



## **Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery by Using Pair Check Method at the Eighth Grade Students of Junior High School**

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### **Abstrak**

Mengajarkan kosakata terutama untuk siswa SMP harus penuh kesabaran karena siswa SMP sering merasa bosan dan tidak memiliki minat dan motivasi dalam mempelajari kosakata bahasa Inggris. Kita perlu cara untuk mengatasi masalah ini. Salah satu metode pengajaran yang dapat digunakan untuk mendidik mereka adalah penggunaan metode pair check. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menentukan apakah penerapan metode pair check dapat secara signifikan meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan desain penelitian tindakan kelas (PTK). Subjek penelitian adalah siswa kelas delapan di SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26, Medan. Berdasarkan analisis, skor siswa meningkat di setiap tes. Skor rata-rata pre-test adalah 58,2. Pada post-test 1, skor rata-rata siswa adalah 70,4. Dan pada post-test 2, skor rata-rata siswa adalah 89,8. Dari hasil observasi dan wawancara, ditemukan bahwa proses belajar mengajar berjalan sangat baik, dengan siswa menjadi lebih aktif dan antusias dalam belajar. Siswa meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata mereka dengan menggunakan metode pair check dan memperoleh pemahaman baru tentang metode pengajaran yang digunakan peneliti dalam pembelajaran kosakata. Metode pair check berhasil menciptakan suasana belajar yang menyenangkan dan interaktif, meningkatkan motivasi dan partisipasi aktif siswa dalam proses pembelajaran kosakata.

**Kata Kunci:** Penguasaan Kosakata, Metode Pair Check, Siswa Sekolah Menengah Pertama

### **Abstract**

*Teaching vocabulary especially to junior high school students must be full of patience because junior high school students often feel bored and have no interest and motivation in learning English vocabulary. We need a way to conquer this trouble. One of teaching method that may be used to educate them is the use of pair check method. The purpose of this study was to determine whether the application of the pair check method can significantly improve students' vocabulary mastery. This research was conducted using a classroom action research (CAR) design. The subjects were eighth grade students at SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26, Medan. Based on the analysis, students' scores improved in each test. The average pre-test score was 58,2. In post-test 1, the average student score was 70,4. And in post-test 2, the average student score was 89,8. From the observation and interview results, it was found that the teaching and learning process went very well, with students being more active and enthusiastic in learning. The students improved their vocabulary mastery by using the pair check method and gained new understanding of the teaching method the researcher used in vocabulary learning. The pair check method successfully creates a fun and interactive learning atmosphere, increasing motivation and active participation of students in the vocabulary learning process.*

**Keywords:** Vocabulary Mastery, Pair Check Method, Junior High School Students

## INTRODUCTION

Many people need English furthermore English is a global language. English is a requirement to be able to face lots of people and build relationships with different backgrounds. English is positioned as a foreign language that is formally learned from elementary school to university in Indonesia. Mastering English can strengthen value and quality in the eyes of other and will be respected in the national or International world of work.

Learning English at school is one of the important matters. Consequently, mastering from an early age have to be completed if you want to facilitate get right of entry to greater complete English mastering. According to (Hamida et al., 2023) mastering the vocabulary of the language being learned by a student is considered as being one of the most necessary and significant in the process of language learning. To master English, there will be 4 skills that must be trained, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This ability is a benchmark in language skills. So one can enhance those 4 competencies required quite a few vocabulary. Vocabulary mastery is very important in language teaching. In accordance to (Hatch and Brown, 1995:1) cited in (Shanty, 2018) say that vocabulary refers to a list or set of words for a particular language or a list or set of words that individual speakers of language might use.

Vocabulary is a set of words or phrases which have an essential role in language. In keeping with (Bai, 2018) vocabulary is one of the key factors for language mastering. Solid vocabulary in huge numbers may be very tremendous and important as a foundation for making sentences and expressing which means and mind is the main requirement in language. To communicate the ideas either orally or writing, we need vocabulary.

Teaching English starts from the important and simple, namely vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary especially to junior high school students must be full of patience because junior high school students often feel bored and have no interest and motivation in learning English vocabulary. As (Amelia et al., 2023) states that teaching English vocabulary, especially in a foreign language context, is a debated aspect of language education, requiring consideration of effective strategies tailored to students' characteristics. Learning vocabulary is the most important thing in learning a language. The teacher that uses an interesting media or teaching method will make the students more enthusiasts in learning and the knowledge they got will be retained better in their memory (Shanty Halim, 2018). In the process of learning a foreign language requires mastery of quite a lot of vocabulary to be able to understand its meaning.

