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Editors:
Manneke Budiman
Marti Fauziah

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EDITORS' NOTES

This Conference Proceeding contains selected participants' paper. The selection was not based on the quality of the contents as all of the papers accepted for presentation in this conference have met the standard of quality set by the Conference Committee.

The papers published in this Proceeding are those that met the formal requirements set on the conference website, among others, the papers should not exceed a total number of five pages (excluding tables, figures, and references). In the process, the editors extended the maximum page limit to seven in order to accommodate more papers.

Unfortunately, not all of the papers can be published. Papers with multiple figures and tables, or those submitted in the PDF format, cannot be included as they would have taken too much space and caused the Editors a lot of trouble with formatting. However, the Committee has also provided a separate Compact Disc containing the remaining of the papers that are not published in the Proceeding.

The Proceeding is organized based on the alphabetical order of the titles of the papers. An accompanying index of the author names based on the first name basis is provided at the end for users' convenience.

Neither the Conference Committee nor the Editors are responsible for the outlooks, opinions and arguments made in the papers. The sole responsibility concerning the ethical aspect, validity of methodology, and political views in the papers is with the individual authors.

Manneke Budiman **Marti Fauziah**

Using Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) to improve students' mastery of English tenses at the English Education Study Program of Universitas Bengkulu

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Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is based on an idea that giving tasks to students will make them engaging more with the language use. This paper is based on a classroom action research aimed at finding out whether the use of Task-Based Language Teaching can improve the students' mastery of English tenses and finding out the factors improved the students' mastery at the English Education Study Program of Universitas Bengkulu. The subjects were 38 students in Structure I course. The action research steps by Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1998) consists of plan, action, observe and reflect were used. Data were collected by using grammar tests, observation checklist and interview. The findings show that the use of Task-Based Language Teaching can improve the students' mastery of English tenses. In addition, the tasks given, students' internal and external learning motivation and text analysis in group and class discussion is also influenced the improvement.

Keywords: Task-Based Language Teaching and English Tenses

Introduction

English as a foreign language in Indonesia has its own grammatical structure which is different from Indonesian language. The differences made English consider being difficult to learn by Indonesian people especially students in junior high school, senior high school and the university level students. The difficulties may caused by first, English language has an 'MD' (modifier –headword) pattern (eg. blue car) in which the word 'blue' modifies the headword 'car'. While in Indonesian language, it has a 'DM' (headword- modifier) pattern (eg. gadis cantik) in which the word 'cantik' modifies the word 'gadis'. Second, the difficulties may be caused by the differences in the use of the 'verb' in which English has four types of verb namely past, present, future and v-*ing*, while Indonesian has only one type for its verb and can be used in the past, present and future time.

Because of the differences, a language learner feels it is difficult to learn English grammar, especially at the English Education study Program of Universitas Bengkulu. Therefore, such material is given at the beginning of the students studying at the study program through courses named structure I-IV. In structure I, the students study the English parts of speech (eg. nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, articles and prepositions) and English tenses. The mastery of English tenses is important for the students since they are trained to be future English teachers. There are twelve tenses that they need to learn in Structure I as can be seen in table 1. But due to the time constrains, the tenses used in this study are only *simple present tense, present progressive tense, simple past tense, past progressive tense, present perfect tense, present perfect progressive tense, simple future tense, and future progressive tense.*

Even though the material about these tenses has been included in the curriculum of the study program, based on the writer's experiences teaching the subject the last seven years, the students still experienced difficulties in using the tenses in speaking and writing as told by a student in the

Structure I class below:

> *"Waktu mempelajari tenses tu kami ngerti mem rumusnyo dan penggunaannyo, tapi kalau udah lamo dah tu jadi lupo dan susah membuek kalimat menggunokan tenses tu* (When we learn the tenses, we understand the pattern ma'am, but then we forget and we experience difficulties in using the tenses)"

In addition, the writer also found that when learning the tenses, they focused more on the pattern of the tenses and did not focus on the use of the tenses in communication. Therefore, the writer did a research by using task-based language teaching for the teaching of the English tenses at the study program in the odd semester of 2012/ 2013 academic year. In this paper, the writer will explain how it was conducted and the related theories and the result of the study.

