

## Flashcards as a Tool for Vocabulary Enhancement: A Study on Tenth Grade Students at SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the effect of using flashcards in vocabulary teaching on improving students' vocabulary acquisition at SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu. The method used was classroom action research which consisted of two cycles. The data collection instruments were pre-test, post-test cycle 1 and post-test cycle 2 along with observation and interview. The data were statistically analyzed by calculating the mean and percentage increase in students' scores. The results showed that the use of flashcards was effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery. The average score of the students increased from 43.67 in the pre-test to 82.5 in the second cycle post-test. The percentage of score increase from the pre-test to the second cycle post-test was 88.9%. In addition, 83.33% of the students successfully achieved the minimum criteria (KKM) at the end of the second cycle. The results of this study support the hypothesis that the use of flashcards has a significant positive impact on vocabulary learning.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

English holds the status of an international language, serving as a primary medium of communication across the globe. In Indonesia, it is recognized as a foreign language and is incorporated into the educational curriculum from the early stages of schooling up to higher levels. Despite this extensive exposure, Indonesian students often encounter significant challenges in mastering English, particularly in vocabulary acquisition. Proficiency in English is crucial for students aiming to articulate their ideas effectively, as it facilitates smoother communication both in oral and written forms.

As Wilce (2009) points out, language plays a central role in our intellectual, emotional, and social lives, acting as a conduit for human interaction through the use of structured, audible symbols. In the era of globalization, knowledge of a foreign language, especially English, is indispensable. For Indonesia, a developing country, the ability to communicate in English is not only beneficial, but essential to engage with the international community.

Despite its introduction from kindergarten to higher education levels, students continue to face difficulties, particularly in vocabulary acquisition (Irvani, 2019; Surmanov & Azimova, 2020), which is crucial for effective communication. English, being an international language, plays a pivotal role in global communication, making its mastery essential for Indonesians, especially in the globalization. The educational curriculum emphasizes the importance of the four key language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—alongside essential language components like grammar and vocabulary. However, students at SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu have been observed to struggle with vocabulary, which is a fundamental aspect of language proficiency.

This research aims to explore the effectiveness of using flashcards, a traditional yet powerful learning tool, in enhancing the vocabulary skills of tenth-grade students at the mentioned school. Flashcards are widely regarded as an effective means for enhancing vocabulary due to their simplicity and the active recall they promote. The research will investigate the students' vocabulary levels before and after the introduction of flashcards, aiming to provide a comprehensive analysis of the tool's impact on their language learning process.

The significance of this study extends beyond the students to encompass educators and the broader academic community, offering insights into effective vocabulary learning strategies and potentially influencing teaching methodologies. By

hypothesizing that flashcards will lead to a significant improvement in vocabulary proficiency, this study aligns with the educational objectives of enhancing communication skills and overall language mastery among students at SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu, thus addressing a crucial aspect of language learning in the Indonesian educational.

## **B. LITERATUR REVIEW**

### **1. Vocabulary**

The emphasis on vocabulary acquisition in foreign language learning, particularly English in Indonesia, is a recognized priority among English language educators. They understand the critical role that vocabulary plays in helping students improve their language skills. While vocabulary is considered essential, it is important to recognize that other components of English learning, such as grammar, pronunciation, and speaking skills, are equally important. However, a lack of vocabulary can pose significant communication challenges for students (Fathin & Prasetyarini, 2021), underscoring the interconnectedness of vocabulary mastery with other facets of language learning.

The relationship between vocabulary mastery and performance in other language skills is profound. A robust vocabulary facilitates easier comprehension of English texts, fluency in pronunciation, and better understanding of English conversations. As Finocchiaro (1964) articulates, the mastery of vocabulary is indispensable to the development of communicative aspects of language, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This underscores the notion that a rich vocabulary reservoir can significantly facilitate the language learning process and lead to successful language skill development.

Echoing this sentiment, Harmer (2015) emphasizes the indispensable role of vocabulary as a core element in promoting language development. Vocabulary serves as a crucial bridge that enables learners to achieve specific language learning goals in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. From an educator's perspective, success in language learning depends heavily on the amount of vocabulary that students can acquire and their ability to use it effectively (Jue, 2010; Rahmawati, 2012; Rasuan, 2017). This dual emphasis on vocabulary acquisition and use underscores its central role in the holistic development of learners' language competence.

a. Definition of Vocabulary

Vocabulary comes from the Latin word "vocabulary," which means words. The concept of vocabulary has been interpreted by experts in different languages. To get a clear definition of vocabulary from various experts' statements, (Graves, 2016) defines vocabulary as "the number and variety of words a person hears, recognizes, understands, and uses in spoken or written language". (Hatch & Brown, 1995) expand on this definition, stating that it refers to "a list of words or phrases used by a particular person, even if they are not frequently used in their full passive vocabulary". This means that vocabulary includes words in sentences, both spoken and written, and refers to a person's language ability to effectively use a wide range of words to communicate (Space, 2013; Simon and Schuster, 2012).

