



## Using Flashcards to Improve Students' Vocabulary Mastery in SD Hafizh Al-Qurbah Parepare

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### **Abstract**

*Vocabulary mastery is a basic for language skill development especially in learning a foreign language. This research aims to improve learning outcomes in vocabulary teaching through flash cards. The study was conducted from 08 to 17 October 2019 at SD Hafizh Al-Qurbah Parepare with 15 students as respondents. This study uses a classroom action research method consisting of II cycles with stages in each cycle including planning, implementation, observation and reflection. To obtain the data, the researcher implemented the test and observational sheet as the instrument. The result shows that there is a significant improvement shown from the students' score achieves 76 in cycle I then increase to 83 in cycle II and the students' activity improves from the observational sheet description.*

**Keywords:** *Flashcards, Vocabulary*

### **1. Introduction**

Teaching vocabulary in elementary school becomes the most important part to help the students to comprehend the meaning of every single words they learn. They will not be able to understand the meaning of English if they do not comprehend a simple word of vocabulary which is known as the basic competence to complete the communication. Vocabulary is not only used in speaking but also we used in writing competence.

As explained by Krashen in Pratiwi (2017) the natural way of learning is in childhood because the level of sensitivity will be difficult for memorizing the vocabularies which mostly own by the adults. Children can save the lesson in long memory of their brain in which the object of the learning could be seen directly (haniye, 2015). By this explanation, we could explore the way of teaching in giving the students the visual object as the media to help them keep the words easily and naturally.

Realizing the students' difficulties in learning English of SD Hafizh Al-Qurbah Parepare, the researcher who acts as the teacher intends to rearrange the students' learning achievement in English. Comprehending that this school for further learning is going to use English and Arabic as the up to date languages should be used so that the researcher need to use another strategy to help the students resolve their lack of their vocabularies. The students are still difficult in pronouncing, memorizing and writing the vocabularies because their limitation of mastering the letters of alphabets however they are very motivated students when they we teach them interesting things in the classroom.

Some problems also occurred during the process of teaching and learning. The problems were: (1) Students did not pay attention to the lesson; (2) When the teacher gave explanations, students talked to each other, it made the class noisy; (3) Students in

the class were passive. These problems happened in the classroom situation should be fixed to increase the students English learning motivation and to enhance the students' vocabulary mastery. Therefore, the researcher formulates the research question as follows: (1) How is the effect of flashcard in improving the students' vocabulary mastery?. The researcher is focused on finding out the effectiveness and also the use of flashcard to improve the students' vocabulary mastery.

Teacher should find the best way in teaching English to get the best result. Based on the problems identified, the writer would like to try to provide a suitable media that is expected to help teacher in improving vocabulary mastery. Flashcard is the best way to be used for solving the students' difficulties in memorizing the vocabularies. According to Cross (1991: 119), flashcard is a simple picture on a piece of card or paper, which is probably the most widely used visual aids in language teaching. It means that flashcard is one of media which can help the teacher to teaching English easily.

According to Ur IN Kristiyana et al (2014: 60) vocabulary is the words we teach in the foreign language. It means vocabulary is written or spoken unit of language as symbol of idea in foreign language for the learners. Moreover, Hatch and Brown (1995: 1) stated that vocabulary refers to a list or set of words for a particular language or a list or set of words that individual speaker of a language might use. It means that vocabulary as the words of certain language which are used by language speaker in using language. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary of current English (1995:721), the word mastery means complete knowledge; great skill. From this simple definition, the word mastery is tightly related to the complete knowledge, and great skill of something. From those description of vocabulary and mastery, it can be concluded that vocabulary mastery as complete integrated word knowledge (knowing its form, meaning, and use) of certain language.

According the definitions above, the researcher concluded that vocabulary is a stock of words in language, written or spoken with the meaning that considered as cultural meaning used by group or individual community because it uses of the people to communicate and interact to other people. In this research, the writer uses "Vocabulary" to teach the students the subject of vocabulary by using flashcards as a media. It is hoped that the students will easy to learn the words and its sounds so that they can express what they feel through its meaning and its pronunciation. The researcher believes that by adding some media in their ways of teaching will improve the students' activity in following the learning process. According to Haycraft (1978: 102), flashcards can be used for consolidating vocabulary, practicing structure and words order or a variety of games. The use of flashcards is related to the characteristics of elementary school students as children who commonly feel interested in something with attractive shapes and color

In the early stage of learning English vocabulary, the learners should learn in contextualized language, which is supported by visual materials and the ability to handle the objects. Visual provides the learners to know the concept of vocabulary. One strategy to enhance young learners' ability in recognizing word to improve their vocabulary is by using Phonics flash cards. Phonics stands as a method in teaching people to pronounce and read word by learning the sound of the letters.