Task-Based Language Teaching and the English tenses

Task-based language teaching is an approach in teaching language in which the focus is to enable the language learner to use the target language by giving them tasks related to the use of the language in a real life situation. It is in line with Ellis (2007) who states that:

> "TBLT is an approach to teaching a second/foreign language that seeks to engage learners in interactionally authentic language use by having them perform a series of tasks. It aims to both enable learners to acquire new linguistic knowledge and to proceduralize their existing knowledge"

Based on the opinion above, it can be inferred that this task-based language teaching approach is an approach aiming at enabling the learner to learn and use the language by giving them tasks to be accomplished.

In addition, Nunan (1999) also mentions that task based language teaching is an approach in which the lesson is not started by a stretch of language entities but a collection of tasks. In further, Zhu (2007) argues that task-based language teaching gives the language learners chances to experiment and explore the language in oral and written through tasks that have been constructing to make the language learners involved authentically, practically and functionally in using the language for a meaningful communication.

As an approach, task-based language teaching has its own characteristics. Nunan cited in Zhu (2007) mentions the characteristics of task-based language teaching as follow; 1) emphasizing on learning to communicate through interaction in target language, 2) introducing authentic into the learning situation, 3) giving opportunities to learners to focus not only on the language but also on the learning process itself, 4) enhancing the learners 'own experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning and 5) trying to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

In addition, Bilash (2009) states that task –based language teaching has the following characteristics: 1) students are encouraged to use language creatively and spontaneously through tasks and problem solving, 2) students focus on a relationship that is comparable to real world activities, 3) the

conveyance of some sort of meaning is central to this method, 4) assessment is primarily based on task outcome, and 5) it is student-centered.

Based on the characteristics proposed by the two experts, it can be concluded that task-based language teaching is a modern approach which no longer focus on the teacher but the language learner. The aims are to enable the learner to communicate in the target language by giving the learner a lot of meaningful tasks.

The task-based language teaching, besides having characteristics, it also has the procedure in using it in a language learning process. Citing Willis (1996), there are three stages (pre-task, task and language focus) in implementing the task-based language teaching as can be seen in table 2.

The three stages were used in learning the English tenses in the teaching and learning process. There were 8 English tenses learnt by the students in this study. They were *simple present tense, present progressive tense, simple past tense, past progressive tense, present perfect tense, present perfect progressive tense, simple future tense, and future progressive tense.* The detail examples of each tense can be seen in table 3 taken from Azar (2003).

Method

The subjects of this study were 38 students in Structure I course at the English Study Program of Universitas Bengkulu in the odd semester of 2012/2013 academic year. It was a classroom action research based on Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1998) which has four stages; plan, action, observe and reflect conducted in two cycles, The lesson plan was drawn up based on Willis (1996) consisted of three stages; pre task, task cycle and language focus (see table 2). Before applying the approach, the students were given preliminary test consisting of 40 gap filling questions. Then the other tests were given at the end of cycle I and cycle 2. In the process of teaching and learning, the students were divided into groups and assigned two tenses for each group. There are eight tenses used. They worked together in analyzing the assigned tenses in a short text which they searched themselves and then presented the result of the group analysis to their classmates in front of the class. The teacher appointed the student to explain the result of the analysis in random so that each student has equal opportunity to be selected. The text for every meeting was prepared by the group who had been assigned in the first meeting. Beside the task for the group responsible for presenting the tenses in a meeting, the other groups were also assigned to do the same task as did by the assigned group but they can collect it in the following week. This was done to make every group understand the tenses in deeper, and do not only the assigned group that master the tenses well. In gathering the data, the students' score of each cycle was counted and found the frequency and the percentage, for each category of the score. The categories are divided into four categories: *very poor* (<50), *poor* (50-59), *fair* (60-69), *good* (70-79) and *very good* (80-100). Beside the students' scores, there was also an interview of 10 students (25%) to answer the second research question, the factor influencing the improvement of the students' mastery of the English tenses. The data from the interview was analyzed by using Parson and Baron in Metler (2006) which has three steps; organizing, describing, and interpreting the data. The data was given code and then was seen the relationship with the other data.

