

IMPROVING THE VII-E GRADE STUDENTS' ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND THEIR VOCABULARY ACHIEVEMENT BY USING FLASHCARDS AT SMPN 2 TANGGUL-JEMBER

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Abstract

Vocabulary is one of the language component that is very important to be mastered in the teaching learning process of English language. The purpose of this research was to know whether the use of flashcards could improve the VII-E Grade Students Active Participation and Their Vocabulary Achievement at SMPN 2 Tanggul-Jember or not. The research design used was classroom action research. The research subject were determined by using purposive method. The data of this research were obtained from the students' observation and vocabulary achievement test. The results showed that there were improvement in each cycle. In Cycle 1, the results showed that 76.4% of 36 students were actively participated in teaching learning process and 77.8% of 36 students got score 75 or more in vocabulary test. Meanwhile, the results in Cycle 2 showed that 84.7% of 36 students were actively involved in teaching learning proses and the students who got scores at least 75 were 83.3% of 36 students. Based on the research result, it could be concluded that the use of flashcards was able to improve the VII-E students' active participation, as well as their vocabulary achievement in the teaching learning process of vocabulary.

Keywords: Classroom Action Research, Flashcards, Active Participation, Vocabulary Achievement

Introduction

Mastering English is very important to enable people to involve in global activity. According to Bough and Cable (2002:3), English is one of the most important languages in the world. This means that English has important place in this world. English has important role in many aspects as in education, politics, economics, technology, science and arts. By that reasons, the Indonesian government determines English as a compulsory subject in the 2006 Institutional Level Curriculum (*Kurikulum Satuan Tingkat Pendidikan/KTSP*) for SMP and MTs. The Government hopes, by determining English as a compulsory subject in KTSP, the students are able develop their ability to use and communicate in acceptable English.

There are four language skills that should be learned by the Junior High School students, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. There are also three language components to support the language competence,

namely vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. One of the language components that is very important in learning English is vocabulary. Vocabulary is very important, because it supporting the ability of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Without mastering vocabulary, people will find many difficulties in improving the ability in communication with other people.

It is very important to construct instructional media to motivate the students to learn English. As Wright (2004:2) states that it is important to have as wide range of resources as possible in the classroom so that the students will have stimulus for this development. One of the resources to teach vocabulary is flashcards. Flashcards are an instructional media to help the students memorize information. Komachali (2012:137), defines that flash card is cardboard consisting of a word, a sentence, or a simple picture on it. Flashcards are held up for pupils as a visual aid to learn. Flashcards are useful to teach vocabulary in namely matching words to pictures, singular and plural

nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, articles, conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections.

A preliminary study was carried out on Monday, November 18, 2013. Based on the interview with the English teacher of class VII-E at SMPN 2 Tanggul, Jember, there were some problems faced by the students in teaching learning process of English. Some students had difficulties in understanding the meaning of the words. Then, the researcher asserted that the problem was about vocabulary. By using flashcard the students would be easier to understand the meaning of the words. The students would see a single picture that was familiar with them, so they already knew the name of that picture in their own language and it would make them easier to understand the meaning.

There were 36 students in the VII-E class. To know the students' mastery of vocabulary, the researcher carried out a vocabulary test in the preliminary study. The mean score of the vocabulary test done in preliminary study was 69, whereas the standard score of the English subject was 75. There were only 15 students (41,7%) who got 75 or higher. The rest of them had not reached the minimum score requirement (75) yet. Based on the observation in the classroom during teaching learning process of English, the students' active participation in the teaching learning process was quite low.

Based on the observation in the classroom while the teaching learning process of English was in progress, the teacher taught the vocabulary skill integrated with another skill. The teacher used the students' worksheet (LKS) as the materials. In that LKS, there were vocabulary list that must be learned and understood by the students. Usually, the teacher taught the vocabulary skill integratedly with the reading skill. There was a text with the list of some vocabularies below the text. The teacher asked the students to find out the meaning of these vocabulary list in their dictionary. Then, the teacher discussed the answers together with the students. While in the teaching learning process, many students seemed not active enough. The students could not memorize the meaning of the words well. Based on those problems, it was important to choose the interesting media to make the students active and motivate them to learn vocabulary.