Vocabulary plays a central role in language learning, which itself is a system of sounds, words, sentences, and more that people use to communicate thoughts and feelings. The words used in a language make up its vocabulary. Vocabulary consists of a list of words with meanings and serves as the fundamental skill required for effective communication. Without a solid vocabulary foundation, people may struggle to communicate efficiently (Hatch & Brown, 1995; Neuman et al., 2000).

When it comes to foreign language learning, students often face challenges related to vocabulary comprehension. They may have limited vocabulary to comprehend text, have difficulty understanding the context of words in text, have difficulty recognizing the meaning of individual words, have difficulty listening to English words from speakers, have difficulty composing written assignments, and have difficulty forming sentences in English. These difficulties hinder individuals from both receptive and productive communication in English (Ganie & Rangkuti, 2019; Harahap et al., 2020; Harputra et al., 2023; Proctor et al., 2007; Risanda et al., 2022)

Finding effective techniques to motivate children to learn English is a major challenge for English language teachers (Crump, 1995; Djafar, 2021; Meidipa et al., 2021; Ramadhani, 2017; Suhri, 2019). Vocabulary teaching has been approached in different ways (Khoirul & Wijayanto, 2023; Sari et al., 2021), and it should be done using different methods to engage children's interest. The use of flashcards is one such method that has been used to improve students' vocabulary performance (Leonardus et al., 2017; Nugroho et al., 2012; Rachmadi et al., 2023). Teachers have

used a variety of techniques such as card games, puzzles, role plays, and more to effectively teach English.

Before delving into vocabulary acquisition, it is important to understand the concept of vocabulary itself, especially for foreign language learners. The acquisition of a wide range of vocabulary is crucial for students because it directly affects their proficiency in all four language skills - speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Nation & Nation, 2001). Vocabulary is the cornerstone of language proficiency and affects how well students can communicate in all aspects of language (Johnson & Pearson, 1984). Vocabulary includes both spoken and heard words, making it an integral part of successful communication (Rohmatillah, 2017; Suryanto et al., 2021).

#### b. Types of Vocabulary

There are different classifications of vocabulary in language studies. (Dudley-Evans & John, 1998) distinguish two main types: general vocabulary and specialized vocabulary. General vocabulary includes words that are used in everyday language without any specific limitations, while special vocabulary consists of words that are used in specific professions or fields.

Regarding the categorization of vocabulary, (Plutino Ed. et al., 2019)(Nation & Nation, 2001) identifies four different types within a text:

- 1) High frequency words. These words make up nearly 80% of the running words in the text.
- 2) Academic words. These words typically make up about 9% of the running words in the text.
- 3) Technical words. These words make up about 5% of the running words in the text.
- 4) Low frequency words. These words fall outside the high-frequency category and comprise more than 5% of the words in academic texts.

(Adrian, 1993) outlines two basic types of vocabulary:

- 1) Active vocabulary. This refers to words that students need not only to understand but also to use in their own language production. Teaching active vocabulary often involves providing examples and asking questions to help students learn how to use these words effectively.
- 2) Passive vocabulary. Passive vocabulary includes words that students want to understand (e.g., when reading a text) but do not necessarily need to use actively

themselves. Vocabulary acquisition is a gradual process, and the acquisition of a substantial vocabulary requires dedicated study and exposure.

Herry (in Rahmasari, 2016) highlights two methods of vocabulary acquisition for children:

- 1) Hearing words from a variety of sources such as parents, older friends, peers, television, radio, and their immediate environment.
- 2) Expanding vocabulary through personal experience, including verbal communication about objects, eating, touching, smelling, drinking, and interacting with their environment.

This emphasizes the idea that children develop their vocabulary based on their accumulated life experiences. For example, visits to places such as the zoo, garden, market, and other environments contribute to the expansion of their vocabulary. The richness of a child's experiences correlates with the diversity and breadth of his or her vocabulary.

## 2. Flashcard

A flashcard is a compact piece of paper, typically the size of a business card, with a new word in the language being learned on one side and its corresponding term in the learner's native language on the other (Chotimah, 2021; Cotterall & Crabbe, 1992). These flashcards often contain words and/or images and are designed to be easily visible from a distance at the back of the classroom. They should be concise, well-organized, and clear, with the use of capital letters to increase readability, especially when viewed from a distance (Pan et al., 2022)

(Hatch & Brown, 1995; Webb, 2005) provide a distinction between two essential types of vocabulary, they are : 1) Receptive vocabulary includes words that learners can recognize and understand in context, but have difficulty producing accurately. Learners can identify these words when they encounter them in reading, but may not actively use them in speaking or writing. This aspect of vocabulary acquisition is often referred to as a passive process, as learners absorb information from external sources; 2) Learners' productive vocabulary includes words that they understand, can pronounce correctly, and can use in both spoken and written communication. This category includes receptive vocabulary, but also emphasizes the ability to use these words effectively in appropriate contexts.

