

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FLASH CARDS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY

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Abstract

This research is a classroom action research. The objective of this research is to investigate the process of improving students' vocabulary mastery by using flash cards. The respondents in this research was seventh grade students of MTs Nurul Islam. There are 30 students. In collecting data, this research used interviews, observation, and tests. The researchers assessed four aspects of vocabulary in determining students' scores. This research employed two cycles in this research and perform in four stage, namely; planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The results of the research showed that the implementation of flash cards can increase students' vocabulary. It can be seen from the development in the mean score of students: for aspect meaning at pretest cycle 1 is 63 and in post test in cycle 2 is 78, for spelling aspects at pretest cycle 1 is 58 and in post test in cycle 2 is 81, for pronunciation aspects at pretest cycle 1 is 65 and in post test in cycle 2 is 83, and for aspects of word use at pretest cycle 1 is 71 and in post test in cycle 2 is 88.

Keywords: *Vocabulary Mastery, Flashcards, Action Research*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool to communication with other. English is a foreign language for student in Indonesia. In English we should mastered 4 skills there are speaking, writing, listening, and reading. To mastery English, students have to learn about vocabulary then they can understand English what they read or they write.

Based on Nurdiani (2016) vocabulary is extremely large and also varied. Nobody ever learn all of the words in any language, but they can enlarge the number of words they have. It is hard to master foreign language without mastering certain number of vocabulary. Without understanding the vocabulary, they students can get trouble in listening, reading, speaking and writing. Vocabulary is a crucial aspects of teaching English besides four English skills like reading, writing, speaking, and listening. According to Hatch and Brown, as cited by Nugroho (2012), they say that "Vocabulary is the foundation to develop languages, which has a role as a basis in communication".

Students in MTs Nurul Islam learn basic English. They learn about words that they always use in their environment. It is aimed that students can understand simple English used in daily context. Therefore, it is necessary to understand vocabulary because vocabulary is a basic competency that must be achieved by students to master other competencies in English such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

The researchers found several problems about mastery of student vocabularies such as difficulty in understanding the meaning of words, difficulty in pronouncing words correctly, students unable to spell words correctly, and students unable to use and understand references properly. The students also has less motivated in participating in the teaching-learning activities. These problems are that some students are busy talking with their friends when the learning activities takes place, some students are busy doing other tasks, students are less effective in the teaching and learning activities, they are more passive, and some students ignore the teacher's instructions.

Besides the student problems, the researchers found that the problem also came from the teacher. The teacher only teaches students by giving assignments to students to fill in the questions on the LKS, therefore the students did not have sufficient knowledge in learning vocabulary. This makes students less motivated and interested in learning English. The researchers argues that the teacher must have a creative idea in choosing the media to be used in teaching vocabulary. One of the media that can be used in teaching vocabulary is picture. According to Yunus (1981:49-53, cited in Apsari, 2017) classifies pictures into three types they are composite picture, picture series and individual picture.

Based on these problems, researchers decided to apply flashcards as learning media. According to Cross (1991), flashcards is a simple picture on the piece of card or paper, and usually this media always used as a education tools. The wider the context in which students can make connections, the more meaningful content will apply to them. So, most of the teacher's work is to provide context. The more students can connect their academic lessons to this context, the more meaning they will gain from the lesson. To find meaning in knowledge and skills that leads to the authorization of knowledge and skills.

According to Haycraft as cited by Widiastuti (2014), flashcards are cards that contain words and/ or pictures are printed and drawn. They must be clearly seen by every student in the class. He further said that flashcards can be used to consolidate vocabulary, practice structure, and word commands, or various games.

Based on the explanation above, the researchers interested in conducting a research entitled “THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FLASH CARDS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS’ VOCABULARY MASTERY (A classroom Action Research in the seventh grade student of MTs Nurul Islam)

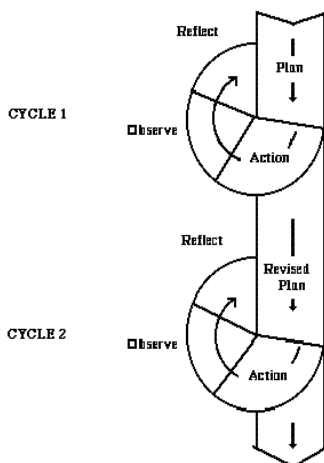


Figure 1. A cycle of action research based on Kemmis &MacTaggart 1988

METHOD

The research conducted in the seventh grade students at MTs Nurul Islam. The school is located at Jl. Raya Bandung KM. 09, Selajambe, Sukaluyu, Cianjur, West Java. The research method that the researchers use is classroom action research or CAR (Kemmis and Taggart, 1988) states that the action research model consists of four stage in a spiral activities, there is :

- 1) Planning. Here the researchers prepares everything needed to take action, prepares lesson plans, materials to be used in action, and also prepares material evaluations after making information whether speaking is increasing or not.
- 2) Acting. After preparing lesson plans, materials and evaluations, researchers implement the plan. In this research the researchers will apply flashcards games in teaching vocabulary, flashcard games do in groups. The researchers also gave the pretest, the treatment and the last, the researchers did post-test.
- 3) Observing. The researchers observes the effects of actions that are informed critically in the context in which they occur. Furthermore, the researchers also made an observation sheet about the activities in the teaching-learning activities.
- 4) Reflecting. After making observations, the researchers goes on to the next step which is a reflection. In this step the researchers reflects on how the teaching-learning activities works. The reflection function is to know the weaknesses and strengths of action.