Flash cards is seen as simple, handy and colorful learning tool which contain numbers, letters, object or word which prefer some information for the learners to make them easy and enjoy learning activities. Teng & He (2015) argues Flash cards are a set of cards bearing information, such as words, pictures, or numbers, on either or both sides, used in classroom drills or in private study.

Meriem Webster dictionary defines flash cards as a card bearing words, numbers, or a picture that is briefly displayed (as by a teacher to a class) usually as a learning aid. Meanwhile, Fowler et.al (1995) in oxford dictionary mentioned flash cards is a card containing a small amount of information, held up for pupils to see, as an aid to learning. In addition Cambridge dictionary says a card having words, numerals, or pictures on it, designed for gaining a rapid response from pupils when held up briefly by a teacher, used especially in reading, arithmetic, or vocabulary drills.

To this end, the researcher will use the flash cards which contain of words and pictures. Considering that the students in her school are very difficult to memorize and to save the vocabularies in their mind so that the researcher decided to put the media as the supporting teaching of her ways to improve the students' vocabularies.

The problem statement of this research has been formulated as “the use of flashcard effective to improve the students' vocabulary mastery”. The writer states the objective of the research, that is to find out whether effective or not the teaching by modifying material simple present tense material to the second year students of MAN 1 Parepare.

## 2. Method

The method employed in this research is classroom action research (CAR). This way has been used by among practitioners to accomplish the problems appear in the classroom. As stated in (Wahab, 2018:79) that Classroom Action Research model can also be used to foster deeper understanding of a given situation which can reveals the description of the effective approach and method in teaching. The teachers directly be able to resolve their mistaken of teaching and help them evaluate their process of learning.

This research is conducted in SD Hafizh Al-Qurbah Parepare. The subject of this research is all of students in class I B which consist of 15 students, those are 11 male and 4 female. This research needs one week (from 08 to 17 October 2019) to see the preference in the learning process.

The process of learning has been done at school of Hafizh Al-Qurbah Parepare. The sample was taken from the class B which consists of 15 students. The data analyzed as quantitative descriptive and the test was done to see the different achievement of the scoring from pre and post-test. The instrument was used to observe and check the activity description that explained qualitatively in each process of the cycle and the scoring classification was done in the scale description. There were four steps doing in this research namely planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

**Table 1.** Learning Results Classification

<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Category</b>
86-100	Very good
71-85	Good
56-70	Fair
41-55	Poor
0-40	Very poor

The test instrument is used to measure student learning outcomes. Test instrument designed by researchers to measure the ability of students to solve the problem of reduction operations by referring to the scoring guidelines that have been prepared previously. Indicators of success in this study by looking at learning outcomes and learning

activities of students which are marked by an increase in the value of student learning outcomes through the Magic Animals Bag method with KKM 75%.

This research applies two cycles. The first cycle works as follow: planning is an initial step that must be done by researchers before doing something; the activities carried out in the planning stage are making Learning Implementation. Plans (RPP) and providing learning in advance related to the material then providing games, songs and drilling methods for more active students to progress to work on the questions are given and also use learning media as the flashcards of the lesson. The preparation of the learning was also designed individually. In the observation and evaluation stage the researcher monitors the learning activities, by giving a test. The data obtained in the first cycle was collected and then analyzed later there was a reflection.

The second cycle works as follow: the action planning phase in cycle II is based on the results of reflection on the action in cycle I which is the result of improvement from the cycle I action. The planning stage is filled in by making a Learning Implementation Plan related to the subtraction of two and three numbers. The implementation of learning actions in the second cycle is almost the same as the actions in the first cycle, but different indicators, researchers expect an increase in student learning achievement. While the observation and evaluation stages are the same and reflection is the same as cycle I.

The results of this study are in the form of student test scores which are formative test results in testing students' improvement of vocabulary teaching through flashcards. The data of the student learning achievement of scoring is presented in the form of quantitative descriptive data.