Acquiring new vocabulary is a challenging task, and each individual may have their own preferred method for doing so (Ghalebi et al., 2020). In the case of learning

English vocabulary, students need to memorize words thoroughly and use them in real-life situations, while being careful not to overuse them in the classroom. Effective vocabulary acquisition involves both memorization and practical application (Mawaddah, 2023).

a. Definition of Flashcards

As a teaching and learning tool, flashcards are considered a valuable medium alongside other educational resources such as diagrams, cartoons, maps, and more. (Kasihani, 2002) defines flashcards as cards that are typically the size of A4 paper, with a total of 30 to 50 cards in a set. Each card contains an image and the name of the object depicted. Flashcards are usually organized into groups that correspond to different categories, such as pictures of fruits, vegetables, body parts, animals, transportation, and more. The use of pictorial representations in flashcards is intentional, as it is believed that pictures provide a clear conceptual understanding of the associated word or structure.

On the other hand, (Finocchiaro, 1964) describes flashcards as cards containing individual words that can be either printed or handwritten. These words are typically categorized and arranged in a manner similar to the arrangement of individual pictures. The primary purpose of flashcards is to assist teachers in effectively explaining course material. Flashcards are essentially visual aids, and their images can be used to illustrate the meanings of vocabulary words. (Kasihani, 2002) further emphasizes that presenting appealing pictures is an effective way to encourage language production, especially among children. The use of pictures in flashcards not only attracts students' interest but also enhances vocabulary acquisition.

Flashcards typically contain a combination of pictures, words and instructions. They are often designed as A4-sized cards, with 30 to 50 cards in a set, each with a picture and a label for the object depicted. Flashcards are grouped into categories, making them suitable for a variety of lesson content. The larger size of flashcards ensures that students can easily identify the information presented.

b. Role of Flashcards

(Harmer, 2015) emphasizes the important role of flashcards in language learning. Flashcards are particularly valuable for several purposes, including reviewing grammar points, encouraging the formation of different sentence structures, and practicing vocabulary. They provide an effective and practical means

of memorizing new vocabulary and ensuring that it is firmly embedded in your memory, which is especially important when preparing for exams.

The use of flashcards in the English learning process is well suited for beginners. This approach places a strong emphasis on the pronunciation of words, helping learners to master correct pronunciation. In addition, the use of flashcards encourages students to actively participate in the learning process, promoting an engaged and interactive approach rather than passive learning.

### c. Function of Flashcards

Flashcards serve multiple functions in the English teaching and learning process, offering significant assistance to educators. According to (Suyanto, 2013), the use of flashcards helps teachers in several ways, they are :

Firstly, flashcards aid in making students familiar with the concept of singular and plural forms, allowing them to grasp the nuances of grammatical structures. This visual aid simplifies the comprehension of such fundamental language elements. Secondly, flashcards contribute to building students' proficiency in numbers. Whether it involves counting or understanding numerical concepts, flashcards provide a visual and interactive tool for learners to become confident in dealing with numbers in English. Furthermore, flashcards help students become acquainted with the distinction between "a few" and "a lot of" concepts. This visual differentiation enables learners to grasp and apply these quantifiers accurately in their language use. Moreover, flashcards serve as attention-grabbing tools through captivating and relevant images. These visual aids are thoughtfully chosen to align with the teaching content, ensuring that students are engaged and attentive during lessons.

Additionally, the incorporation of flashcards brings variety to the teaching and learning process. It greatly facilitates the teacher's ability to explain materials and provide clear examples. The visual aspect of flashcards, coupled with their thematic relevance, enhances students' comprehension and receptivity to the teacher's explanations.

Ultimately, the use of flashcards can significantly enhance students' interest in the English learning process. The visual appeal and interactive nature of flashcards make lessons more engaging and enjoyable for learners, contributing to a more effective and enjoyable educational experience (Kasihani and Suyanto, 2008:109).



d. Advantages and Disadvantages of Flashcards

The use of flashcards in vocabulary instruction has both advantages and disadvantages, as outlined by (Putu & Agung, 2021). On the positive side, flashcards offer several advantages. First, they help students retain and recall what they have learned by providing a visual and interactive tool that reinforces memory and vocabulary retention. Second, flashcards add variety to teaching methods, allowing teachers to not only teach verbally, but also engage students in forming their own sentences and expressions, thereby encouraging active language use and creativity. Third, due to their compact size, flashcards are highly portable and convenient for students, allowing them to take advantage of free time to practice vocabulary, making learning more flexible and accessible. Finally, flashcards serve as an effective tool for reviewing and refreshing students' understanding of previous lessons before delving into new material, facilitating quick and efficient review and improving overall comprehension.

