores in the control group is relatively small. The lowest score improved from 35 to 50, and the highest increased from 70 to 75.

**Table 3. The normality data of the experimental class and control class**

Class	Pretest - Posttest	Statistic	df	Sig.
Control class	Pretest	11,3	3	1%
	Posttest	11,3	3	1%
Experimental class	Pretest	11,3	3	1%
	Posttest	11,3	3	1%

The normality of the distribution is determined based on the criterion that the data is considered normal if the calculated chi-square value ( $x^2$  count) is smaller than the critical chi-square value ( $x^2$  table). From the calculations, the  $x^2$  count was found to be 4.79, while the  $x^2$  table value is 11.3. Therefore, the post-test data for the control group follows a normal distribution.

**Table 4. The homogeneity data of both classes**

Types of test	Aspect	Results
Pretest	$F_{count}$	0,54
	$F_{table}$	2,64
Posttest	$F_{count}$	1,06
	$F_{table}$	2,93

In the pretest, In determining the homogeneity of the data, If  $F_{count} < F_{table}$ , it can be interpreted that the data is homogeneous. While if  $F_{count} > F_{table}$ , it can be interpreted the data is not homogeneous. After the process of calculation, it can be concluded that the pre-test data of the experimental and control classes are **homogenous** because of  $F_{count}$  (0.54) <  $F_{table}$  (2.64).

In the posttest, in determining the homogeneity of the data, If  $F_{count} < F_{table}$ , it can be interpreted that the data is homogeneous. While if  $F_{count} > F_{table}$ , it can be interpreted the data is not homogeneous. After the process of calculation, it can be concluded that post-

test data of the experimental and control classes are homogenous because of  $F_{\text{count}} (1.06) < F_{\text{table}} (2.93)$ .

**Table 5. T-test results and hypothesis testing**

No	Aspect	Result
1	$T_{\text{count}}$	4
2	$T_{\text{table}}$	2,64

From Table 5, the research computation used 1% for signification from the result by hypothesis in the experimental class and control class. In hypothesis testing using a t-test, if the  $T_{\text{count}}$  is less than the  $T_{\text{table}}$ , it can be concluded that  $H_0$  is accepted and  $H_a$  is rejected. Conversely, if the  $T_{\text{count}}$  exceeds the T table,  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_a$  is accepted. The results show that  $T_{\text{count}} = 4$  and  $T_{\text{table}} = 2.64$ . Therefore, there is a significant difference in students' receptive vocabulary after being taught using the word mapping strategy. Students taught with the word mapping strategy demonstrated more effective improvements in their receptive vocabulary compared to those taught using conventional methods.

### The Result of Gain Score in Experimental and Control Classes

**Table 6. The gain score of the experimental and control class**

No	Aspect	Result
1	Gain score of the experimental class	0.5
2	Gain score of the control class	0.16

From the statistic above, it is considered as the high degree if the percentage of gain score is between 0.7 and 1, it is considered as the medium degree if the percentage of gain is between 0.3 and 0.7, and it is considered as the low degree if the percentage of gain is between 0 until 0.3. The gain score of the experimental group is found to be 0.5, which is classified as a moderate level of improvement. In contrast, the gain score for the control group is 0.16, indicating a low level of improvement. It can be concluded that teaching receptive vocabulary through the word mapping strategy is more effective than using conventional techniques.

After implementing the experiment, the result of this study shows that the assumption of teaching vocabulary by using the word mapping strategy significantly impacts students' ability to acquire receptive vocabulary. The result of this study is to answer the research question as follows:

The students who are taught by using the word mapping strategy significantly improve. The difference between students' pre-test and post-test scores demonstrates a significant improvement in their vocabulary following the implementation of the word mapping strategy. Additionally, there is a notable increase in students' post-test scores, reflecting an enhancement in their receptive vocabulary. Moreover, based on the gain score, the experimental group achieved a gain score of 0.5, which is considered a moderate level of improvement, indicating a positive outcome.

This result supports the theory from Graves (2016) that strategy is an effective strategy to encourage students to learn and to enrich their receptive vocabulary for the long term. It means that by using the word mapping strategy, students are motivated to learn and can easily remember what they have learned.

The students who are taught by using conventional techniques also get improvement. But, the improvement is not significant. Some students get bad scores in the posttest after doing the treatment. Furthermore, based on the gain score, The gain score for the control group is calculated to be 0.16, which is classified as a low level of improvement, indicating that the progress is not significant.

This result supports the theory from Boumová et al., (2024) said that by using the traditional method students mostly get only narrow knowledge. This is because students are less motivated in learning and it influences their ability to comprehend the materials. It can be concluded that by using the conventional technique, students are less motivated in learning because the teaching method is monotone and it influences their ability to comprehend the knowledge well.

A significant distinction exists between teaching vocabulary using the word mapping strategy and the conventional technique, as evidenced by the results in Table 3.26. The gain scores reveal that the experimental group achieved a moderate improvement level (0.5), whereas the control group recorded a low improvement level (0.16). This indicates that students taught using the word mapping strategy exhibited a more substantial enhancement in their receptive vocabulary compared to those taught with conventional methods. Furthermore, the hypothesis testing results confirm the presence of significant differences between the two approaches.

It can be concluded that the majority of students in the class feel more at ease and motivated when learning vocabulary through the word mapping strategy compared to the conventional technique. This finding aligns with the theory proposed by Conceição et al., (2017) It was stated that the word mapping strategy can inspire students to learn English more effectively, enabling them to actively explore vocabulary. This approach provides structured guidance on how to retain words effortlessly and for an extended period.

## CONCLUSION

A substantial difference exists in teaching receptive vocabulary using the word mapping strategy compared to the conventional technique. Based on the gain scores, the experimental group achieved a score of 0.5, while the control group recorded a score of 0.16. In summary, it can be concluded that the word mapping strategy significantly enhances students' receptive vocabulary more effectively than the conventional approach. Further, the hypothesis test shows there is a significant difference in results.

Overall, the students have more benefit in learning reading comprehension by using the word mapping strategy. The study's limitation lies in its focus on a single strategy (word mapping) and limited participant scope. Future research should explore diverse vocabulary strategies, larger sample sizes, and longitudinal impacts to generalize findings. Investigating technology-based methods and cross-cultural contexts could also provide valuable insights into enhancing vocabulary learning.

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