In this research, the researcher conducted a classroom action research entitled "Improving the VII-E Grade Students' Active Participation and Their Vocabulary Achievement by Using Flashcards at SMPN 2 Tanggul Jember". The objectives of this research were to improve the VII-E students' active participation during teaching learning process of vocabulary by using flashcards and their vocabulary achievement at SMPN 2 Tanggul Jember in the 2013/2014 academic year.

Research Methods

The research design of this study was classroom action research with cyclical model, because the purpose was to improve the VII-E students' active participation and their

vocabulary achievement by using flashcards at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul Jember in the 2013/2014 academic year. Opie (2004:79) states that "action research offers a means of providing an understanding to a problematic situation and whether this situation concerns people or procedures is immaterial". Some researchers have done similar topic in action research because they wanted to solve some problems that were faced by the students in teaching learning process.

This classroom action research was conducted collaboratively with the English teacher of VII-E class in SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul Jember in the 2013/2014 academic year in the second semester. There were four stages of activities in each cycle, namely planning the action; implementing of the action; observing and evaluating; and analysing the data and doing reflection the action (Elliot, 1991:69).

The method to determine this research was conducted by using purposive method. This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul Jember. This school was chosen because of some reasons. First, based on the result of the preliminary study, the students still had problem in learning English, especially in learning vocabulary. Second, the English teacher agreed to collaboratively conducted classroom action research to improve the students' vocabulary achievement by using flashcards. Third, the Headmaster gave permission to conduct this classroom action research. These reasons made the researcher able to obtain the data required in this research.

In this research, the research subjects were the students of class VII E at SMPN 2 Tanggul Jember in the 2013/2014 academic year. Based on the result of the vocabulary test in preliminary study, it was known the total number of the students in that class was 36 students. This class was chosen because based on the preliminary study this class had the lowest score. In this research, there were two kinds of data, primary and supporting data. The primary data were obtained from vocabulary test and observation. Meanwhile, the supporting data were taken from interview and documentation.

The evaluations conducted in this research were product and process evaluations. The process evaluation was conducted by observation was done in each meeting to evaluate the students' participation during the teaching learning process of vocabulary by using flashcards. The product of evaluation was conducted at the end of each cycle by administering the vocabulary test.

The students' active participation could be seen from the student's activity in answering the teacher's questions based on the flashcards, practicing Q-A based on the flashcards in pair, doing the vocabulary exercises, finding the meaning of the new words, and paying attention to the teacher's explanation and flashcards shown by the teacher. The compulsory indicators were indicators number 1, 3, and 5. The student was categorized as an active student if he or she fulfilled at least three (compulsory indicators) of five indicators. This research was regarded successful if

75% of the students obtain at least minimum score category (≥ 75) and fulfill at least three indicators of the five indicators in the observation checklist.

The collected data of test were analyzed by using the following formula:

$$\Sigma = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

Notes:

Σ : The percentage of students whose score was ≥ 75 in the vocabulary test

n : the number of students whose score was ≥ 75 in the vocabulary test

N : The total number of the students (the research subjects)
(Adapted from Ali: 1993:186)

Then, to find the percentage of the students who are active during the teaching learning process, the researcher used the following formula:

$$\Sigma = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

Notes:

Σ : The percentage of the students who participate actively in the vocabulary class

n : the number of students who were active in the vocabulary class

N : The total number of the students in the vocabulary class
(Adapted from Ali: 1993:186)

Research Findings

The action in the first cycle was conducted in three meetings, including the time for vocabulary test. The action in the first cycle was carried out in three meetings, including the time for vocabulary test. The first meeting was done on April 29th, 2014 and the second meeting was done on April 30th, 2014. Meanwhile, the test was administered on May 2nd, 2014. The implementation of the action in the first cycle was conducted based on the lesson plans which constructed collaboratively by the researcher and the English teacher.

In the first meeting, the doer of the action was the researcher, while the English teacher observed the students' active participation during the teaching learning process of vocabulary by using flashcards. In the second meeting, they exchanged their positions. The time allocation was 2x40 minutes. In the teaching learning process, the teacher taught vocabulary integrated with reading skill. The genre of the text was procedure text.

The evaluations conducted in this research were process and product evaluation. The process of evaluation was done during the teaching and learning process by observing the students active participation based on the observation checklist. There were five indicators in the checklist those were the students answering the teacher's questions based on the flashcards, the students practicing Q-A based on the flashcards in pair, the students doing the vocabulary exercises, the students finding the meaning of the new words, and the students' paying attention to the teacher's

explanation and the flashcards shown by the teacher. The students were categorized as active students if they could fulfill at least three indicators above.

