Implementing Mistake Buster Technique to Improve the Students` Grammar Mastery

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Abstract

This research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the Mistake Buster technique in improving the students` grammar mastery at seven grade students of junior high school number 11 of Bengkulu City. Collaborative classroom action research was carried out and it had two cycles designed with four steps; Planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting on the action. The subjects of this research consisted of 32 students. The instruments were a test, observation checklist, and field note. The result showed that there was an improvement in students` grammar mastery by applying the Mistake Buster technique in the grammar teaching. It seemed that the Mistake Buster technique is quite effective to help the students` grammar mastery, to encourage students` motivation, and to build an active learning atmosphere in the EFL teaching and learning process. Moreover, the result provides teachers with more insight and reference regarding to the technique in teaching English grammar and applying it to their teaching process.

Keywords: Mistake Buster technique, Grammar Teaching, Simple Present Tense

INTRODUCTION

English in Junior high school is a compulsory subject and it is learned twice a week with the total of 160 minutes in a week (Curriculum 2013). Students are expected to achieve the objectives of learning language that is the ability in four essential language skills of listening, reading, writing, and speaking along with good grammar competence and pronunciation. In fact, one of the competencies that must be achieved by junior high school students for English is the linguistic element where grammar is included.

Grammar is essential in all aspects of English. It is the knowledge about

how to organize words into larger units in order to create meaning correctly and appropriately (Apsari et al., 2019). Larsen-Freeman and Celce-Murcia (2015) define grammar as set of rules that describe the structure of sentences. By understanding grammar structure as the central key in the English language, all English students are able to improve their receptive and productive skills (Faharani, 2018). Thus, grammar becomes the basis that all English students should understand if they want to improve their oral and written communication (Hendriani, 2018; Nurhamsih & Syahrial, 2019).

Teaching English grammar to the students also gives some benefit. It teaches students how the language works and how words are combined in a sentence (Cam & Tran, 2017). Further, it leads students to the ability to read and write in English. It will be difficult to understand a written statement without grammar (Mahdi, 2018). Moreover, the language cannot convey essential meaning without the concept of grammar (Djurayeva et al., 2020). In fact, teaching grammar to the students will assist them in improving their effective sentence and confidently expressing their ideas.

On the contrary, Indonesian students still face some problems in learning English grammar. Hajji and Kim (2019) reported that only about 10% to 25% of secondary students are capable of grammar and creating a good sentence and it signified that grammar mastery remains a concerning issue. It was also probably caused by some factors such as lack of confidence, lack of input of English outside the class, lack of vocabulary mastery, lack of correct pronunciation , and lack of grammar mastery (Andika & Mitsalina, 2020; Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020). Furthermore, the students are not interested in learning grammar. They assumed that learning grammar entails memorizing formulas and it is a tedious subject to be learned (Matkasimova & Makhmudov, 2020; Komara & Tiarsiwi, 2021).

Due to the fact, these issues had an impact on the students` courage to learn and develop their English skills. They are being afraid to speak English in class, have difficulty understanding the meaning of the reading text, and not knowing how to write the sentence correctly (Go et al., 2019; Bandivilai & Cullen in Diana

et al., 2021; Izzah et al., 2021;). As a result, the students are unmotivated to study.

To overcome these issues, English teachers should select the appropriate technique in teaching English grammar. This effort should be done in order to create a meaningful teaching process and achieve the goal of teaching itself. Bahang et al. (2021) stated that the appropriate teaching technique is required to accommodate the students` mastery of English grammar. To ensure the effective teaching, the technique should be carefully chosen.

One of the techniques that can be applied in teaching grammar is Mistake Buster technique. Huynh (2003) argued that the Mistake Buster technique helps students learning better by providing opportunities for them to reflect on what they have learn. In this technique, teacher prepares an activity where the students take over the role of correcting mistake which is normally done by the teacher, while the teacher deliberately becomes the "mistake maker" (Huynh, 2003; Syam, 2017). Through this technique, students will actively engage in learning process and take charge of their learning by giving students the opportunities to identify and correct mistake themselves. Thus, the mistake buster technique can be implemented to help the students` in learning English grammar.

In order to help the students, the researchers would tried to apply the Mistake Buster technique into the teaching process and to investigate the effectiveness of applying the Mistake Buster technique to improve the students` grammar mastery especially in teaching the simple present tense.

METHODS

In this research, Classroom Action Research (CAR) was carried out. CAR is action research conducted by the teacher (as a researcher) on a real problem that is encountered during learning to improve the quality of learning to achieve the learning objectives (Cameron-Jone, 1983; Parnawi, 2020). Arikunto (2015) states that classroom action research is research that is reflective of doing certain actions to enhance learning practice in the classroom professionally. This research was designed as a collaborative classroom action research between some people who related to implementing the research. They were the English student in the English

study program at the University of Bengkulu, the English teacher at the Junior High School number 11 of Bengkulu City, and the supervisor who is the lecturer in the English study program at the University of Bengkulu.