Result and Discussion

Before the action using task-based language teaching was used, the students were given preliminary test to be used as the baseline data so that the condition of the students' mastery of English tenses before the action can be known. The result of the students' mastery of the English tenses was still in *very poor* category as can be seen in chart 1.

From the chart, it can be seen that there are 74% of the students in a *very poor* category which means that they got score below 50, 8% of the students is in the *poor* category, 5% is in *fair* category, 3% is in *good* category and 10% is in *very good* category. This condition is caused by the inability of the students to change the verb correctly according to the right tenses, for example they did not use the *to be* for the tenses such as *present progressive and the perfect tenses.* In further, it can also be inferred that the condition occurs because the differences between the sentence pattern of English language and Indonesian language. Indonesian does not have auxiliary or *to be* to accompany the main verb to state something in progressive time.

Based on the result, cycle I was conducted to improve the students' mastery of the English sentences. In the first meeting in cycle I, the students were given instruction on what to do during the classroom teaching and learning process. The instruction was written in a table as can be seen in table 3. The implementing of the stages of task based language teaching approach was done in the next two meetings. The tenses learnt in this cycle were *simple present tense, present progressive tense, simple past and past progressive tense.* In the fourth meeting, the students were given achievement test for cycle I. The result of the test in cycle 1 shows that the students that reached the *very good* category is 63% as can be seen in chart 2.

From the chart, it can be seen that the students in the *very good* category is improved into 63%, the *good* category is 13%, the *fair* category is 8%, the *poor* category is 3% and the *very poor* category is 13%. This condition shows that the students were able to use the correct verbs and to be to complete the gap filling question given. In addition, it also implies that the students have started to understand the differences of the pattern of English and Indonesian language, and understand how the use of *to be*, the present and the past verbs in English language.

After the result of the cycle I was improved, the use of task-based language teaching was continued to be implemented in the next cycle 2 but the tenses used was different. In this cycle, the tenses being learnt were *present perfect tense, present perfect progressive tense, simple future tense* and *future progressive tense.* The classroom teaching and learning activities are similar to the previous cycle but with different tenses. On the fourth meeting, the achievement test was delivered and the result shows that the students' mastery was improved. The number of students who reached the *very good* category was 42% as can be seen in chart 3.

From the chart, it can be seen that the students' mastery of the tenses is improved into 42% in the *very good* category, 16% in the *good* category, 5% for each category of *fair* and *poor* and 32% in the *very poor* category. This condition shows that the students were able to comprehend the rules and pattern of *present perfect tense, present perfect progressive tense, simple future tense* and *future progressive tense.*

The improvement of the students' mastery of the English tenses was also influenced by several factors which was uncovered through interviewing the students after the cycles were done. The factors are the tasks given as mentioned by nine interviewed students. One of the students said:

> *"Faktor yang mempengaruhi penguasaan tenses saya adalah banyaknya tugas-tugas yang diberikan yang menuntut saya agar benar-benar memahami tugas-tugas tersebut yang bertemakan tenses* (factor that influence my tenses mastery was the tasks given that required me to understand the tasks which is related to tenses"

In addition, the next factor is the factor that come from the internal and external motivation which was mentioned by seven students out of ten being interviewed. One of the statements is presented in following excerpt:

> *"Menurut saya faktor yang mempengaruhi penguasaan tenses adalah faktor dari dalam dan luar diri saya sendiri yaitu pertama keinginan untuk lebih menguasai tenses dan yang kedua yaitu kerjasama tim dalam kelompok belajar di kelas maupun di luar kelas* (In my opinion, the factor influencing the mastery of the tenses is coming from inside and outside of me. Internally, it was the strong will to master the tenses and externally, the teamwork in the study group inside and outside the classroom".

The last factor that influencing the students' improvement is the factor of analysis or in group and in class discussion as stated by a student as follow:

> *"Analisis yang dilakukan bersama-sama di dalam group dan diskusi kelas membuat saya bisa sharing ilmu dengan yang lain* (Analysis that was done together in group and class discussion enabling me to share the knowledge with others)"

From the result of the students' scores in each cycle and the students' statements above, it can be concluded that the use of task-based language teaching can improve the students' mastery of English tenses in Structure I course at the English Education Study Program of Universitas Bengkulu. The improvement is also influenced by the task given, the drive from inside and outside the students and the analysis did in group and in the classroom. This finding is in line with the theory of Cuesta (1995) who states that the teaching of English by using Task-based Language Teaching provides a rich environment and great opportunity for students to understand and use English grammar in daily life. In addition, this finding is also confirmed Zhu (2007) states that Task-based Language Teaching is a communicative approach to teach a language which focuses on learners and the teacher is function as facilitator. It gives opportunity to students to give opinions and participate in the language learning. Therefore, the use of this effective, practical and innovative approach is feasible in grammar teaching.

