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The Use of Flashcards Through *Umbul* Game in Learning Vocabulary: Is It Effective?

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Abstract. Vocabulary is the basic thing needed to learn the foreign language. It is wording that people have to know to communicate well, both in written and spoken structures, especially for young learners. Children's language development depends on their vocabulary, which has an impact on their academic performance. This study aimed to understand why first-grade elementary students struggle with English vocabulary in the curriculum. The primary goal was to determine if using flashcards with the *Umbul* game improved English vocabulary for first-grade students. The design of the research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). There are four fundamental processes in Classroom Action Research (CAR). Those are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. In accordance with planning, the researchers prepare teaching kits needed to take action, such as: lesson plans, observation sheet, materials to be used in the classroom action, and evaluation sheet. In terms of acting, researchers implement the plan after preparing lesson plans, materials and evaluations. In this research, the researchers apply flashcards through *Umbul* games in teaching vocabulary. The researchers also give the post-test. Concerning observing, the researchers observe the process of teaching and learning activity. The researcher also makes result sheet to take note the information that occur during the activity. Regarding reflection, the researchers reflect, evaluate, and describe to improve the condition in the next cycle. The subjects were first-grade students from SD Pangudi Luhur Don Bosko Semarang participated in class I-C research projects. In this study, observation and evaluation sheet were applied as instruments. On the other hand, the information was obtained from observation and evaluation sheets. Information examined throughout the study was quantitative. The data was collected, and then it was examined by the researchers. The findings indicate a significant increase in first-grade students' motivation to learn English vocabulary, from 7% before

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to 15% after using flashcards. After implementing the flashcards through the *Umbul* game, the statistics indicated that students were able to acquire vocabulary with ease and were actively engaged in the teaching-learning process in the classroom. With the use of flashcards through *Umbul* games, students become more engaged in their studies and are more motivated to learn English. The students will have opportunities to improve their English by employing this strategy. Additionally, the English teacher can provide up chances for student participation in class activities by using flashcards as illustrated media. Hopefully, these findings can serve as a reference for future research.

Keywords: Learning Media, Flashcards, Game, Vocabulary.

Introduction

The *Merdeka* Curriculum provides an 'Independent Study Program' to schools to enhance the learning process. In the *Merdeka* Curriculum, teachers are given the freedom to compile and design the English curriculum that will be taught to students, which is adapted to school conditions. Curriculum and learning can be developed and managed by the school to meet the needs of the students and the education unit (Kemendikbud, 2022a). The greatest benefit of this curriculum is the freedom for teachers to create innovative teaching methods.

Teachers can adjust their approach based on students' learning styles, considering the needs of each student during the process of teaching and learning. Flexibly, teachers are capable of providing more interesting and relevant learning experiences, integrating local elements such as folklore or local cultural riches into English learning. This not only makes the material more meaningful for students but also increases their engagement in the process of learning. Moreover, it can increase students' comprehension of the subject matter that will be conveyed by the teacher.

The *Merdeka* Curriculum encourages teachers to foster creativity, innovation, and independence in students through diverse learning methods, especially in English. By the variation of the methods, it will increase students' skills and English comprehension. By the variation of the methods, it will increase students' skills and English comprehension. The variety of the learning methods will also attract students' attention so that they want to learn English better.

English is one of the subjects taught to improve students' skills at every level of school. English is also said to be a means of communication. Out of the 4.000 to 5.000 living languages, English is by far the most extensively used, according to Broughton et al. (2003:1). Consequently, it is used by people in numerous nations. It is extensively utilized in a variety of contexts and fields, such as politics, economics, knowledge, etc. We can communicate with people round the world using English. Everyone all around the world uses and learns English as a global language. Speaking with people from other nations requires the use of an international language, such as English (Permai et al., 2021; Sirivedin et al., 2018; Vonti & Rahmah, 2019). In Indonesia, English is a foreign language. The students from elementary school to senior high school start learning English. From elementary school on up to higher education, it is taught as a formal subject (Khusniyah & Hakim, 2019; Saraswati et al., 2020; Trisnanti et al., 2018; Wahyudin et al., 2020).