The researcher did the observation in English learning at SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan, there have been many problems which students confronted in gaining knowledge of English, especially in vocabulary. Based on the results of interviews with English teachers at SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan, in their daily learning English, students often being silent when the teachers ask the meaning of an English word. English teacher sometimes ask to read books, but students do not understand the meaning of what they read. Consisting of problem of students who are not acquainted with English vocabulary, the researcher located that many students did no longer understand the meaning of English words and can not answer about English question. Students quickly forget the words that the teacher has just revealed the meaning of or after they have looked up the meaning in a dictionary. The passing grade score at the school is 75. However, many students are below the passing grade. And the data that the researcher found, the students' English scores are 30% able to achieve the passing grade and 70% are still incomplete. Consequently, we need a way to conquer this trouble.

Certainly, one of teaching method that may be used to educate them is the use of pair check method. According to (Fauziah Ajmi et al., 2024) pair check method applies group gaining knowledge of which demands independence and the capability of students to resolve the issues given. The pair check method trains students' social sense, cooperation and the potential to give assessment. Pair check method be able to make students memorizing vocabulary easier and store in long-term reminiscence. Pair check method divides

students into a few agencies such as students, solving hassle by way of each group and checking end result. The usage of pair check method hoped that students will enjoy, amusing and simpler studying English Vocabulary so the students will improve their vocabulary.

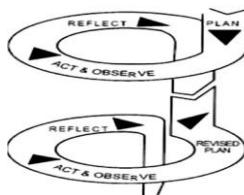
(Sari & Sari, 2024) conducted a research with the title “Distinguishing Facts and Opinions: Enhancing Students’ Critical Reading Skills Using Pair Checks Method states that the Pair Checks method can be an effective tool for enhancing students’ reading comprehension and critical engagement with texts. (Thoha et al., 2023) with the research title describe The implementation of the pair check method in learning to write procedural texts for class VII at MTs Jâ-alHaq Bengkulu City in the 2022/2023 academic year” say that implementing the pair check method are creating mutual cooperation among students and increasing understanding of concepts or learning processes. As for the inhibiting factor, which requires a longer time and requires students' skills to become mentors for their partners. According to (Mikhael Misa et al., 2023) stated that the Pair Check method emerged as a practical and effective tool for improving reading comprehension in an educational environment. It showed that research with the same or with different learning methods to improve students’ vocabulary mastery. The studies above are related to the research that the researcher did. The researcher tried to conduct a research “Improving Students’ Vocabulary Mastery Using Pair Check Method at The Eighth Grade Students of Junior High School” because the pair check method has a good impact on vocabulary mastery. The researcher wants to introduce the students of junior high school that the pair check method can improve their vocabulary mastery and provide effective solutions in learning vocabulary.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research conducted using classroom action research (CAR). Classroom action research (CAR) is a study conducted to solve problems in class (Adolph, 2016). Classroom action research is used because it is aimed at enhancing outcomes in teaching and learning. According to (Mu’alimin & Cahyadi, 2008) classroom action research aims to improve learning. Improvements were made gradually and continuously during the research activities. Therefore, in classroom action research there is a patterned cycle: planning-implementation-observation-reflection-revision.

The subject of this research were the eighth grade students of SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan which is located on Marelan VI street No.2, Rengas Pulau, Medan City. The eighth grade class consists of 37 students, 21 boys and 16 girls.

The researcher started the research by making observations to identify problems in learning English. This research followed the classroom action research model by Kemmis and Mc Taggart, each cycle has four stages, namely planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.



**Figure 1. Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988)**

In this study, researcher used data collection techniques such as interviews, observation, and test. Researcher got some informations related to the research through interviews. The researcher conducted interviews with English teachers and students to obtain information about students' skills in learning English at the school and the conditions of students in English classes.

The researcher made observation to find out how students' learning activities in class are in the process of learning English, especially students' vocabulary mastery using the pair check method. Observation is made to describe the results of observation using words.

Researcher also used the test as a data collection technique. The researcher gave a pre-test and post test before and after teaching vocabulary to find out how well the students' vocabulary mastery is. Researcher made test sheets to see if students' skills have improved or not using the pair check learning method.