However, there are certain disadvantages associated with the use of flashcards. First, they may not be appropriate for all levels of learners. While highly effective for learners who are in the process of building their vocabulary, flashcards may offer limited benefits to individuals who already have an extensive vocabulary. Second, the creation and use of flashcards can be time consuming for teachers. Preparing a set of flashcards, including selecting appropriate content and images, can be a labor-intensive task. In addition, incorporating flashcards into lessons may require dedicated presentation time, which is not always feasible within the constraints of a busy classroom. In conclusion, while flashcards are a valuable instructional tool for vocabulary acquisition and retention, their effectiveness may vary depending on the proficiency level of the learner, and their creation and integration into the classroom may require a considerable amount of time and effort on the part of the teacher (Putu & Agung, 2021). (Putu & Agung, 2021)

3. Previous Research Studies

The research question addressed in this study is not a new one in the field of education, especially in the context of teaching and learning to improve students' language skills and proficiency. Previous research studies, such as (Wulandari, 2017) with the dissertation entitled "The Use of Bilingual Flash Cards in Teaching English Vocabulary (A Pre-Experimental Research at the Eighth Grade Students of MTs Mannilingi Bulu-Bulu Jeneponto)," have explored this issue. Wulandari's findings

showed that the use of bilingual flashcards in the classroom significantly improved the vocabulary of the eighth grade students of MTs Mannilingi Bulu-Bulu.

Another relevant study conducted by (Rahmasari, 2016) titled "The Use of Flashcards in Teaching Vocabulary at Fourth Grade Students of SDN Sukosari 02 Dagangan Madiun" highlighted the strengths of using flashcards in teaching vocabulary. Rahmasari found that flashcards made a significant contribution to students' vocabulary competence and achievement, with almost no identified weaknesses when used with elementary school students.

In addition, (Razaq, 2022) in his research entitled "The Use of Flashcards to Improve Students' Vocabulary Achievement," reported findings that indicated the effective use of flashcards in improving students' vocabulary achievement.

Considered as a whole, these previous research findings support the notion that the use of flashcards is an effective method for teaching and improving vocabulary mastery among students at various educational levels, including elementary, junior, and senior high school. Therefore, it is recommended that flashcards be considered as a valuable teaching and learning tool in the language classroom, especially in the English language classroom. These research findings also open the door for further and more extensive studies in different fields and with different samples, thus broadening the scope of research in this area.

### **C. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study adopts a quantitative research approach using the Class Action Research (CAR) design, which follows a structured process outlined by Kemmis and Tanggart that includes four distinct phases: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Together, these phases form a research cycle. Data collection primarily involves pre-tests, post-test 1, and post-test 2 to assess the effectiveness of using flashcards as an instructional tool to improve students' vocabulary.

Arikunto provides a detailed description of each phase of the CAR (Arikunto, 2006) :

- 1) Planning, in this first phase, the researcher carefully designs the research, formulates action plans, creates observation sheets, and develops tests to be used in subsequent phases;
- 2) Implementation, the second stage involves the practical implementation of the designed content and action plans in the classroom. During this phase, it is imperative that the teacher adheres to the planned actions while ensuring that the implementation remains consistent with the original design;
- 3) Observation, this activities are conducted by designated observers as the action unfolds. In addition, the

teacher directly involved in the action keeps records of ongoing developments. These observations and notes contribute to the collection of accurate data, which is essential for improving subsequent cycles; 4) Reflection, the fourth stage involves post-action reflection, during which the teacher and observers engage in discussions to evaluate the implementation of the action plan and its outcomes. The inquiry is conducted over two cycles, with the possibility of additional cycles or remediation if the desired intervention or improvement is not achieved after the third cycle. This structured approach ensures a comprehensive assessment of the impact of flashcards on vocabulary improvement in the classroom context.

This study focuses on the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu, with a total population of 190 students in six classes. For the research, a convenience sampling method was used, resulting in the selection of class X-1 as the sample group, consisting of 30 students.

Data collection for this study involved two main methods, they are vocabulary tests and interviews with students from SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu. The vocabulary tests included a pre-test and a post-test, each consisting of 20 items to measure the students' vocabulary proficiency before and after the intervention. In addition, interviews were conducted with the students to understand their difficulties with personal pronouns and their perceptions of using flashcards to learn English vocabulary. These methods were used to collect comprehensive data on the effectiveness of flashcards in vocabulary instruction.

The data collected in this research was analyzed with the aim of assessing the students' vocabulary scores in the pre-test, post-test 1 (Cycle 1), and post-test 2 (Cycle 2). This analysis aimed to determine the extent of improvement in students' vocabulary scores. The data analysis was descriptive using quantitative methods.

After collecting the necessary data from the field, the researcher used statistical analysis techniques to evaluate the effectiveness of using flashcards as an instructional strategy for improving students' vocabulary mastery.