Vocabulary is another important aspect of English that students must learn in elementary school. Developing a meaningful vocabulary is essential to studying a foreign language in elementary school (Lynne Cameroon, 2001). Vocabulary is the basic thing needed to learn the foreign language. Vocabulary is a fundamental aspect of language proficiency and forms a large part of the foundation for how effectively students speak, listen, read, and write, according to Richard (2002), cited in Hamer and Rohimajaya (2018). The assertion made by Fries (1975), as referenced by Rahmawati and Utami (2019), that the basis for language acquisition is a strong vocabulary. Vocabulary comprises content words, which can be nouns, adjectives, verbs, or adverbs and are what give language meaning. It is words that people have to know to communicate well, both in written and spoken structures, especially for young learners. Children's language development depends on their vocabulary, which has an impact on their academic performance (Saeedakhtar et al., 2021; Tivnan, 2015). Moreover, one of the most important parts of language is vocabulary. Students are easily learning English by mastering vocabulary first. They will communicate with each other easily in English. One of the most important things about teaching language, according to Edward (1997:149), is vocabulary. Students need to constantly be picking up new words as they study sound systems and structures. That is the main reason why vocabulary is one of the important aspects of learning language. Increased vocabulary knowledge is one efficient technique to support learners in communication, as it is shown that a lack of vocabulary is the primary reason of learners' difficulties in communication activities and learning English (Celce & Murcia, 1991, quoted in Abbasian & Ghorbanpour, 2016).

Teachers must have appropriate media to make the students understand vocabulary easily. Flashcards are the media to facilitate them. Flashcards are the English learning media that have got illustrated pictures. They can be creative pictures to talk about the vocabulary. According to Musyaffa (2020), flashcards are large-sized cards with words or images on somewhat thicker A4 paper. Young learners can acquire English vocabulary more efficiently when they use flashcards. Flashcards will be a great aid in the teaching-learning process and will help to enhance the way the lesson is presented. Flashcards are the media used in the teaching and learning process (Harefa, 2022). Children can learn to correlate new words with their meanings by using basic pictures on flashcards (Chen & Chan, 2019; Habibi, 2017). Flashcards make it easier for students to memorize vocabulary easily.

SD PL Don Bosko Semarang is one of the private elementary schools under the authority of Pangudi Luhur Foundation which has implemented the *Merdeka* Curriculum. With this curriculum, English teachers in SD PL Don Bosko Semarang have many opportunities to develop varied learning methods so that students will be involved in learning. One method of learning English using *Merdeka* curriculum in SD PL Don Bosko is with flashcards. Based on this study, students' enthusiasm and writing skills might both be enhanced by flashcards (Anggraini et al., 2019; Ying et al., 2021). According to earlier studies, the teaching and learning process benefited greatly from the use of flashcards as a visual learning tool (Fidiyanti, 2020; Fitriyana et al., 2020; Putra et al., 2018; Trisnanti et al., 2018). Children have found that using flashcards to learn new vocabulary and

knowledge is an excellent way to learn in a broader educational setting (Kornell, 2009 & Nation, 2011).

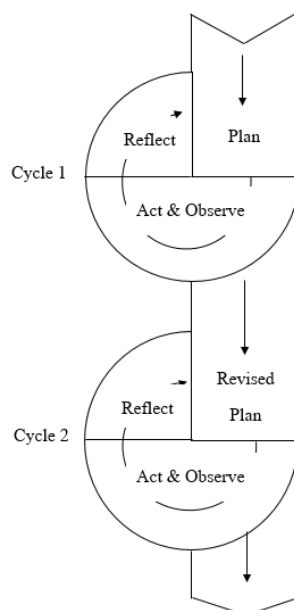
This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of integrating flashcards with the Umbul game to enhance vocabulary acquisition among first-grade students. The researchers modified the use of flashcards that could be used through traditional game named *Umbul* game. The *Umbul* game, nowadays, is popular game among elementary students. They like to play it because they like the picture on the cards and they can have fun competition using those cards. They throw up the cards together and they decide that the card opened is the winner. They mention the word from the card opened. Through the *Umbul* game and the use of flashcards, it is possible for students to get more motivated to study English and expand their vocabulary. Furthermore, the students can also memorize the vocabulary easily through this game. Concerning to the previous explanations, the researchers wanted to identify whether or not the use of flashcard through *Umbul* game.