Conclusion

Task-based language teaching with it three stages (pre-task, task and language focus) based on Willis (1996) can improve the students' mastery of English tenses at the English Education Study Program of Universitas Bengkulu. The improvement was influenced by the task given, the internal and external motivation of the students and the analysis of the tenses in their groups and in class discussion.

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Tabel 1: English Tenses in Structure I Syllabus

No	English Tenses
1	Simple present tense Present progressive tense
2	Simple Past Tense Past progressive Tense
3	Present perfect tense Present perfect progressive tense
4	Simple future tense Future progressive Tense
5	Past perfect tense Past prefect progressive tense
6	Future perfect tense Future perfect continuous tense

Tabel 2: Willis' Model for Task-Based Language Teaching Approach

Pre-Task	Introduction to Topic and Task
Task Cycle	Task
	Planning
	Report
Language Focus	Analysis
	Practice

(Willis, 1996)

Table 3: The Tenses Learnt by the Students

Tenses	Explanation	Example
Simple Present Tense	A tense that expresses daily habits or usual activities, and general statements of fact or it can be said as a tense that used for events or situation that exist always, usually or habitually in the past, present and future	a. It doesn't snow in Bengkulu b. I teach English grammar every semester
Present Progressive Tense	A tense that expresses an activity that is in progress at the time the speaker is saying the sentence. The event started in the past, and will continue into the future	a. It is raining now b. I am teaching English grammar now
Simple Past Tense	A tense that id used to talk about activities or situations that began and ended in the past	a. I was busy yesterday b. I taught English grammar last semester
Past Progressive Tense	A tense that expresses an activity that was in progress at a point of time in the past or at the time of another action	a. I was eating dinner when Leni came. b. I was sleeping when the phone rang.
Present Perfect Tense	A tense that expresses an activity that occur unspecific time in the past	a. I have already finished my homework b. I have been in Jakarta several times.
Present Perfect Progressive Tense	A tense that talks about how long an activity has been in progress before now.	a. I have been driving for two hours b. She has been sitting in class since 8 o'clock
Simple future Tense	A tense that talks about plans that will be done in the future. Future with 'be going to' is fixer that the future with 'will' in which the plan can still be change.	a. I am going to go Jakarta next August b. I will go to Jakarta next week.
Future Progressive Tense	A tense that expresses an activity that will be in progress at a time in the future	a. I will be studying when you come b. I am going to be studying at the library.

Adapted from Azar (1999; and 2003)

Table 4: Teacher's Instruction in Doing the Task in Structure I Class

No	Instruction
First	Students who have been divided into group should work together to find a short text related to the tenses becoming their task. They are suggested to use Line by Line book which has a short text based on a tense and then prepare a paper (minimum of ten pages) about the tenses which covered the definition, rules of using the tenses and pattern of the tenses with examples. The students may take the materials from sources such as books and internet websites. The text and the short paper should be copied to be submitted to the lecturer and for other groups in the class. This task was done outside the classroom before the meeting is held.
Second	In the class, the text related to two tenses is learnt. Each group analyzes the tenses in the text given by the assigned group and prepare a result of the discussion in written to be presented in front of the class.
Third	The lecturer appoints a member from any group in random to present the result of their discussion. The text is displayed in power point and the students explain the pattern of the tenses and state the reason for saying that it is the particular tense.
Fourth	Every other group which is not assigned about the tenses finds out other texts from magazines, newspapers, or short stories that have the tenses. Then, they should give comments and explanation about the pattern of the sentences. It is the second task in group and should be submitted in the following week.