In order to assess the overall performance of students in vocabulary mastery during each cycle, the researcher calculated the average vocabulary score per action within a cycle using Anas Sudijono's formula:

$$M_x = \frac{\sum X}{N} \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where:

$M_x$  = Mean

X = Individual score

N = number of students

In addition, the researcher determined the class percentage of students who scored above the pass mark (KKM) of 75 using (Sudijono, 2016)'s formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100 \% \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Where:

P = The class percentage

F = Total percentage score

N = Number of students

In addition, the researcher analyzed the improvement in student scores from pre-test to post-test in both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 using (Meltzer, 2002)'s formula:

$$P = \frac{y - y_1}{y} \times 100 \% \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

Where:

P = percentage of student improvement

y = pre-test score

y<sub>1</sub> = Post-test score

The researcher established specific criteria to evaluate the success of the instructional intervention using flashcards. These criteria included evaluating the students' performance based on their final vocabulary scores, with the goal of having 75% of the students score at least 75. In addition, the evaluation took into account the students' improvement in vocabulary mastery, with the goal of having 30% of the students reach the target score of 75. These criteria served as essential benchmarks for evaluating the effectiveness of using flashcards as an instructional strategy to improve students' vocabulary skills.

#### **D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

##### **1. The Result of Research**

###### **a. The Pre-Observation**

The research process followed a systematic approach based on the Class Action Research (CAR) methodology, which includes phases such as planning, implementation, observation, and reflection as developed by (Stephen Kemmis & Robin McTaggart, 2014). To initiate the research, the author conducted pre-observation activities in SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu to assess the feasibility of conducting research in the school. In this stage, the author met with the curriculum

teacher and the English teacher in charge of the research to get their approval. After receiving approval, the researcher inquired about the use of flashcards in teaching vocabulary to tenth grade students and found that it was included in the English teacher's curriculum. Subsequently, the researcher conducted classroom observations and had the opportunity to select a tenth grade class of 30 students as the research sample. In the first observation, the author introduced the concept of using flashcards to improve vocabulary, especially for students who were new to vocabulary learning. This meeting served as the only direct interaction between the author and the students who would participate in the study.

#### b. The Pre-Test

In the pretest phase of the research, students were administered a vocabulary assessment to determine their initial vocabulary knowledge. The pre-test was designed to assess the students' vocabulary knowledge prior to implementing the Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach with flashcards. Only one session was conducted for the pretest. It used a multiple-choice test format consisting of 20 questions, with each question scored 0.5. The pre-test served as a baseline assessment to determine the students' prior knowledge of English vocabulary.

After scoring the pre-test, it was found that the highest score achieved by a student was 75, while the lowest score was 20. The mean score for the pre-test data was calculated to be 43.67. Only seven students scored above the minimum completeness criteria (KKM), while the remaining 23 students scored below the KKM.

To further analyze the pretest results, the data was presented in a frequency and percentage distribution table. This table showed that the majority of the students scored below the KKM, with different scores distributed among the students.

Table 1

The frequency and percentage distribution of the students' vocabulary  
Scores of pre-tests

No	Scores	Frequency	Percentages
1	20	5	16.67%
2	25	3	10%
3	35	4	13.33%

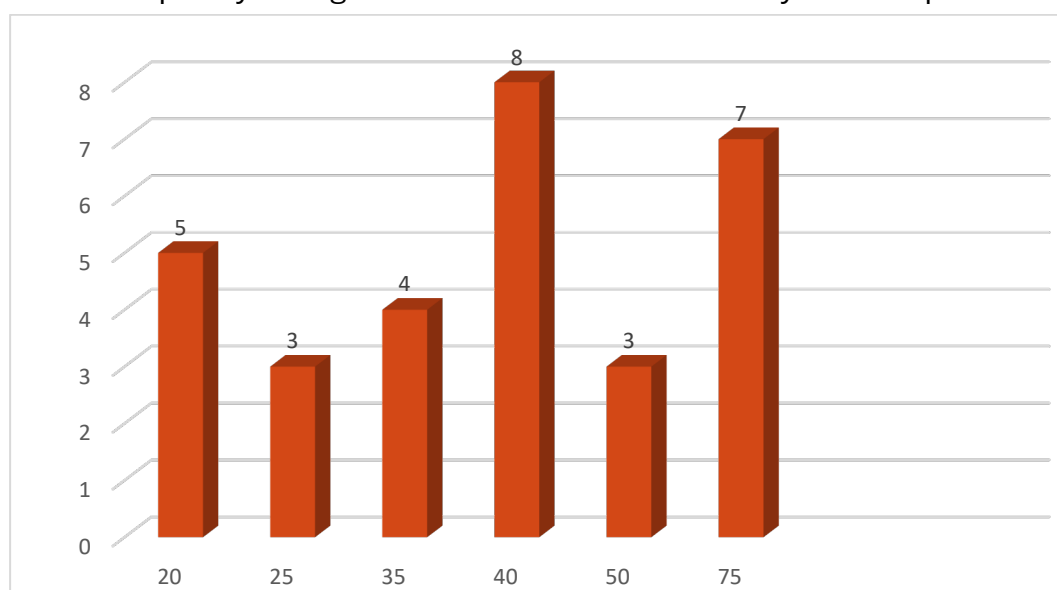
4	40	8	26.67%
5	50	3	10%
6	75	7	23.33%
Total		30	100 %

Source: Data Processing 2023

Based on this data, a histogram graph was created to illustrate the distribution of students' pretest scores.

