

## IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY BY USING WORD SQUARE MEDIA

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this research is to find out whether using word square media can improve the vocabulary mastery of the eleventh-grade students of SMK Negeri 3 Metro. In this study, researchers conducted classroom action research (CAR) which was carried out in three cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The subjects of this study were 32 students of eleventh grade at SMK Negeri 3 Metro. In collecting data, researchers used pre-test, post-test 1, post-test 2, post-test 3, observing, interview, and questionnaire. The results of the study show that using Word square media can improve students' vocabulary mastery at eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro, this can be seen in the progress of the pre-test and post-test cycle 1 to cycle 3. the average of pre-test score was 42.31% and the post-test in cycle 1 was 61.37%, the average value in post-test 2 was 75.40% and the average score in cycle 3 was 81.37%. pre-test and post-test cycle 1 to post-test cycle 3 there was an increase of 5.97%. it means that the results of the post test have reached indicators of success that can be achieved on the results of this post-test. Students responses in using word square media that have been done can be seen that 93.45% of students gave responses very positive in learning using word square learning media and word square media can be said to be practical and easy to use for students, this can be seen from the enthusiasm of students and their spirits at the first time in using word square media.*

**Key Words:** Vocabulary Mastery, Word Square Media.

## Introduction

Vocabulary is a common word that is known and used by someone in language or in communication. Without vocabulary, we would not be able to communicate easily without knowing the words we want to use. So vocabulary can develop four skills in English, namely listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Vocabulary plays an important role in learning a foreign language. Especially in learning English vocabulary is an activity where researchers must have the ability to arrange and master vocabulary properly and correctly, so that readers can easily understand it.

**Table 1. Students' score of Vocabulary Mastery at the Eleventh Grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro**

No.	Category	Score	Students Frequency	Percentage
1.	High	80-85	2	6%
2.	Average	70-75	9	28%
3.	Low	10-65	21	65%
	Total		32	100%

*Source; The data from English Teacher of SMKN 3 METRO on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2022*

In the preliminary study, the researcher conducted a pre-survey and the researcher asked the English teacher for a list of values regarding vocabulary material in eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro on December 1, 2022. Based on the pre-survey above, it can be seen that 2 students scored 80-85 in the high category and received a percentage of 6%, then there were 9 students who scored 70-75 in the average category and received a percentage of 28%, and there were 21 students who received the value of 10-65 is in the low category and gets a percentage of 65%. So, the total students are still lacking in vocabulary mastery.

As said by (Lestari et al., 2013) Word Square is a learning model that combines the ability to answer questions with carefulness in matching answers to the answer boxes. It's similar to filling in a crossword puzzle, but the difference is that the answer is already there, but it's disguised by adding additional boxes with any disguised letters or distractors.

Therefore, with the problems and solutions above, the researcher conducted research on using word square media to improve students' vocabulary mastery with the aim that this research could be carried out as a solution to alleviate students' problems in vocabulary mastery. The researcher conducted a study entitled "Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery by Using Word Square Media at Eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro".

## Literature Review

Vocabulary Mastery According to Cameron (2001:78), vocabulary skill included: pronunciation, spelling, grammar and meaning. Pronunciation is one of the aspects that have a great influence of vocabulary. "Pronunciation is the way in which a particular person pronounces the word of a language" (Wehmeler, 2003:1057), Spelling Children also need to know the letters and syllables that make up the word that is called spelling. "Spelling is the act of forming words correctly from individual letter or the way that a word is spelt"

(Wehmeler, 2003:1293). Grammatical information is tied into words, and learning words can take students along the way into grammar. This suggests that if we give a high priority to vocabulary, we are not thereby abandoning grammar. (Cameron, 2001:72). Ur (1997:61) also points out that: The grammar of vocabulary need to be taught if this is not obviously covered by the grammatical rules. Meaning Nation and Cameron (2001:85) argue ways to explain the meaning of new words in the young learner classroom that is by using an object, a cut-out figure, gesture, performing and action, photograph, drawing or diagram on the board, and pictures from story books. Ur (1997:62) says that to find the meaning it can be done through translation that is word in learners' mother tongue that are equivalent in meaning to the item being taught. It can be concluded that pronunciation, spelling, grammar and meaning are the indicators of vocabulary mastery. Word Square is a medium used through Student Worksheets (LKPD), Word Square is in the form of letters arranged randomly and is the answer to the questions available in the LKPD (Amalia, Imanda, & Fakhrah, 2021).

## **Research Methods**

### **Design**

In the opinion of (Sukarsono et al., 2014) Classroom action research is a research conducted systematically reflective of the various actions taken by the teacher who is also a researcher, since the preparation of a plan to assessment of real actions in the classroom in the form of teaching and learning activities, to improve the learning conditions carried out.

According to Kurt Lewin in (Juanda, 2016) stated that there are four steps in conducting action research, namely: planning, action, observation and reflection. The cycle which consists of four steps, the explanation is as follows:

#### **Planning**

In this stage the researcher took several actions such as observing the learning process techniques used by the previous teacher, identifying inhibiting and facilitating factors in the previous learning process, formulating alternative actions to be taken, then finally preparing a learning plan. From the explanation above the researcher made a schedule, which first observed the condition of the school, class conditions and also students then school facilities, as well as the learning methods used in the class. after that, set learning objectives based on observations, as part of the learning plan.