The data analysis technique that used in this study is a descriptive analysis technique which includes quantitative data and qualitative data. In quantitative data, the data that studied is a test which is divided into two, namely the pre-test and post-test. In qualitative data, the data that studied is the result of interviews, observation and documentation. Descriptive analysis is used to interpret the observational data. The researcher explained about the observation of students, analyzed interview that is conducted with English teachers and students. And the documentation was spell out and attach.

## RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Finding

#### 1. Data of Test

Based on the analyzed results, students were more proficient in remembering vocabulary for nouns and verbs. Overall, almost all students' memories and pronunciations were correct and categorized as good. Students were also able to answer English questions very well.

**Table 1. Students' Completion Percentage on Pre Test, Post Test 1, Post Test 2**

Number	Research	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Pre Test	Complete	7	18,9%
		Uncompleted	30	81,01%
2	Post Test 1	Complete	17	45,9%
		Uncompleted	20	54,01%
3	Post Test 2	Complete	33	89,18%
		Uncompleted	4	10,82%

Based on the table above, 89,18% of students achieved the passing grade, while 10,8% did not. Analysis data of test was used to compare student learning outcomes from the pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II, taking into account the achievement of indicators previously established by the researcher. In the initial condition or pre-cycle, of the 37 students, 7 students had achieved the passing grade 75. After the first action, or cycle I, 17 of the 37 students achieved the passing grade (45,9%). Then, the researcher conducted cycle II, where 33 of the 37 students achieved the passing grade. Four students did not achieve the passing grade (10,82%). Researcher collected data from vocabulary tests distributed to students in each cycle. Based on the results of each equation and the test results, students' score consistently improved from the beginning to the end of the session. Students' test score improved across the pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2. Post-test 1 score was better than pre-test score. Post-test 2 score was better than post-test 1 score.

#### 2. Data of Observation

Data collection on student activities during the vocabulary learning process using the pair check method was carried out by the researcher and colleagues as observers. The results of this observation represent the researcher's observations of student activities during the learning process.

The following results of observation of vocabulary learning activities using pair check method.

**Table 2. Observation**

Number	Observation Aspects	Category			
		Very Good	Good	Enough	Bad
1	Student readiness to participate in learning.		√		
2	Listening attentively when learning objectives are explained.		√		
3	Paying attention when learning materials are explained.		√		
4	Student activity and enthusiasm during the learning process.	√			
5	Positive interactions between students using the pair check method.	√			
6	How students answer questions. How students complete pre-test and post-test worksheets.		√		
7	How students take responsibility for their work	√			

Based on the table 2 the results of observation of students learning activities obtained very improved with the category is very good.

### 3. Data of Interview

In this study, researcher conducted interviews with English teachers and students who served as the research sample. The researcher recorded English teacher and students responses in detail. The researcher also observed the vocabulary learning process in the classroom before and after implementing the Pair Check method. These interviews are expected to provide clear information about vocabulary comprehension issues and the potential of the Pair Check method to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The interview results will serve as a basic for the researcher to develop a more effective learning action plan.

### 4. Data of Documentation

In this case, documentation involves taking photographs as concrete evidence of the research being conducted. Researcher used images as a source of documentation or responding observation taken during the learning process and vocabulary tests in the classroom.

The researcher conducted the research teaching and learning vocabulary using pair check method. And then, after the implementation pair check method in the class, the students' vocabulary score increased. It proved that the pair check method can improve the students' vocabulary mastery. The Pair Check learning method bring positive changes to students' understanding of the material. By working together in groups, students will be more motivated to express their opinions, thereby increasing their interest in learning and achieving maximum learning outcomes. This method employs cooperative learning, which demands students' independence and ability to solve problems. The Pair Check method also fosters social skills, cooperation, and assessment skills. Learning objectives will be achieved if the learning method used is appropriate and suitable

## Discussion

After the observation that has been done in eighth grade students of SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan, there are several supporting and inhibiting factors of learning in schools experienced by researchers. In the process of implementing the Pair Check method in eighth grade students of SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan, there are several supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the implementation of learning using pair check method.