Figure 1

The frequency histogram of the students' vocabulary score in pre-test



In conclusion, the pre-test results indicated that, on average, students had a limited understanding of vocabulary prior to the introduction of the flashcards-based instructional approach. Only 23.33% of the students were able to meet the minimum completeness criteria (KKM) based on their pre-test scores.

#### c. Finding on Cycle 1

In the planning phase, the researcher develops a comprehensive plan of action to be implemented in the classroom with the target students. Materials for the Cycle One post-test are prepared and the necessary data collection instruments are prepared to assess any improvement in student scores from pre-test to post-test.

The Action Phase involves the initiation of Cycle One after an initial observation and pretest session has revealed that the students' vocabulary proficiency is still categorized as not proficient. During this phase, the researcher introduces flashcards with different vocabulary words to the students. Students engage in learning these vocabulary words using flashcards as a teaching tool. The process includes group

activities where students read and translate the words from the flashcards based on an English text. Students are also given the opportunity to ask questions, limited to a maximum of five vocabulary words, to clarify any difficulties. Students are then given a questionnaire consisting of 30 questions related to the flashcards, each question worth 0.5 marks.

The observation phase involves monitoring and evaluating how the students respond to the teaching approach, specifically their understanding and progress after being introduced to the flashcards. The pre-test in the first cycle is carried out under favourable conditions and significant progress is observed. However, it is acknowledged that some students may still not fully grasp the concepts.

In the reflection phase, the researcher concludes that despite some progress in cycle one, a significant number of students still do not fully comprehend the material. The results indicate that only 46.67% of the students passed the minimum mastery criterion on the first cycle pretest. In light of these results, the researcher decides to administer a pretest for cycle two to further address the students' vocabulary challenges.

#### d. Finding on Cycle 2

In the planning phase of Cycle 2, after conducting three meetings that included observation, pre-test, and post-test sessions of Cycle 1, it became clear that the students still had limited understanding of the research and had not fully mastered the English vocabulary using flashcards. Therefore, the author designed a plan to further improve their vocabulary using different types of flashcards to meet the students' needs for vocabulary improvement. A post-test in Cycle 2 was designed to determine if the students' vocabulary could be improved to a level where they would meet the minimum mastery criteria.

During the action phase, because the average scores on the Cycle 1 posttest were still below the desired level, the author decided to administer the Cycle 2 posttest. In this phase, the author wanted to create a positive and enjoyable learning experience for the students who had participated in the study. Various flashcards with different vocabulary words were provided, and the students engaged in interactive English learning activities. The author read the words from the flashcards aloud to ensure that the students understood the meanings. Discussions were then held to explore the meanings of the words. Students were presented with short English sentences

and their comprehension was assessed by asking about 10 vocabulary words related to the flashcard vocabulary. Remarkable progress was observed in post-test cycle 2, with the same set of 20 questions as in cycle 1, each worth 0.5 marks.

In the observation phase, the author closely monitored how the students responded to the teaching approach and assessed their understanding after explanations about the use of flashcards in English class. The pretest in Cycle 2 was conducted under favorable conditions and remarkable progress was observed.

In the reflective phase, the author concluded that many students demonstrated a strong understanding of the material during the pretest in Cycle 2. As a result, 83.33% of the students scored above the minimum mastery criteria. It was evident that students had improved significantly and expanded their vocabulary over the course of the study.

#### e. The Result of Implementation The Classroom Action Research (CAR)

In the post-test cycle 1 after the implementation of flashcards in teaching vocabulary to tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu for the academic year 2022-2023, the highest post-test score was 85, while the lowest score was 45. The Cycle 1 post-test used a multiple-choice format with 20 questions, each worth 0.5 points. Scores varied among students, with the lowest score being 45 and the highest being 85. The total score of all students was 2040 points. The average vocabulary score (M) for this first post-test cycle was calculated using the formula (1). This calculation yielded an average score of 68.00, which reflects the overall performance of students on this test. Using the collected data, the researcher can calculate the percentages of students' vocabulary scores in post-test cycle one, which are shown in the following table:

Table 2  
The Frequency and Percentage Distribution  
of the students' Vocabulary Score of Post-test Cycle 1

No	Scores	Frequency	Percentages
1	20	5	16.67%
2	25	3	10%
3	35	4	13.33%
4	40	8	26.67%
5	50	3	10%