Chart 1: Percentage of Students' Score in Preliminary Test based on Each Category

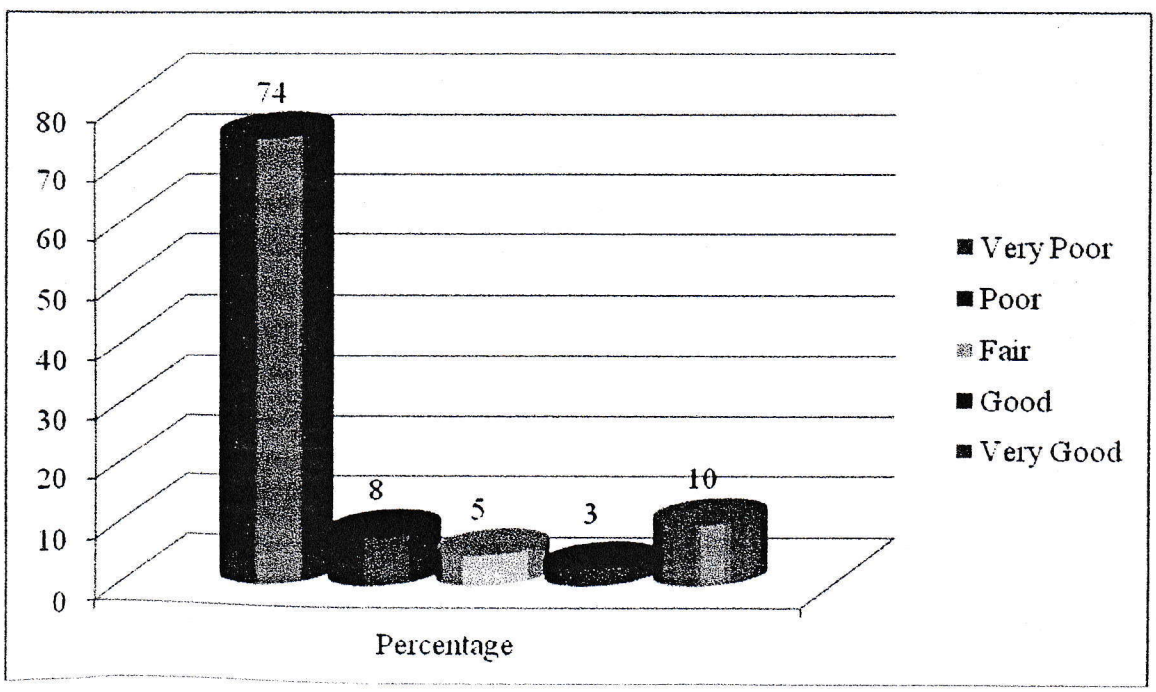

Chart 2: Percentage of Students' Scores in Cycle I based on Each Category