Then, the product of evaluation done at the end of Cycle 1 by administering vocabulary test. The test was in the form of multiple choices and gap filling. The number of the test items was 15 items for multiple choices and 15 items for gap filling. The number of the test items of the vocabulary test was 30 items. Dealing with the scoring, the student's score was obtained from the number of the correct answer divided by 30 and multiplied by 100. So, the total score of the test items was 100. It was done to measure the students' vocabulary achievement after being taught vocabulary by using flashcards (picture, word, and sentence flashcards).

The result of the observation in the first meeting of Cycle 1 showed that there were 27 out of 36 students (75%) and the second meeting showed that there were 28 out of 36 students (77.8%) actively participated in the teaching learning process of vocabulary by using flashcards. The average result of observation in the first cycle was 76.4%. Meanwhile, the result of the students' vocabulary test in the first cycle was 28 out of 36 students (77.8%) got the standard minimum score of 75. Based on the result of result of observation and the students' vocabulary test in the first cycle, both of them have achieved the target.

The result in the first cycle have met the target because there were some strengths from Cycle 1, so both of the result of observation and result of the students' vocabulary test had achieved the target. The strengths of Cycle 1 were as follows:

1. The size of flashcards were large enough, that was 21 X 29.7 cm, so all of the students in the class could see the flashcards clearly.
2. The colors of the flashcards were clear.
3. Teaching vocabulary by using flashcards could attract the students' attention in teaching learning process.
4. Teaching vocabulary by using flashcards could help the students understand the vocabulary taught because the students have already known the meaning of the picture in their language.

In the teaching and learning vocabulary by using flashcards, there were still a few of the students who were less active and could not achieve the standard score (75). From the observation in the first and second meeting, it was found that a few students still confused about the meaning of the unfamiliar words in word and sentence flashcards. It took longer of time for them to understand the meaning of the words and the sentences. It happened because it was the first time for the students to use flashcards to learn vocabulary. So, when the teacher asked them to practice using flashcards with their partner in front of the class, there were only a few students who practiced in front of the class by using flashcards. It happened because they only have limited time. To overcome this problem, the researcher and the English teacher provide picture, word, and sentence flashcards that familiar with the students.

Although both of the results of the students' vocabulary achievement and the observation met the target, however it

was still necessary to continue the actions to the second cycle to ensure the consistency of the result in the first cycle.

The second cycle was conducted in three meetings, including the time for vocabulary test. The first meeting was done on May 3rd, 2014 and the second meeting was done on May 9th, 2014. Meanwhile, the test was administered on May 10th, 2014. The stages of the activities in the second cycle were the same as those in the first cycle, namely the planning of the action, the implementing of the action, the observation and evaluation, and the reflection of the action.

The result of observation in the first meeting of Cycle 2 showed that there were 30 of 36 students (83.3%) and in the second meeting showed that there were 31 of 36 students (86.1%) actively participated in the teaching learning process of vocabulary by using flashcards. The average result of observation in the second cycle was 84.7%. Meanwhile, the result of the vocabulary test in the second cycle was 83.3% of 36 students got the standard minimum score 75. Based on the result of the students' vocabulary test and result of observation in the second cycle, both of them have achieved the target.

Based on the result of the observation and students' vocabulary achievement test in Cycle 2, it had shown improvement and successfully achieved the criteria of the research. It means that the results of Cycle 2 gave the consistent results as well as Cycle 1, that the use of flashcards could improve the students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement. Therefore, Cycle 2 was stopped.

The following table and graph present the improvement of the students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement in cycle 1 and cycle 2.