In this research the flashcards were unique. Students customized the flashcards by themselves. They cut picture based on the vocabulary then they stuck it on colourful piece of 5 x 8 cm paper. After that they write the name of the picture underneath it. Students produced four sets of flashcards. After that, the pupils engage in the *Umbul* game. They mentioned the names of the pictures on the flashcards that were opened after flying up the cards. By sticking the picture and writing the name of the picture on the paper, students could imagine and memorize the vocabulary easily. Also, via the physical action of playing games, they might retain the terminology. The vocabulary knowledge and motivation of the 1st grade students at SD Pangudi Luhur Don Bosko Semarang may both be enhanced by this implementation.

Research Method

The study was carried out utilizing a quantitative methodology. However, throughout the procedure, the vocabulary mastering difficulty faced by the students at SD Pangudi Luhur Don Bosko Semarang is addressed by the researchers through the use of Classroom Action Research (CAR). Planning, acting, observing, and reflecting are four fundamental processes in a research cycle that comprise this action research (Kemmis and Mc. Taggart, 1998, as referenced in Burns, 2010). Here is an illustration of the cycle model.

Figure 1. Cyclical CAR design based on Kemmis & MacTaggart (1988, as cited in Burns, 2010)



In planning, the researchers prepare teaching kits needed to take action, such as: lesson plans, observation sheet, materials to be used in the classroom action, and evaluation sheet. After planning, the researchers do acting. The researchers implement the plan after preparing lesson plans, materials and evaluations. In this research, the researchers apply flashcards through *Umbul* games in teaching vocabulary. The researchers also give the post-test. Concerning observing, the researchers observe the process of teaching and learning activity. The researchers also make result sheet to take note the information that occur during the activity. Regarding reflection, the researchers reflect, evaluate, and describe to improve the condition in the next cycle.

The cycles spiral will reoccur until satisfactory results have been achieved and stop until the time is felt enough (Kemmis and Mc Taggart, 1998, as cited in Burns, 2010).

Table 1. The Implementation of the Classroom Action Research in this Research

	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
	The subject that will be covered at the meeting is explained by the teacher. The subject is then explained by the teacher using flashcards, where the vocabulary is mostly nouns.	In this cycle, the activities are nearly identical to those from the first cycle. An extra traditional game (<i>Umbul</i> game) will be added to the activity.
Planning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making teaching and learning guide for each meeting (Lesson Plan). 2. Preparing the observation form. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making teaching and learning guide for each meeting (Lesson Plan). 2. Preparing the observation form.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Preparing teaching aid (flashcards). 4. Preparing the first post test. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Preparing flashcards with additional game (<i>Umbul</i> Game). 4. Preparing the second post-test.
Acting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Pre-activity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greet the students as the class begins. 2. List or mark the students' attendance sheet. 3. Outlining the subject matter B. Main activity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introducing new words that are connected to the topics. 2. Students make notes for the vocabulary. 3. Request the students to pronounce and explain the words. 4. Ask some questions to the students about the material. 5. Give flashcards to students. 6. Ask students to mention the words based on the flashcards shown. C. Post-activity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resume the lesson. 2. Allow students to ask questions regarding the material. 3. Provide first post test. 4. Close the class. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Pre-activity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greet the students as the class begins. 2. List or mark the students' attendance sheet. 3. Outlining the subject matter B. Main activity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introducing new words that are connected to the topics. 2. Check the students' pronunciation skills for each word and see if they have any questions. 3. Ask some questions to the students about the material. 4. Give flashcards and implementing <i>Umbul</i> game. C. Post-activity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resume the lesson. 2. Allow students to ask question regarding the material. 3. Provide second post-test. 4. Close the class.
Observing	Research revealed that students would respond favorably to the treatment. Students' learning progress was determined using the first post-test results.	From the observation and evaluation sheet completed during the classroom action, the outcome of the activity was known. The differences between the results of the first and second post-tests were utilized to determine how many students had improved.
Reflecting	Through this procedure, the strengths and weaknesses of the activity might be determined by looking at the result of the planning, acting, and observing. In order to tackle the issue in the first cycle, the researchers utilized this result as input to decide whether to continue or change course.	The decision on whether or not to stop the activity could be made throughout this process. There won't be any additional treatments if the outcome meets the Minimum Passing Grade of 68. The researchers then give up on their research.