The procedures of teaching vocabulary by using flash card

Table 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.

In this research, the data was accumulated by using some of qualitative and quantitative technique. The qualitative data was accumulated from interview and observation, while the quantitative data was collected from tests that is pretest and post test.

Test results can answer the problem of whether the implementation of flashcards could improve students' vocabulary. This can be identified from the mean differences in pretest and post test. According to Ngadiso (2013: 5-7, cited in Parmawati, A., & Yugafiati, 2017), the mean of the pretest and post test could be computed using the following formula:

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

In which

M=Mean score

$\sum x$ = Total score

N = Total students

If all of the students give positive responses to the teaching-learning activities and their post test score is higher than pretest score, the technique is successful. On the contrary, if the students give negative responses to the teaching-learning activities and their post test score is lower than pretest score, the technique is not successful. In Analyzing the data, the researchers integrated and related the findings to background of the study, mainly to the research questions, theories, and the methodology for classifying the data into manageable units as suggested by Emilia (2008:201, cited in Apsari, 2018)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

In this research, there are two cycle that the researchers conducted. After conducting interviews, observations, and tests, researchers found an increased student in vocabulary mastery and motivation in participating in teaching-learning activities.

The output of the pretest and post test in the first cycle and second cycle showed the improvement of the students' vocabulary. This improvement could be seen from the development of students' vocabulary score. It is summarized in the table below:

Table 2 : The improve students' vocabulary after cycle 1

Aspect	Meaning		Spelling		Pronunciation		Word use	
	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test
Sum of the score	1890	2130	1740	2220	1950	2250	2130	2490
Sum of the students	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Students mean score	63	71	58	74	65	75	71	83

Table 3 : The improve students' vocabulary after cycle 2

Aspect	Meaning		Spelling		Pronunciation		Word use	
	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test

Sum of the score	2130	2340	2220	2430	2250	2490	2490	2640
Sum of the students	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Students mean score	71	78	74	81	75	83	83	88

Discussion

The table above describes the result implementation of flash cards to improve the students' vocabulary mastery. Based on the table 2 above, the student mean scores in cycle 1 in pretest is high in word use aspect that is 71 and the low in spelling aspect that is 58. The student mean scores in post test is high in word use aspect that is 83 and the low in meaning aspect that is 71.

Based on the table 2 above, the student mean scores in cycle 2 in pretest is high in word use aspect that is 83 and the low in meaning aspect that is 71. The student mean scores in post test is high in word use aspect that is 88 and the low in meaning aspect that is 78.

Based on the mean scores in cycle 1 and cycle 2, it can be concluded that the use of flashcards can improve students' vocabulary mastery. The researchers also found that the students more master the vocabulary from the aspect of word use.

Motivation of students after taking lessons using flash cards also increases. By using flashcards in teaching English, the students looked so happy when the teacher entered the class. They were very curious with the flashcards that the teacher brought. They also enjoyed the lesson, they became so active, enthusiastic and full of participation when the teacher asked them to guess and answer the question.

Based on the information above, we can sum up that the implementation of flashcards in teaching vocabulary can improve the students' motivation and the research finding of the classroom action research was satisfactory. It can be shown by increasing score of the students in individual test. The implementation of using flashcards as the media helped the students in improve their vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

Depend on the analysis of the students' learning, the researchers find that the students' vocabulary improved. It was indicated by the score of the test. This is evidenced by the development in the mean score of students: for aspect meaning at pretest cycle 1 is 63 and in post test in cycle 2 is 78, for spelling aspects at pretest cycle 1 is 58 and in post test in cycle 2 is 81, for pronunciation aspects at pretest cycle 1 is 65 and in post test in cycle 2 is 83, and for aspects of word use at pretest cycle 1 is 71 and in post test in cycle 2 is 88.

The existence of flashcards makes the students familiar with certain words, and the students can memorize the words easily. The increasing attention, motivation, and existence of flashcards improve the students' ability in mastering vocabulary.

The students' motivation in teaching and learning activities improved. It could be seen from the students' attention in teaching-learning activities which was higher. They also paid more to the teacher's explanation and the classroom situation became active and interactive

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