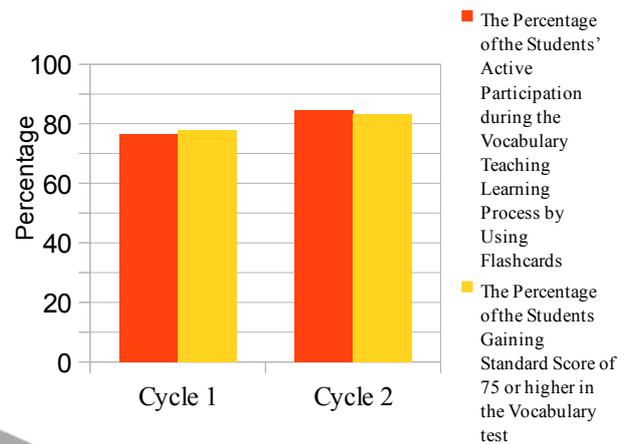
Table 1. The Improvement of the Students' Active Participation and Their Vocabulary Achievement in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

Research Target	Results		Improvement
	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	
The Percentage of the Students' Active Participation during the Vocabulary Teaching Learning Process by Using Flashcards	76.4%	84.7%	8.3%
The Percentage of the Students Gaining Standard Score of 75 or higher in the Vocabulary test	77.8%	83.3%	5.5%

Graph 1. The Improvement of the Students' Active Participation and Their Vocabulary Achievement in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

Based on the result of implementation of the actions in

two cycles, it could be concluded that teaching vocabulary by using flashcards could improve the students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement. It was



proven by more than 75% students who were active in the teaching and learning process of vocabulary and more than 75% students met the standard score required for the vocabulary test that was 75.

Those results proved the theories which state that using flashcards in teaching vocabulary can improve the students' vocabulary achievement as well as their active participation in the vocabulary teaching learning process. Zainuddin (2012) states that vocabulary flashcards are great tools for studying, they can be fun, colorful, and creative ways to aid in memory and retention of vocabulary words.

Further, the present research of using flashcards supported some previous research results which proved that flashcards could improve the students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement. For example, a classroom action research conducted by Pratama (2010) from Jember University entitled "Improving the Seventh Year Students' Vocabulary Achievement by Using Flashcards at MTs Negeri 2 Jember" proved that flashcards could improve the students' vocabulary achievement from 70.73% in the first cycle to 87.5% in the second cycle. Another classroom action research was conducted by Nugroho (2012) from Sebelas Maret University entitled "Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery Using Flashcards". It found that using flashcards could improve the students' vocabulary achievement from 70,52% in the first cycle to 80.13% in the second cycle.

Besides that, an experimental research done by Komachali (2012) from Islamic Azad University-Tonekabon Branch, Iran, entitled "The Effect of Using Vocabulary Flashcards on Iranian Pre-University Students' Vocabulary Knowledge" showed that the students' vocabulary achievement of the experimental group was higher than that in the control group.

In this research, the result of this research in two cycles proved the action hypotheses as follows:

1. The use of flashcards can improve the VII-E students' active participation in vocabulary class at SMPN 2 Tanggul Jember in the 2013/2014 academic year.
2. The use of flashcards can improve the VII-E students' vocabulary achievement at SMPN 2 Tanggul Jember in

the 2013/2014 academic year.

In conclusion, flashcards were appropriate media to help the students to improve their active participation in the teaching learning process and their vocabulary achievement. Based on the result and discussion above, it proved that the use of flashcards could improve the VII-E grade students' active participation in the teaching learning process and their vocabulary achievement at SMPN 2 Tanggul Jember in the 2013/2014 academic year.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, it could be concluded that the use of flashcards could improve the VII-E students' active participation in teaching learning process of vocabulary and their vocabulary achievement at SMPN 2 Tanggul Jember in 2013/2014 academic year. The results of the students' active participation in the teaching learning process and their vocabulary achievement had met the target and also improved in each cycle. It means that the results of Cycle 2 gave the consistent results as well as Cycle 1 that the use of flashcards could improve the students' active participation in teaching learning process of vocabulary and their vocabulary achievement.

Since the use of flashcards could improve the students active participation in teaching learning process of vocabulary and their vocabulary achievement, flashcards can be used as media to teach in vocabulary class. Thus, the researcher purposes a suggestion to the English teacher to use flashcards to teach vocabulary because it was proved that the use of flashcards could improve the students' active participation in teaching learning process of vocabulary and their vocabulary achievement. Then, she/he should learn how to make flashcards or other media in order to create or look for the teaching media, especially flashcards that is appropriate with the curriculum. The students also are suggested to be more active during teaching learning process in the class of English so that they can enlarge their vocabulary mastery in the improvement of their vocabulary achievement. The future researchers who have the similar problem in teaching vocabulary are encouraged to use this research result as reference to conduct further research that deals with the use of flashcards to develop students vocabulary achievement, such as experimental research on the effect of flashcards on the students' vocabulary achievement to the different level of students.

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