Subject of the Study

Students of SD Pangudi Luhur Don Bosko Semarang's first grade were the study's subjects. There were 27 students participated in class I-C research projects. The low degree of vocabulary knowledge among the students in class I-C was indicated by a few signs uncovered by the researcher. The followings are the signs:

- a) Students had trouble understanding some words.
- b) Students mispronounced some English words.
- c) Students struggled with spelling words correctly.
- d) Students struggled to utilize references correctly.

Furthermore, during the teaching-learning process, the issues also arose from the students' motivation. The signs include:

- a) Students occupied with conversations with friends during class.
- b) Students occupied with drawing pictures in their books.
- c) Students not actively participating in the learning process
- d) Some students disobeyed the teacher's instructions.

Instruments of the Research

The data that the researchers gathered for this study was quantitative data. It concerned the students' ratings on the assessment form. The researchers utilized the following instructional data in order to acquire the information:

a. Observation sheet

Activities of students were observed using an observation sheet. In addition, an observation sheet proved to be helpful in identifying the research's advantages and disadvantages during the process of teaching-learning. To make the observation more methodical, the researchers employed a checklist. Checklists are observations that include prepared lists of objects, as stated by Wina Sanjaya (2013: 274). The item's presence or absence can be specified by selecting "Yes" or "No," or the type or quantity of items can be indicated by selecting the relevant word or number.

b. Evaluation sheet

The student's aptitude was assessed using an evaluation form. By using the *Umbul* game with Flashcards, the researchers were able to determine the students' proficiency with vocabulary through this worksheet. The students' proficiency with vocabulary was assessed by the researchers using a paper test. The multiple choice and matching test was employed in this study. The exam was given twice by the researchers. The test was first administered before to the use of flash cards in the teaching and learning process. It was then administered by the researchers after the conclusion of the procedure, or following each cycle of using flash cards in the classroom.

Quantitative data was collected and analyzed by the researchers. Then the researchers used descriptive statistics to analyze the data from the students' written test results in order to determine the extent of the students' proficiency with vocabulary in English in the first grade. The researchers get the data from observation and evaluation sheets. In order to derive a legitimate result from the assessment sheet, they examined the quantitative data. The right response was assigned a score of 1 (one) and the incorrect response, a score of 0 (zero).

As Arikunto in Asrori (2020), analyzed and assessed the data using a formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100$$

In which:

P = Student learning activity percentage

F = The sum total of the learning activity level for students.

N = The sum total of the optimal degree of student learning activities

Moreover, the degree of accomplishment of the action is categorized by Asrori (2020) using a scale (%):

Table 2. Classification of Action Achievement

Title	Title
92-100	Very well
75-91	Good
50-74	Pretty good
25-49	Not good
0-24	Not enough

Analyzing Quantitative Data

Students' vocabulary is analyzed when doing quantitative data analysis. the information gleaned from the evaluation form. According to the formula suggested by Arikunto in Asrori (2020), the assessment sheet will analyze and score the students' work by calculating:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100$$

In which:

P = Score

F = Obtained score

N = Maximum scores

As the students' achievement criterion, the research will use a scale to classify the students' scores as follows:

Table 3. Scale of Students' Score

Score	Classification
96-100	Excellent
86-95	Very Good
76-85	Good
66-75	Fairly Good
56-65	Fair
36-55	Poor
0-35	Very Poor

