

# **IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN VOCABULARY BY USING FLASHCARD**

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## **Abstract**

This study concerned on improving students' achievement in vocabulary by using flashcard. The objective of this study was to find out the improvement of students' achievement in vocabulary by using flashcard. This research was conducted by using action research method. The subject of the study was VII-4 student of SMA Prayatna Medan, which consisted of 30 students. The instruments of collecting data were quantitative (vocabulary test) and qualitative data (diary notes, and observation sheets). In analyzing, the mean of students' score for the first vocabulary test was 40.33 the second vocabulary was 64 and the third vocabulary test was 83. The total percentage of the improvement from the first vocabulary test to the third was 100%. The conclusion is the application of flashcard can improve students' achievement in vocabulary. The qualitative data show that students were enthusiastic and interested in learning vocabulary during the teaching learning process.

**Keywords:** Achievement, vocabulary, flashcard.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Vocabulary of foreign language is very important to learn. Because without learning the basic vocabulary of foreign language, no one get successful in that language. If we can use the basic vocabulary and realize its function, we may have learned it for comprehensible communication.

Further, Spears (2000: XXV) states " if you do not know the meaning of many words a writer uses, you can not understand very well what he/she is saying. From the quotation above, we can say that words are essential, if we don't know many words, we

are very poor to understand what one speaks. To develop students' language skill in reading, listening, speaking, and writing, the learners must master the vocabulary.

Based on the researcher's experience while doing the Teaching Training Program (TTP) it was found that most of the students have low vocabulary in English because some teachers thought that teaching vocabulary items can be done in the same way while doing teaching learning process. The teacher gives the students list of words that the students should memorize it. The teacher gives many assignments from the students' worksheets every time they learn English without using any media. It can cause the students think that English is very difficult, not enjoyable and make them bored. Finally, this technique is not effective and efficient to the students to develop their vocabulary.

Therefore, based on the explanation above, the researcher would like to apply Flashcard as the media in teaching learning process as one of ways in improving students' achievement in Vocabulary.

A flash card is part of a set of cards which are written items to be studied. They are "flashed" (shown quickly) one by one to a learner to elicit a quick response. Vocabulary flashcards are great tools for studying. They can be fun, colorful, and creative ways to aid in memory and retention of vocabulary words. By the flash card, the students can remember the letter, it also help the teacher to increase students' interest and motivation to learn vocabulary at the result. It will make the students to feel joyful and fun during the teaching learning process.

It is expected that students' achievement in vocabulary will be improved if the students are taught by using flashcard as the media.

### **Research Question**

Based on the background of the study, the research question is formulated as follows:

Is students' achievement in vocabulary improved if the students are taught by using flashcard?

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Students' Achievement**

Hornby (2000:11) defines “achievement” as (1) a thing that somebody has done successfully, especially using his own effort and skill (2) the act or process of achieving something.

### **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is the total number of words which makes up a language (Hornby, 1974 :959). Vocabulary is defined as the words which use in a language that should be known and comprehend by the student. A vocabulary is defined as all the words known used by a particular person do not constitute all the words (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/vocabulary>). People exchange their thought and ideas by using words. These words can be signs or symbols for ideas and thoughts.

### **Flashcard**

A flash card is part of a set of cards on which are written items to be studied. They are “flashed” (shown quickly) one by one to a learner to elicit a quick response.

Flash card is a sort of card which had been developed for the purpose of storing the information. The information which is of greater importance can be easily stored on the flash card as its primary purpose is to store the information for the easy of the people.

Vocabulary flashcards are great tools for studying. They can be fun, colorful, and creative ways to aid in memory and retention of vocabulary words. The key to using flash cards is to look at the word or definition on one side, and test yourself to see if you can remember the answer written on the other. Based on the explanation above, the researcher conclude that the flash card is suitable to use in teaching learning process in improving the students in vocabulary in English word, especially in students in Junior High School student's level.

## The procedures of teaching vocabulary by using flash card

*Table 2.1 Teaching and Learning Activities*

Teacher's Activities	Students' Activities
Explain the topic.	Listening and paying attention to teacher's explanation.
Pronounce some words by using flashcard	Follow the pronounce the new vocabularies.
Dividing students into pairs	Sitting in group
Playing guessing game	Playing guesing game.
Explain the vocabulary in simple text.	Pay attention to the teacher explanation.
Asking students to analyze the vocabulary in simple text.	Anlyze the vocabulary in simple text.
Asking students to answer the question	Doing the excercise.