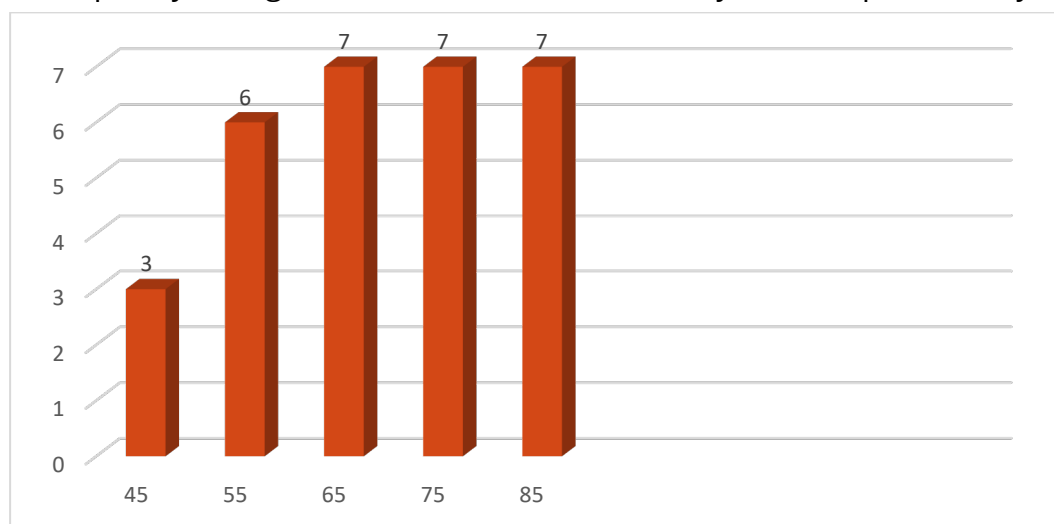
6	75	7	23.33%
Total		30	100 %

Source: Data Processing 2023

Based on the table above, a histogram chart can be created of the students' vocabulary score in post-test cycle 1.

Figure 2

The frequency histogram of the students' vocabulary score of post-test cycle 1



Based on the calculations, the average score of the students' vocabulary in post-test cycle one is 68.00. This indicates an improvement in the students' vocabulary from the pre-test with a difference of 24.33 points ( $68.00 - 43.67 = 24.33$ ). In order to determine the percentage of students who passed the minimum criteria (KKM), the author uses the formula (2); where the calculation shows that 46.67% of the students passed the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM).

In addition, the percentage increase in students' average scores from the pre-test to the post-test of Cycle 1 was calculated using formula (3). The percentage of improvement in students' mean scores from pretest to posttest cycle 1 is 55.7%, which does not meet the 70% improvement criteria set for the research to be considered successful. Additional steps are needed to reach the desired level of improvement.

In the post-test cycle 2 after the implementation of flashcards in teaching vocabulary to tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu for the academic year 2022-2023, the highest post-test score was 95, while the lowest score was 60. The post-test cycle 2 used a multiple-choice test format with a total of 20 questions, with each question worth 0.5 points.

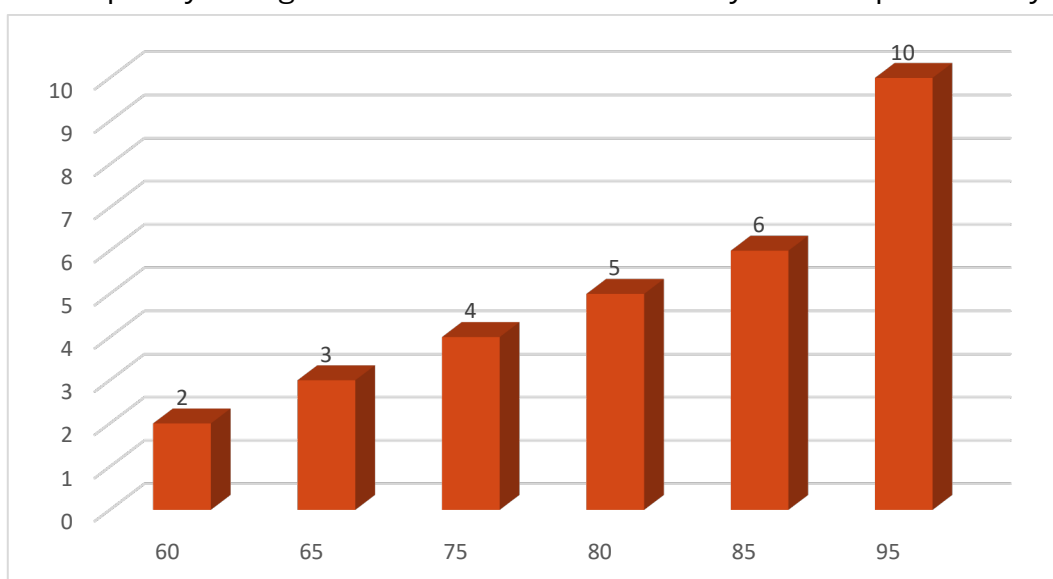
For the second post-test cycle, the mean vocabulary score of the students was calculated using formula (1). In this case, the total sum of the scores was 2475, and with 30 students participating, the calculation resulted in an average score of 82.5. This indicates an improvement in the students' vocabulary skills as measured in the second cycle of the post-test, highlighting their progress in learning and understanding vocabulary. Using the collected data, the researcher can calculate the percentages of students' vocabulary scores in post-test cycle two, which are shown in the following table:

Table 3  
 The Frequency and Percentage Distribution  
 of The Students' Vocabulary Score of Post-test Cycle 2

No	Scores	Frequency	Percentages
1	65	3	10%
2	75	4	13.33%
3	80	5	16.67%
4	85	6	20%
5	95	10	33.33%
6	65	3	10%
Total		30	100 %

Based on the table 3, a histogram graph of the students' vocabulary scores in post-test cycle 2 can be created.