On October 8, 2019 the researcher was teaching the vocabularies of flash cards material for the first time. In the beginning of the lesson, the researcher explained about vocabularies of flash cards to the students and divided them into five groups. Each group was given some flash cards and they were tried to translate the meaning of the cards. After that, the students discuss to their friends about what they had gotten from the new words they found.

### **3. Results**

#### **3.1. Cycle I**

The result which was done in cycle on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2019 indicates the teaching of vocabulary through flash cards was running with some steps of cycles. They are:

Firstly, this step of cycle I was done with the teacher and researcher prepared the vocabularies of flash cards with some colors and pictures; made lesson plan and observation checklist for the students in order to know the students' activity during the learning process; made the observation checklist for the researcher in order to know the teachers' teaching activity during the learning process; arranged the evaluation for cycle I to see the students' comprehension.

Secondly, in the beginning of the lesson, the researcher explained about vocabularies of flash cards to the students and divided them into five groups. Each group was given some flash cards and they were tried to translate the meaning of the cards. After that, the students discuss to their friends about what they had gotten from the new words they found.

The next step, students discuss the flash cards to their friends in groups and translate the meaning and pronounce the words. This first activity was done to see the students' activity with their friends when they are in group. The words of vocabulary

contain with verbs of usually used in their daily life or activity. There were two and three cards put by the teacher in this group.

Being understood to the cards and word, the students can ask about their comprehension from the cards to the teacher or complain anything which disturbs their activity in the learning process. They were asked also by the teacher to mention the name of the cards, its colors and its model to be practiced by the students when they were grouped together. In the middle of learning of technique one, the other friends can discuss to the others group about what picture they had gotten and its new words inside the cards. There were twelve new vocabularies distributed with different colors and words inside the cards. Mix feeling was shown in that process of learning. Feeling tired and bored also seen from their eyes and their movement which showed the strange and bored condition.

Considering the run of the lesson, the researcher changes the technique to minimize the problems. Only students could be divided in big group or a group which consist of four and five students because the classroom size is not available to have students in many groups. That was why the researcher change her teaching method by doing the same of dividing students but the second technique was dividing them into two people only for drilling the vocabularies so that they could try to memorize the words and to learn the pronunciation.

**Table 2.** The students result classification in cycle I

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Successful	12	66.67%
Unsuccessful	3	33.34%

Thirdly, observation was done in the learning process in each cycle. This observation was held by the researcher's friend who helped her observe the students' activity during the learning process. There were some aspects observed and described in this part of result and the researcher used observation checklist to obtain data on the students' participation and their activities in the learning process. The observational checklist was used to observe the students' progress in learning process, included the students' behavior in the class when the material was given by the researcher, the students' participation and activities in the class when they were giving a question, answer the question or suggestions.

**Table 3.** The result of students' observation

Observed Activities	Total students	Percentage
Present	15	100%
Asking question	7	46.7%
Answer question	8	53.4%
Taking notes	12	80 %
Memorizing word	10	66.7%
Attention	9	60%
pears/group	10	66.7%
Naughty	6	40%
Playing	4	26.7%
Silent	7	46.7%

**Table 4.** The result of teachers' observation

Cycle	Score	Percentage	Criteria
I	13	86.6%	Very good

Based on the result of the students' activity description, it shows that under the 80% students did the observation of the learning while the teacher results shows that there were 13 activities done by total activities 18 or classified in 86.6% in the observing process of cycle I.

Fourthly, The reflecting is done in purpose to differentiate the learning outcomes and the solving problems to be fixed in the next cycle.

**Table 5.** The result of teachers' observation

Students' Obstacles	Activity solving
The students were interested to learn vocabulary by using flash cards but unfortunately most of them were still less confident, nervous, and afraid of making mistakes.	The teacher and researcher collaboratively plan the learning method of teaching vocabulary by using flash cards. The cards was not really different with the applied of the cycle I. the researcher still focus to put some new words of verbs inside the cards.
Some students were in trouble because they had noisy voice and some of them are the naughty students who always disturb their friends in the classroom.	Paying attention to the naughty students and the researcher tried to divided them with not group the students who are categorized as fast respond of thinking and achieving the language with the students' who are low in transferring the lesson.
The test shows a better material's achievement but the students had difficulties in using the cards such identified the meaning of the words and pronounce the words correctly	The teacher still doing the drilling method to reduce the students pronounce mistaken and playing some songs to reduce the students bored in the learning process.