## **THE METHODOLOGY AND DISCUSSION**

This research was conducted by applying Classroom Action Research. Action research is defined by Wallace (1998: 1 in Phil Benson, 2001), as the systematic collection and analysis of data relating to the improvement of some area of professional practice. It is often considered the most accessible form of research for teachers, because its goal is the solution of problems encountered in everyday practice. Burns (1999: 12) states that the action research is to bring about change in social situation as the result of group problem solving and collaboration.

According to Mc Taggart(1988:5) action research is a form of collective, self reflective inquiry that participant in social situations undertake to improve (1) the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices; (2) the participants' understanding of these practices and the situations in which they carry out these practices. Groups of the participants can be teachers, students, parents, workplace colleagues, social activists or any other community members- that is any groups with a shared concern and the motivation and will to address their shared concern. The

approach of action research only when it is collaborative and achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members. In other words, action research is a research that is study about social situation with a view improves the quality of the action. It is done in the class to give the improvement of students 'achievement in the class.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that action research is a research which aims to solve educational problems and improve the educational practice by doing reflection.

Action research takes place in the teacher's own classroom and involves a cycle of activities namely planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

The procedures of action research illustrated as follows:

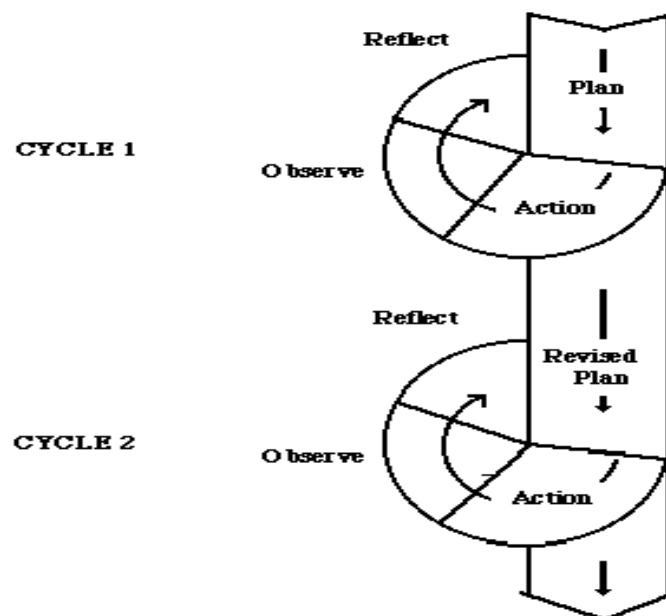


Figure 1 : Action Research Protocol after Kemmis ( cited in Hopkins, 1985)

The researcher used written tests, diary notes and observation sheets as the instruments of data collection. The data in this study were analyzed by using qualitative and quantitative design. The qualitative data were taken from diary notes and observation, while quantitative data were taken from students' vocabulary scores.

## **Results and Discussion**

The result of research indicated that there was an improvement of students' scores in vocabulary which was taught by using flashcard. It was proved by the data, which showed that the mean of the students in Test III (83) was higher than in Test II (64) and also in Test I (40.33). It was also proved from the percentage of the students who got score up to the standard score (70) that the percentage in Test III (100%) was higher than in Test II (56.66%) and also in Test I (16.6%).

The diary notes indicated that the situation of teaching and learning process was better from the first to the last meeting. The students were interested, enthusiastic, and active when teaching learning process was running. They paid full attention and did the assignments seriously.

Then, from the observation sheets, there was significant progress that was shown in every meeting, especially in the second cycle, the students were enthusiastic, active and interested in studying. Their attention became better and their mistakes were decreased.

Based on the results of quantitative and qualitative data, it was found that the use of flashcard had successfully improved students' achievement in vocabulary.

## **CONCLUSION**

After analyzing the data, it was found that the students' achievement in vocabulary improved from the cycle I until the cycle II. The improvement was shown by the mean of the students' scores from the first test (orientation test) 40.33, the second test (in the last meeting of cycle I) 64 and the last test (in the last meeting of cycle II) 83. The percentage of the students' achievement in vocabulary in Test I, there was 15.6%, in Test II 56.66% and in Test III, the percentage was improved to be 100%.

From the data, it can be concluded that teaching vocabulary by using flashcard helps the students to improve their achievement.

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