Findings and Discussion

Cycle I

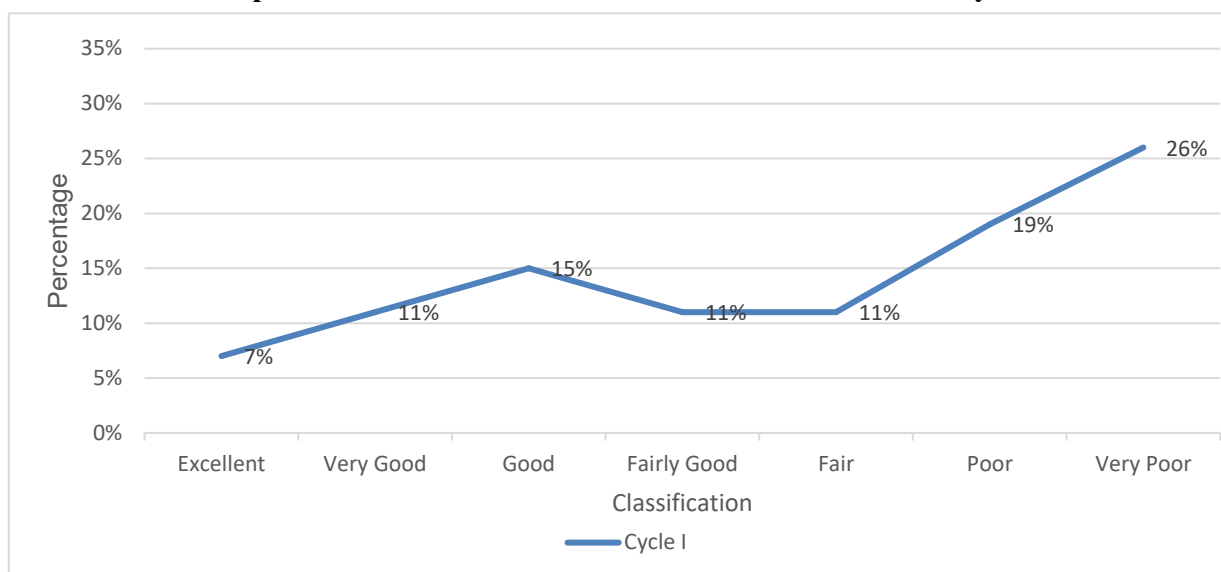
When it came to implementation, the researchers had everything ready for the teaching-learning process, including the lesson plan, syllabus, materials, attendance record, and observation sheet. Following the intervention, the researcher assessed how well the students had used flashcards to learn vocabulary related to descriptive texts, particularly those portraying animals. The pupils were given fifteen multiple-choice questions by the researchers. The evaluation's outcome is displayed in the following table:

Table 4. The Students' Performance in Mastering Vocabulary Using Flashcards in Cycle I

MPG	Score	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
68	96-100	Excellent	2	7%
	86-95	Very Good	3	11%
	76-85	Good	4	15%
	66-75	Fairly Good	3	11%
	56-65	Fair	3	11%
	36-55	Poor	5	19%
	0-35	Very Poor	7	26%
Total			27	100%

The previous table clarified why Cycle I students' attempts to memorize vocabulary through the use of flashcards failed. The minimum passing grade at the school, which was 68 points, was not met by the students. A total of 7 students (26%) were classified as extremely poor, 5 students (19%) as poor, 3 students (11%) as fair, 3 students (11%) as fairly good, 4 students (15%) as good, 3 students (11%) as very good, and 2 students (7%) as excellent. The students' average value came out to be 57.

The researchers came to the conclusion that, despite the use of flashcards to help students memorize vocabulary, the students' proficiency in Cycle I had not improved. By examining the average of the students' values, it was determined that the students could not have obtained the Minimum Passing Grade (MPG) of 68 in the English subject in the first grade. For this reason, the researcher chose to carry out cycle II research. This line graphic illustrates that the percentage of the very poor students' performance increases to 26%. The following line graphic displays the students' Cycle I performance results:

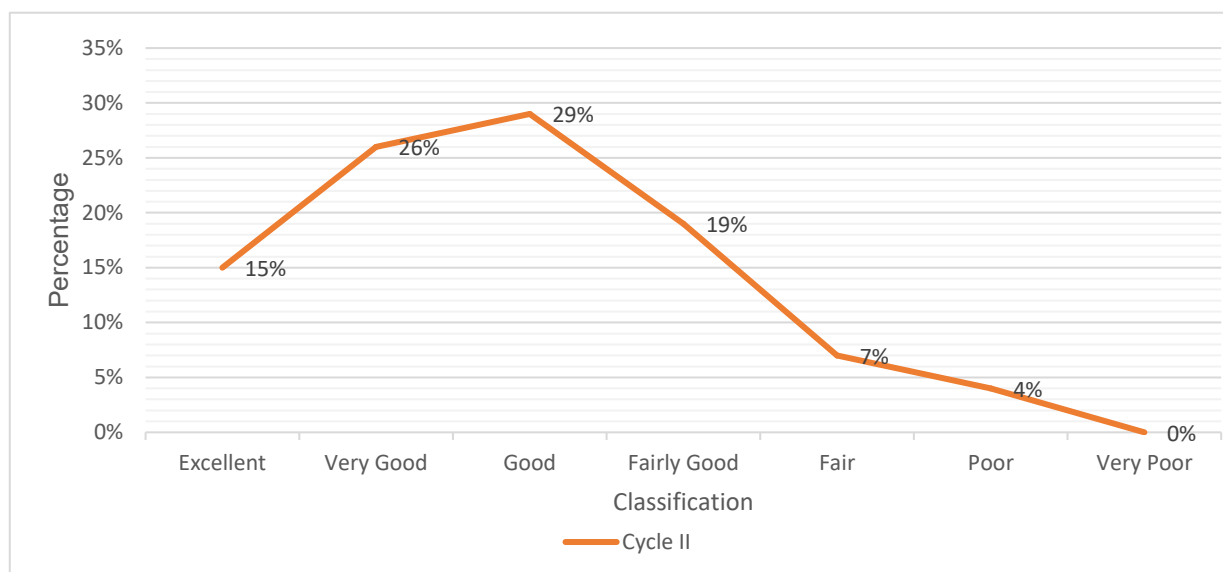
Graphic 1. The Result of the Students' Performance in Cycle I**Cycle II**