The inhibiting factors that have influenced the implementation of the Pair Check method, namely when implementing the Pair Check method, there are factors that hinder the implementation of the method. Inhibiting factors are anything that can cause obstacles in the implementation of the Pair Check Learning Method. The inhibiting factors in implementing the Pair Check method, namely it takes a longer time and requires students' skills to be their partner's guide. During the process of implementing the Pair Check method in eighth grade students of SMP Swasta Al-Washliyah 26 Medan, it took a very long time and each group had different abilities. So, when collecting assignments, there were groups of students who completed faster and some took longer.

In this study, the researcher and teacher also had sufficient theoretical knowledge regarding the application of the pair check method, so that the learning implementation was in accordance with the steps in the Lesson Plan. Implementing learning using the pair check method can explain that during the learning process, students will be able to work together to complete the material being studied. Using this method, students will also be involved in completing assignments given by the teacher with their group members. High ability students can assist low ability students, so that learning outcomes can be achieved evenly. Furthermore, learning using the pair check method explains that students learn not only from the teacher but also from their peers.

After going through a series of learning activities from cycle I to cycle II, it can be seen that the activity of the researcher and students increased in each cycle. Based on the results of the student activity observation sheet, several shortcomings were identified in Cycle I. These shortcomings included the researcher still had difficulty getting students to focus and concentrate when the lesson began. Students were reluctant to ask questions and formulate hypotheses, requiring the researcher to direct the students, students were poorly conditioned during the grouping process, and not all students actively worked on the students worksheets.

Many shortcomings remained during Cycle I, so a Cycle II implementation plan was prepared to address the shortcomings of Cycle I and maintain the strengths of Cycle I. In Cycle II, the implementation of activities increased. The implementation of Cycle II was designed to address the shortcomings of Cycle I and maintain the strengths of Cycle I.

Based on the results of the Cycle I reflection, in the initial activities, the researcher conducted activities to focus and condition student concentration so that learning proceeded conducively. The researcher conducted demonstrations on the effect of force on the shape of objects. Student worksheets were prepared for each student so that no students relied on each other when completing the worksheets.

The learning outcomes achieved by students in the cycle can be considered successful because there was an increase in student learning outcomes from Cycle I to Cycle II. The average student score in Cycle I was 70,4 and in Cycle II the average student score was 89,8. These results indicate that students learning using the pair check method achieved scores above the passing grade.

In Cycle I, there were still twenty students or 54.05% who had not yet completed or had not reached the passing grade. In cycle II, only four students or 10.8% failed to achieve the passing grade. These learning outcomes resulted in increased student engagement in the learning process. Students were able to solve problems and find their own answers to the questions presented. Students began to develop confidence in expressing their opinions, and their collaboration with their peers was excellent during the learning process. Furthermore, during the discussion, no one dominated the discussion, and no one remained silent and

engaged. The success of the Pair Check method may not be guaranteed for other materials, as it depends on the researcher's mastery of the learning theory used. Therefore, teacher and researcher conducting research using the Pair Check method must have a better grasp of the theory of this learning approach so that the planned learning process can achieve its intended objectives.

In (Fauziah Ajmi et al., 2024) with the research title "The Effectiveness of Pair Check Method in Writing Announcement Text at Class". Fauziah Ajmi et al.'s research and research conducted by researcher both use the pair check method in learning. The difference maybe in the level of education (high school versus junior high school) and the focus of the material taught, where Fauziah et al's research examines learning writing announcement text, while the researcher examine learning vocabulary mastery. Fauziah's research examines the effectiveness of the pair check method in students' writing announcement text and critical thinking skills. Meanwhile, researcher used the pair check method to improve students' vocabulary mastery and were able to explore students' learning motivation and teamwork. Fauziah et al's research found that the pair check method was effective in increasing students' ability in writing announcement text. Meanwhile, researcher found that the pair check method could improve the vocabulary mastery ability of students with different ability level and grade.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the students' vocabulary test gradually increased. From the cycle I, in the pre-test with the mean score was 58,2. The result of post-test 1 mean score was 70,4 and in the post-test 2 with the mean score was 89,8. It can be concluded that the research was successful. There was an improvement in students' vocabulary mastery through test after using pair check as an English learning method. Based on the observation and interview, the usage of the pair check method was very helpful in helping students better understand the meaning and use of the vocabulary they had learned. The students were able to construct their own sentences and grasp the meaning of an English text or question. Students learned to work together in teams, share knowledge, and help each other, thus reducing difficulties in understanding vocabulary. With the pair check method, students actively participate in the vocabulary learning process.

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