

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This research presents the background of study, research questions, research objectives, research significances, research scope, conceptual framework, and previous study.

#### **A. Background of Research**

This study aims to measure the effect of clustering technique to teach vocabulary. For language learners, vocabulary is one important items. As Nation reveals that all language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) are influenced by vocabulary mastery, this applies to any language learner, both students for English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) (Nation, 2011). Rivers and Nunan (1991), furthermore, argue that vocabulary mastery is very important for the use of a second language because without it we cannot use the functions and structures of the language to communicate (Alqatani, 2015).

Wilskins (2004, as cited (Andayani, 2017) states that without understanding grammar very little knowledge is obtained, but without vocabulary, there is nothing to achieve. This shows that vocabulary is very influential in one's language skills. Even if someone is good at grammar, it will be useless if the vocabulary knowledge is lacking (Andayani, 2017).

There are still many students who face difficulties in mastering English vocabulary, for example at Islamic Junior High School in Bandung. Based on the preliminary research done by researcher in the Teaching Practicum Program (PPL) in 2020, the English teacher said that most students have not mastered vocabulary. Students still have difficulty memorizing and knowing the meaning of the word. According to him, students are less interested in English vocabulary, so they need teaching techniques to bring out their enthusiasm about vocabulary. To find out the student's ability in vocabulary mastery, the researcher obtained the data of student's vocabulary score from the English teacher.

The following is the student's vocabulary score:

No	Score	Total	Percentage
1	< 70	26	70%
2	≥ 70	11	30%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 1 The Vocabulary Score at The Eighth Grade of MTs Al-Mukhtar*  
*Source: Document of English Teacher at MTs Al-Mukhtar*

Based on the table above, it shows that 70% or 26 out of 37 students got a score less than 70. Students who get the maximum score are only 11 students. It can be concluded that the students' vocabulary mastery is still low. Thus, it affects students' interest in learning English.

The researcher also interviewed several students in 2020. The result shows that most students think that English is a difficult subject so they are not interested in learning it. They admit that they are still confused about English vocabulary. They also feel bored with the techniques used during the learning process. These problems prove that many students are still lacking in vocabulary to master English.

From the problems above, it is known that students need an appropriate and effective learning technique to improve their vocabulary. The right technique must make the learning process become interesting and fun to learn so that students will be easily motivated to learn.

Various learning techniques can be used in teaching vocabulary, one of which is clustering techniques. Clustering technique is word sequences formed from the development of a general topic in the form of bubble diagrams. Fulwiler (2002, as cited (Susanto, 2017) states that the cluster is done by placing one general topic area in the middle then writing some words that related to the topic in a circle around it. According to Oshima and Hogue (2007, as cited Sumartini 2018), clustering techniques are the same as brainstorming to generate ideas (Sumartini et al., 2018). Thus, many possibilities can be drawn from one central idea in a smaller circle.

Many researchers have done several studies relating to clustering techniques. Among others are Putri (Putri et al., 2019). The research is intended to find out the type of content words that have increased the most after students learn to use clustering techniques and find out students' responses to clustering techniques in vocabulary learning. Then, a study conducted by Hendrawaty (2017) focuses on knowing empirically the evidence of whether or not the clustering technique is effective for students in writing recount text (Hendrawaty & Ambarwati, 2017).

This research focuses to know the effectiveness of clustering technique to teach vocabulary at The Islamic Junior High School in Bandung. Finally, the researcher chose the topic in the study entitled "The Effectiveness of Clustering Technique to Teach Vocabulary at The Islamic Junior High School in Bandung".

## **B. Research Question**

The researcher formulates the problems as follows:

1. What is the students' mastery of vocabulary before implementing Clustering Technique?
2. What is the students' mastery of vocabulary after implementing Clustering Technique?
3. How significant is the difference between students' mastery of vocabulary before and after implementing Clustering Technique?

## **C. Research Objectives**

Based on the problem formulated above, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To find out the result of students' vocabulary mastery before implementing Clustering Technique.
2. To find out the result of students' vocabulary mastery after implementing Clustering Technique.
3. To find out the significant difference between students' vocabulary mastery before and after implementing Clustering Technique.

#### **D. Research Significances**

The significance of this study includes three aspects namely theoretical, practical, and professional aspects.

Theoretically, this research is expected to provide benefits for teachers to improve their teaching skills with effective techniques. Practically, this research can be used as a reference for teachers to use clustering techniques in teaching vocabulary. Then this research is expected to increase students' motivation to learn English. Professionally, this study is also expected to help students to improve their vocabulary.