### 3.2. Cycle II

The result which was done in cycle on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2019 indicates the teaching of vocabulary through flash cards was running with some steps of cycles. They are:

Firstly, The teacher and researcher did the second cycle with the same apply for the first cycle. However they did the revised plan to help them solve the problems made in cycle I. Secondly, On October 17, 2019 the researcher applied the teaching of vocabulary with the same technique of the first cycle. However the researcher more focus to did the drilling of the vocabularies in purpose to train the students' pronunciation and memorizing the words.

The activity which was done by the observer in the learning process was the students affective. They were their activity of their association and respond to the lesson. The main subject of the material in cyclus II explained about the example of verbs which were still new for the students. The verbs was put in the cards with different colors in order to improve the students' and motivation of learning. The teacher explain the material to the students as the planning of the teaching. She was

try to stimulate the students' confidence to speak up in some short sentences and phrase in English. The teacher show the cards to the students, try to do the drilling to be repeated by the students and say the words over and over again by practicing the words based on its picture. Such as word "sing", so the researcher did the act like sing a song in order to make the students understand about the meaning. To reduce the students' boring, the researcher playing game and yell-yell to the students in some moment of the learning. They were very interested to follow the learning process and enjoy the process even though there were still some stubborn students who disturb their friends.

In the middle of the learning, they were also asked to practice their vocabularies in big group of the students. Some students were doing ask and answer question from the teacher and their friends. The last activity, the teacher did the evaluation to see the improvement from the students' knowledge and comprehending about the teacher's teaching process. There were given the test of multiple choices about the vocabularies which contain of verbs used in their daily life.

**Table 6.** The students result classification in cycle I

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Successful	14	93.3%
Unsuccessful	1	6.6%

The learning of vocabulary by using flash cards improved the students' activity of their learning process. They could be more focus and interested with the teaching method. Their confidence of asking and answering question approved in the activity learning. For further information could be seen in the following table below:

**Table 7.** The result comparison of the students' score in cycle I and cycle II

Cycle	Students' Score		Mastery	
	Highest	Lowest	Success	fail
I	100	40	11	4
II	100	60	14	1

The table above comparing the students' activity description of the learning process. It could be seen that there were significant improvement of the students' learning activity in vocabulary using applied by the flash cards.

Thirdly, in this cycle, the students in attended the meeting were the same with students' attendance in cycle I. The students data percentage in this cycle achieve in many aspect of the students' activity. The observer saw the situation of the most students in the cycle II felt comfort and convenience in progress their ideas. The same progress is also seen from the teacher's ways of teaching.

Based on the observation result of the students and the teacher above, the researcher concluded that the students' attendance and attention and the positive activities to the material based on observation checklist were increased from the 1<sup>st</sup> cycle to the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle.

**Table 8.** The result comparison of the students' observation in cycle I and cycle II

Observed activities	Cycle I		Cycle II	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Present	15	100%	15	100%
Asking question	7	46.7%	9	60%
Answer question	8	53.4%	11	73.4%
Taking notes	12	80 %	14	93.4 %
Memorizing word of verbs	10	66.7%	15	100%
Attention	9	60%	13	86.7%
Work in pears/group	10	66.7%	15	100%

The last, researcher analyzed the reflection of the implementation of cycle II to see the students' learning enhance and their learning improvement. in the researcher did the reflection of the teaching vocabulary using flash cards in improving students' vocabulary mastery to the first grade students of SD Hafizh Al-Qurbah Parepare.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on data analysis and discussion in the previous chapter, the writer comes to the following conclusion:

Firstly, vocabulary learning becomes training for the students to improve and to progress their ideas improving their vocabulary mastery. This is also can support them to speak in English to their daily activities. The data descriptive and statistic shows that This situation was effective to improve the students vocabulary mastery. Secondly, the applying of vocabulary teaching by using flash cards shows the learning achievement. It is proved by 73.3% students got score  $\geq 70$  and the mean score was 76 in the 1<sup>st</sup> cycle then be improved to 93.3% students got score  $\geq 70$  with mean score 83 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle. Beside that, the result of students' observation showed the students' participation activity was increase from the learning activity improvement.

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