Similar to cycle I, the researcher completed cycle II with all the materials needed for the teaching-learning process, including the lesson plan, syllabus, attendance record, and observation sheet. However, utilizing the *Umbul* game, the researchers added a flashcard exercise to this session. The researcher assessed the students' performance using flashcards to learn vocabulary in descriptive texts, particularly those that described animals, after putting the activity into practice. Fifteen multiple-choice questions were presented to the students by the researchers. The subsequent table displays the outcome of their assessment:

Table 5. The Students' Performance in Mastering Vocabulary Using Flashcards through *Umbul* game in Cycle II

MPG	Score	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
68	96-100	Excellent	4	15%
	86-95	Very Good	7	26%
	76-85	Good	8	29%
	66-75	Fairly Good	5	19%
	56-65	Fair	2	7%
	36-55	Poor	1	4%
	0-35	Very Poor	-	0%
Total			27	100%

The students' mastery of vocabulary in reading allowed them to achieve the Minimum Passing Grade, which was 68 points, as demonstrated by the table above. No students were classified as extremely impoverished. 1 student (4%) as poor, 2 students (7%) as fair, 5 students (19%) as fairly good, 8 students (29%) were classified as good, 7 students (26%) as very good, and 4 students (15%) as excellent. The Minimum Passing Grade is achievable for any student. Students' values averaged out at 81. The line graphic illustrates that the percentage of the very poor students' performance declines to 0%. This is how it looks in the following line graphic:

Graphic 2. The Result of the Students' Performance in Cycle II

It was evident from this outcome that the first-grade children at SD Pangudi Luhur Don Bosko Semarang were able to master vocabulary through the use of flashcards. Because the outcome met the researcher's expectations, the study was completed, and a report would be produced.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the aim of this study is to enhance students' vocabulary mastery skills through the use of flashcards and the *Umbul* game. Every cycle of the research's results led to the conclusion that the pupils had improved. Cycle I to Cycle II saw an increase in improvement. In Cycle I, the students' average value came out to be 57. A total of 7 students (26%) were classified as extremely poor, 5 students (19%) as poor, 3 students (11%) as fair, 3 students (11%) as fairly good, 4 students (15%) as good, 3 students (11%) as very good, and 2 students (7%) as excellent. Since the outcome did not meet expectations, Cycle II of the research was conducted after Cycle I's shortcomings were examined. In Cycle II, students' values averaged out at 81. No students were classified as extremely impoverished. 1 student (4%) as poor, 2 students (7%) as fair, 5 students (19%) as fairly good, 8 students (29%) were classified as good, 7 students (26%) as very good, and 4 students (15%) as excellent. The Minimum Passing Grade is achievable for any student. Stated differently, the *Umbul* game enhanced students' vocabulary mastery through the use of flashcards.

With the use of flashcards through *Umbul* games, students become more engaged in their studies and are more motivated to learn English. The students will have opportunities to improve their English by employing this strategy. Additionally, the English teacher can provide up chances for student participation in class activities by using flashcards as illustrated media. Hopefully, these findings can serve as a reference for future research. Thus, it could be said that the students enjoyed in teaching-learning process.

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