#### **E. Research Scope**

The concern of this study is to measure the effect of clustering technique to teach vocabulary at The Second Grade of MTs Al-Mukhtar in Academic Year 2021/2022. The vocabulary learning was focused about descriptive text with the topic was people, animal, things in the classroom, and things in the home.

#### **F. Conceptual Framework**

Vocabulary plays a role as a basis in a person's language ability that influences the ability of students to listen, speak, read, and write (Surya, 2014). Like the opinion of Nation that the four language skills are strongly influenced by the vocabulary items that a person has (Nation, 2011). This opinion shows that it is important for students to have vocabulary mastery in understanding new concepts and to communicate the idea.

According to Barnhart (2008, as cited (Andayani, 2017), vocabulary is a collection of words used by individuals, groups, professions, and others that are connected with the function of language as a medium of communication.

According to Thornburry (2002, as cited (Andayani, 2017), there are five factors that influence the teaching set of words: The level of learner, learners are familiar with the words, item difficulty, the teacher's ability to teach, the last one is the item studied for production (speaking and writing) or for introduction only

(listening and reading). The five factors above can be fulfilled by the teacher using the clustering technique.

Langan (2005, as cited (Saxena et al., 2017) stated that clustering is also known as diagramming, or mapping, is another form of strategy that can be used to produce material for essays writing. Deeply, Fulwiler states that cluster is a technique that is done by placing one general topic area in the middle then writing words related to that topic in a circle around it (Susanto, 2017). Then, Rukmana revealed that clustering technique is a learning technique that gives students the flexibility to develop ideas and enrich their vocabulary (Rukmana, 2020).

Through clustering technique, students can develop vocabulary based on their ability and knowledge of certain words, so students will be more interested to learn vocabulary. As Hapsari (2013) stated that clustering technique makes students more interested and paying high attention to knowing new vocabulary because they play an active role in making word clusters so as to increase their vocabulary (Hapsari et al., 2013).

### **G. Hypothesis**

Hypothesis is a statement about the relationship between two or more variables which is stated tentatively (Kabir, 2016). Therefore, the hypothesis of this research are as follow:

Ha: There is an effectiveness of using clustering technique to teach vocabulary to the students at The Islamic Junior High School in Bandung.

Ho: There is no effectiveness of using clustering technique to teach vocabulary to the students at The Islamic Junior High School in Bandung.

### **H. Previous Study**

Several of the research has been conducted research that focuses on clustering technique. First, Research conducted by Putri (Putri et al., 2019). This study focused on the type of content word that most improved after implementing

clustering technique. The results of this study indicates that noun is the content word increased significantly after students learned using the clustering technique. The researcher suggests using other methods that are more effective and efficient, for example, giving each group the opportunity to comment on the results of making clusters of other groups by exchanging work results.

Second, Rukmana (2020) investigates the development of students' vocabulary after and before the implementation of clustering technique. The researcher concluded that the students' vocabulary increased after the use of clustering technique, so that the clustering technique made possible in teaching vocabulary. In this study, researcher suggests to using a variety of learning methods in applying clustering technique, because this technique is very flexible for any interesting method (Rukmana, 2020).

Hendrawaty (2017) in *Using Clustering Technique Towards Students' Writing Skill in Recount Text* focuses on finding empirical evidence about the effectiveness of clustering techniques on students' writing skills in recount text. The research method used is quantitative with a quasi experimental design. The results showed that the clustering technique had a significant impact on students' writing skills in recount text.

Another research was conducted by Oktavia. The purpose of the study was to compare the results of student vocabulary achievement after applying clustering techniques and Derivational Exercises in learning vocabulary. In the Clustering Technique class, the students were easily finding related words based on the topic given by the teacher. In this study, the researcher suggests applying instruments that make it easier for students to do the vocabulary test, for example, providing five options for each multiple choice question. So that the test is more valid and reliable (Oktavia et al., 2013).

There are differences between previous research and this research. Among them, the object of this research is aimed at students of Islamic Junior High School, while the other research is aimed at Senior High School and Junior High School. Furthermore, this study focused on the significance of clustering techniques for students' vocabulary mastery, while previous research focused on

the application of clustering techniques to writing skills and comparison of clustering techniques with other techniques.

In this research, researcher tries to apply the suggestion from Putri (2019) to apply effective learning methods in applying clustering technique. The method used is that each group provides comments and suggestions on the results of the clusters of other groups.