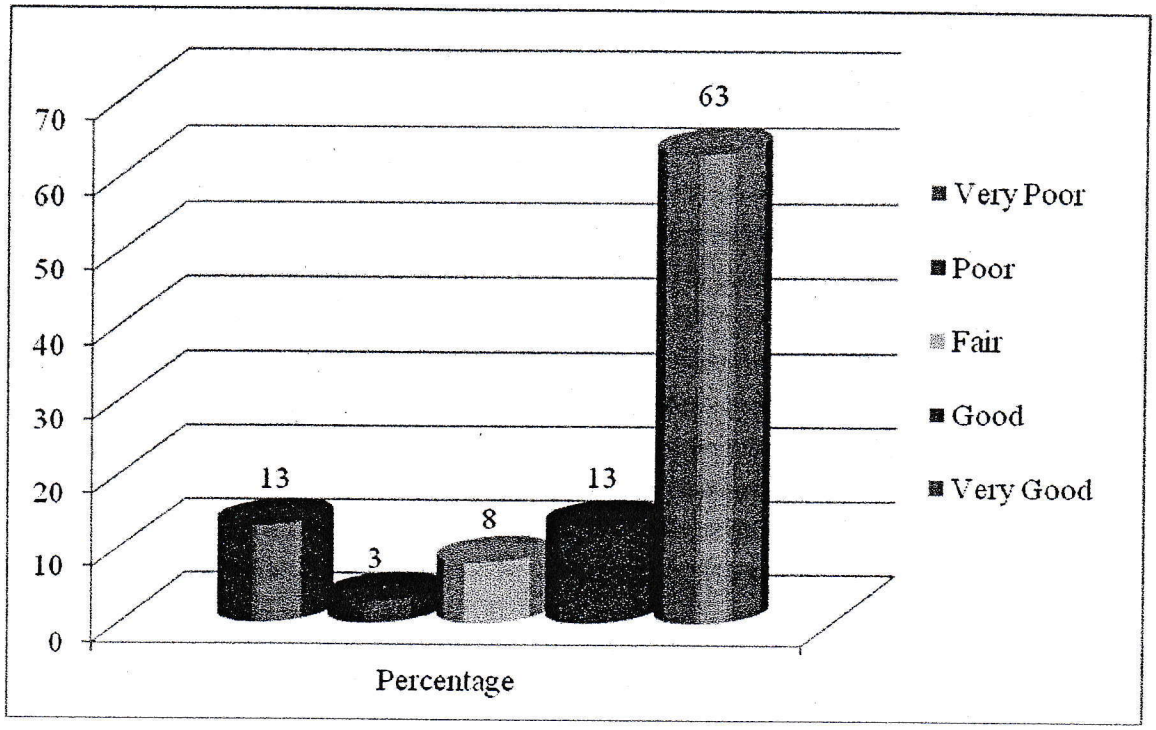
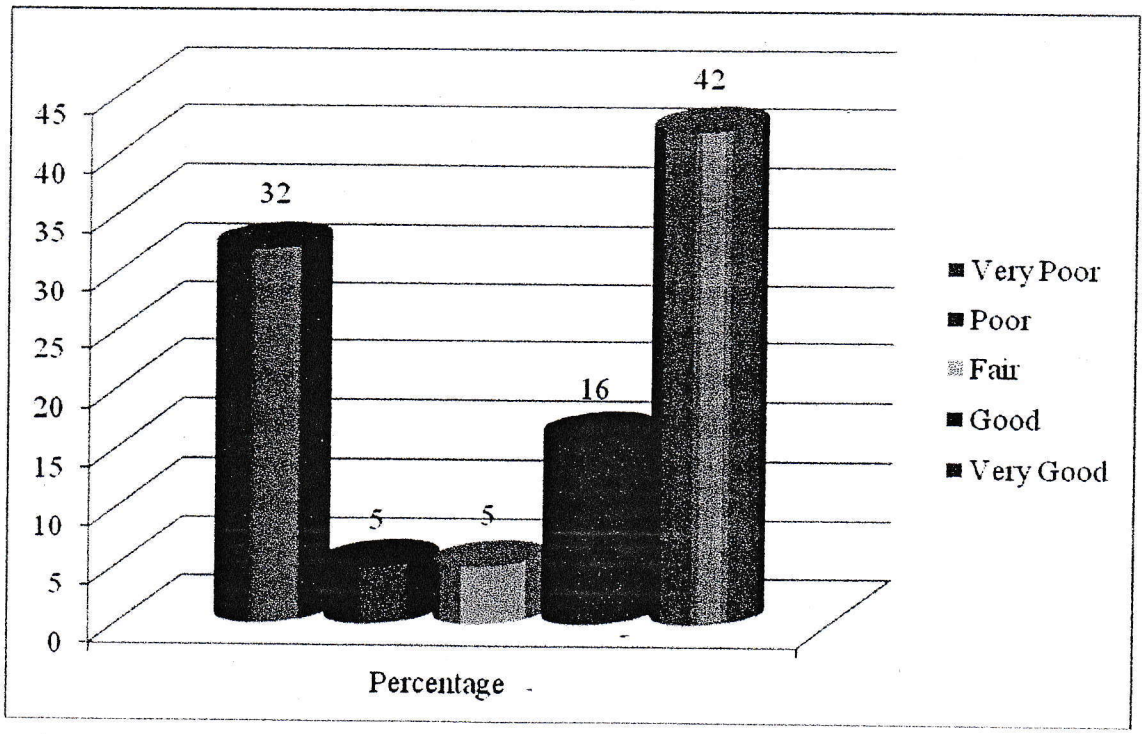
Chart 3: Percentage of Students' Scores in Cycle 2 based on Each Category