This research was done at Junior High School number 11 Bengkulu city involving 32 students with 13 females and 19 males of grade seven in academic year of 2022/2023. Additionally, there are two cycles conducted in this research and each cycle has four stages. They are: (1) the planning of the action, (2) the implementation of the action, (3) the observing the action, and (4) reflecting of the action (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988).

1. Planning

In the planning stage, the researchers prepared instruments, designed the lesson plans, selected the worksheet for the students, set the criteria of success, and made the research schedule.

2. Implementing

In this stage, the researchers implemented the action and observation in the teaching process. In addition, there are two cycles implemented in this stage and each cycle has two meetings to be done.

Cycle 1

In this section, the researchers gave the pre-test to see the students` grammar mastery before doing the treatment. In addition, the researchers applied the treatment to the students based on the lesson plan prepared by implementing the Mistake Buster technique. There are steps made in implementing the Mistake Buster technique. The steps are; 1) Warming up by asking the students about daily activities, 2) Asking the students to find the mistake in the sentences (in the verbs or auxiliary verbs), 3) Asking the students to correct the wrong sentence in the right answer, and 4) Reviewing the important points and giving more explanation necessary.

a. Meeting 1

In the first meeting, first, the researchers asked the students about their daily activities. The questions given were used as "What time do you usually wake up? and what is the first thing you do after waking up?". Second, the students were

divided into groups and asked to observe the picture related to the daily activities. Third, the students were guided to write some vocabulary such as wake up, brush teeth, get dressed, etc. Fourth, the students categorized the activity that they usually do and they never do. Fifth, the students were asked to fill in the blank in their worksheets. Sixth, each group presented their result in front of the class. Last, the students were guided to discuss the sentences that were used to give the information related to their daily activities.

b. Meeting 2

In the second meeting, first, the students were involved to review the lesson in the previous meeting related to the daily activities. Second, the students were divided into group and they observed two texts abut daily activities. Third, the students were guided to compare the sentence structure used in the texts. Fourth, the students were involved to clarify the differences used in the sentence structure (she gets up ad I get up). Fifth, the students were guided to conclude the sentence structure. Sixth, the students were given the worksheet and found the sentence which had the wrong structure. Seventh, the students were asked to correct the wrong sentence into the right answer. Last, the students were asked to express their feeling after the teaching and learning process had completed.

Cycle 2

The activities in cycle 2 were similar to the previous cycle. However, there were several revisions and improvements in terms of material delivery and lesson plan based on the reflection of cycle 1.

3. Observing

In this research, the observation of the students` grammar mastery was conducted to obtain the data and to find out how well the implementation of the Mistake Buster technique could achieve the research objectives. In this stage, the researchers collected the data related to the implementation of actions using two instruments. The first was the observation checklist that was filled by the observer which was adopted from Mulyani and Hajji (2022). The second was the field notes made by the teacher. Those two instruments were used to gain the data related to the students' participation. The third is the result of Grammar mastery

tests conducted by students at the end of each cycle; it aims to obtain data about students` grammar mastery.

4. Reflecting

In this stage, the researchers reflected the obtained data through the students` test results, and the observation had been done related to the implementation of the Mistake Buster technique in the teaching-learning process. The results were analyzed and discussed with colleagues to draw conclusions as a result of the research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The result of the research showed that there was an improvement in students` grammar test from pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II. The students` results of the grammar test in each cycle can be seen in table 1.

Table 1. Students` result of the grammar tests

Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM)	Pre-Cycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
> 75	6.25 %	43.75 %	75.00 %
< 75	93.75 %	56.25 %	25.00 %

Based on the data above, the result of the grammar tests showed a significant increase due to the implementation of the Mistake Buster in the teaching-learning process. It can be seen that there was an improvement from cycle to cycle. The percentage of the students who passed the minimum mastery criterion (KKM) increased from 6.25% in pre-cycle to 43.75% in cycle I and 75.00% in cycle II. The percentage of improvement in the students` grammar test from pre-cycle to cycle I was 37.50% and from cycle I to cycle II was 31.25%. Thus, the Mistake Buster technique was considered quite effective in improving the students` grammar mastery in EFL teaching-learning process.

In addition, the observation of the students` activities was done at the same time as the implementation of the Mistake Buster technique in the classroom. It

was completed by the observer in filling the instrument which had been prepared. The result of the observation of the students` activities is presented in table 2.