Figure 3  
 The frequency histogram of the students' vocabulary score of post-test cycle 2



Based on the data provided, the researcher proceeded to calculate the class percentage of students who successfully met the minimal completeness criteria (KKM) using the formula (2). The calculation shows that 83.33% of the students in the class successfully met the minimal completeness criteria (KKM). This indicates a significant proportion of students who performed well and met the required standards.

The percentage increase in students' vocabulary test scores between Pre-Test and Post-Test 2, calculated using the provided formula (3). The percentage of improvement in the students' mean score from pretest to posttest cycle 2 is 88.9%, which exceeds the 70% improvement criterion set for the research to be considered successful. Therefore, the CAR is considered successful and the cycle of the CAR is completed.

The hypothesis of this research that there would be a significant improvement in students' vocabulary when taught with flashcards was tested and accepted. The analysis of the data showed that the mean score of the students in post-test 2 showed a higher improvement compared to the mean score in post-test 1, with a percentage of 88.9%. This result exceeds the criterion for success of the intervention, which was set at 70%. Therefore, it can be concluded that the hypothesis "There is a significant improvement in students' vocabulary when taught with flashcards" is accepted.

## 2. The Discussion

The use of flashcards in vocabulary instruction has been recognized as an effective technique, supported by the results of hypothesis testing and effect size calculations. Although flashcards were not originally designed for vocabulary instruction, they can be successfully used in school settings to increase students' enthusiasm for learning vocabulary. Initially, students may find this method unfamiliar, but as they engage with it, they become more active participants in the learning process.

The hypothesis of a significant improvement in students' vocabulary mastery through flashcard-based instruction is supported by data analysis. The pre-test results showed an average score of 43.67, which is considered low since the minimum standard set by the teacher is 75. Subsequent post-tests showed an increase in scores. Post-test cycle 1 had a mean score of 68.00, indicating improvement but still below the minimum standard. However, post-test cycle 2

yielded the highest average score of 82.5, indicating significant improvement. The percentage increase from pre-test to post-test cycle 2 was 88.9%, meeting the CAR success criteria of 70%, indicating the effectiveness of the method.

Previous studies support these results. (Razaq, 2022) found that flashcards had a positive effect on the vocabulary of the third semester of English education at IAI As'adiyah Sengkang. Furthermore, (Sitompul, 2013) found that the use of flashcards improved students' vocabulary mastery and made English learning more engaging. Similarly, (Matruty & Que, 2021) found that flashcards were an effective tool for vocabulary development, especially for young learners.

This research highlights the effectiveness of flashcards in improving students' vocabulary mastery. It promotes attention, active participation, and creativity in the learning process, making vocabulary acquisition more enjoyable for students.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, after conducting a comprehensive statistical analysis, several key findings and recommendations have emerged from this study. First, prior to the implementation of flashcards in the classroom, students' vocabulary scores were considered poor, with an average pre-test score of 43.67. However, after using Flashcards in both cycles one and two, the students' vocabulary scores improved significantly and reached the proficient category, as evidenced by the average post-test scores of 68.00 and 82.5, respectively. Second, it is clear that the use of flashcards in the classroom is effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery, as evidenced by the significant increase in mean scores from 43.67 to 82.5, an improvement of 38.9 points. Third, an impressive 88.9% of tenth grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Padang Bolak Julu for the academic year 2022 - 2023 successfully achieved the Minimum Competency Criteria (KKM) by the end of the research cycle. Fourth, the research shows a significant effectiveness of flashcards in increasing students' vocabulary, with a remarkable 88.9% increase in vocabulary test scores between pre-test and post-test cycle 2. Fifth, the research hypothesis predicting the positive impact of flashcards on vocabulary instruction was empirically validated and accepted.

In light of these findings, several suggestions can be made: English teachers should consider incorporating the flashcards technique into their teaching methods to stimulate students' interest in learning vocabulary and to create a more engaging and effective learning environment. Students are encouraged to recognize the value of flashcards as a valuable tool for enhancing vocabulary mastery and to embrace this medium for

improving their language skills and expanding their vocabulary. Future researchers should further explore the study of flashcards as an instructional strategy, either by applying or adapting this technique for their own research, using this study as a reference and building on its findings. In addition, for students who have not yet reached the KKM, it is advisable to continue using the flashcards method to further improve their vocabulary skills, as this research has shown that nearly 70% of the students reached the KKM after implementing flashcards as a means of improving vocabulary skills.

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