Table 2. The result of the observation on the students` activities

No	Aspect observed	Cycle I			Cycle II		
		Category			Category		
		Good	Fair	Less	Good	Fair	Less
1	Students are responsive to the teacher's instructions regarding the teacher's explanation of the problem and what students should prepare.	√			√		
2	Students observe the problems that have been presented on the Students' Worksheets.	√			√		
3	Students express opinions and ask questions about the material to be studied.		√		√		
4	Students work together in group discussions.	√			√		
5	Students solve the problems given and are confident to present their work.		√		√		
6	Students observe presentations from other groups.		√			√	
7	Students express their opinions and respond to their friends' presentations.		√			√	

Based on the table above, it showed that both of the cycles had different results. On the first cycle, the students were good in the aspect observed number one, two, and four while the rest aspects were fair. In the second cycle, the students were good from aspect one to aspect five while the last two aspects were fair. Therefore, it was concluded that the students` activeness in learning grammar was improved. The students could follow the teacher`s instructions and contribute to every activity in the teaching-earning process.

Meanwhile, the result of the observation of the teacher, and the teaching process implemented in both cycles was also improved. The improvements in the teaching process conducted by teacher included teacher's control over students' attention, teachers' guidance, material delivery, and classroom management. To sum up, the indicator of the success of this research had been achieved. Thus, the researchers stopped the implementation of the research in cycle II.

Discussion

The result showed that the Mistake Buster technique improved the students` grammar mastery. It could be due to the fact that the Mistake Buster technique helps the students` grammar mastery problems. Fitriyani (2018) and Liangka et al. (2018) also revealed that the Mistake Buster technique in EFL teaching could solve the students` issues in learning English grammar by finding out and correcting the grammar error in the sentence. Indeed, this research result was consistent with the previous research conducted by Sudarmawan et al. (2020) which found that the implementation of the Mistake Buster technique assisted the students to understand the grammar deeper by allowing them to find and correct mistakes themselves.

Further, Kaka et al. (2021) reported that the application of the Mistake Buster technique in the grammar learning process was considered to have a positive effect on increasing the ability to understand the grammar. In fact, applying the Mistake Buster technique gave benefits for students; it allowed the students to identify the possible mistake themselves and gave them a sense of accomplishment (Huynh, 2003). Moreover, it also helps the teacher to check the students` grammar understanding. As a result, the students could achieve the learning objective.

In addition, the Mistake Buster technique was considered effective in improving the students` grammar proficiency probably caused its potential in encouraging the students` motivation to learn English grammar. Raising students' awareness and enthusiasm is essential for fostering students' interest in language learning (Du, 2017; Faradila et al., 2022). It can inspire them to learn grammar usage, assist them in understanding grammar, and express themselves in a variety of ways in English (Souisa & Yanuarius, 2020).

As the previous study conducted by Andriyani (2020), the result showed that the Mistake Buster technique gave great improvement to the students` learning motivation. Moreover, the technique seemed quite good as an alternative

technique to be applied in teaching grammar in the classroom and it encouraged the students` motivation in the teaching-learning process (Izzah, 2021; Kaka et al., 2021). Hence, by arising the students` motivation, a good class atmosphere can be activated and students` learning outcomes could be enhanced.

Furthermore, the Mistake Buster technique was deemed beneficial in improving the students` grammar mastery due to the potential in building an active learning atmosphere. It becomes essential to enhance the students` interest, attention, and motivation (Owen et al., 2020). Those could be achieved by implementing the Mistake Buster technique to make students` attention focus on the learning process and give them the chance to be active (Huynh, 2003; Fitriyani, 2018). As the previous study done by Sudarmawan et al. (2020), it revealed that the implementation of the Mistake Buster technique made the students feeling happy, enthusiastic, and active in following the activity during and teaching-learning process.

Besides, Djupi and Rofiqoh (2020) also found out that by applying the Mistake Buster technique, the class atmosphere became more lively, the students` curiosity increased, and they were enthusiastic to participate in the learning process. However, it also made students became easier and fun to identify and correct the wrong verbs in short sentences. As a result, the students` engagement and active participation were increased and it also indicated the interactive learning environment (Izzah, 2021).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

English grammar is a part of the English language knowledge that has to be learnt by all of students in order to be competent in English skill. For a teacher, teaching grammar is not an easy matter. It is quite complicated and requires a broad range of knowledge to be taught to students.

This research revealed that the Mistake Buster technique is quite effective in improving the students` grammar mastery in EFL teaching-learning process. It helps the students to solve their grammar mastery problems by becoming the mistake corrector. Additionally, it could encourage the students` motivation and

build an active learning atmosphere in the grammar teaching-learning process. Therefore, it was concluded that the Mistake Buster technique could be considered as an alternative technique to be chosen by English teachers in teaching English grammar.

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