#### **Acting**

Acting is the implementation of planning in class. At this stage, researchers must follow the program in planning. This stage is carried out by implementing a learning plan for teaching reading. The cycle begins with giving a pre-test to students. The pretest results will then be compared with the posttest results. The researcher presents the following research actions: 1) Giving a pre-test 2) Learning vocabulary using word square media 3) Providing opportunities for students to ask about difficulties or problems 4) Giving a post-test.

#### **Observing**

Observation is the process of researchers looking at learning methods and also gathering facts related to the impact of these actions. Then the researcher and the student's English teacher discussed the results of observations including what problems eleventh grade students had in understanding vocabulary and also looking for solutions to overcome these problems. To solve problems for students, researchers will record problems in the learning system

#### **Reflecting**

Reflecting is investigating the information that has been collected and if it fails then it will go to the next cycle stage. Research is said to be successful if 70% of students follow the learning method well and also provide appropriate responses to the teacher. Likewise, students increase their vocabulary scores by working on multiple choice and essay questions. The benchmark for success set by researchers is if 70% of students get the KKM score. If less than 70% of students can achieve the KKM score, it means the researcher must take action in the next cycle.

### **Subject or Participant**

The Subject of the Study this research is carried out in eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro for the 2022/2023 academic year with eleventh grade research topics including 32 students including 31 male students and 1 female student. The researcher selected this class to be the research subject due to the fact maximum of the eleventh grade students is much less motivated in learning English, and the predicted grades remains under the average.

### **Research Instrument**

#### **Test**

Test is some question items regarding the material that has been given to research subjects, to measure ability of students with inside the level of mastery of the material on the end learning.

#### **Observation**

Observation refers to a technique in which one or more people observe what happens in some real-life situation. It is used to evaluate an individual's overt behavior in controlled and uncontrolled situations. As a good research tool, observation requires good planning, adequate recording. When the researcher made observations of the teacher and students, the researcher made a checklist sheet to determine student learning activities.

#### **Interview**

Interview is an interaction process where the subject being interviewed provides the required information verbally in a face-to-face situation. Researchers conducted interviews with teachers and students about English language learning.

#### **Questionnaire**

Questionnaire is an instrument in research including a series of questions for the reason of gathering information from a respondent. This questionnaire is used to answer students' responses to the second problem formulation. This type of questionnaire is a type of closed questionnaire, which includes closed questions using Google Form.

### **Data Collecting Technique**

#### **Test**

For data collection with inside the shape of a test including a pre-test and post-test. The pre-test is carried out earlier than taking the action at the same time as the post-test is conducted after taking the action. Researchers will use the test used as an assessment.

#### **Pre-test**

The pre-test can be performed at some point of the primary meeting with the researcher to look how a lot of students understanding of learning. The test can be given approximately 90 minutes. The tests consist of multiple choice. For the question grid for multiple choice such as, identify and distinguish the types of part of speech, identify and understand a part of speech words, make simple sentences the usage of numerous types of a part of speech words.

#### **Post-test**

The post-test can be carried out at the final meeting in cycle 3, the post-test is the same as the pre-test.

#### **Observation**

In this research, researchers will observe teachers and students during the learning process takes place. In this study, researchers used a type of observation that can be done only by using a checklist in the space provided.

#### **Interview**

For data collecting in the form of interviews, the researcher interviewed teachers and students. The teachers were interviewed in the form of questions about students' abilities in learning English and what learning methods had been used by the teacher which caused these students to feel less active in learning, especially in vocabulary material. Then students were also interviewed about students' difficulties in learning English, especially in vocabulary.

#### **Questionnaire**

For data collecting in the form of a questionnaire, the researcher will give the questionnaire a question using the Google form, then the researcher will share the Google form link in the WA group. After that students are only asked to answer questions with two answer choices, namely in the form of yes or no.

#### **Data Analysis Technique**

All of the data would be collected by pre-test and post-test, the following procedure was used:

The researcher tried to get the score per action within one cycle. It was used to know how well students score as a whole on vocabulary skill. The count of the percentages of the score test by using the following formula (Sainuddin Anita Anggraeni, 2019):

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{students correct answer} \times 100}{\text{The Total of Number}}$$

The collection data from the students in answering the test , the researcher use formula to get the get the mean score of the students as follows (Tri, 2018):

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Note :

$$\bar{X} = \text{Mean or average score}$$

$$\sum X = \text{Total students score}$$

$N$  = Total number of students.

The research ertries to get the class percentage which pass the KKM (70) computing the frequency and the percentage of students score of the students as follow (Nurhalimah, 2020):

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

$P$  = The class percentage

$F$  = The number of correct answer

$N$  = The number of the question

Classification score evaluation

**Table 2. Classifying the score five levels classification**

No.	Classification	Score
1.	Very good	80-100
2.	Good	66-79
3.	Fair	56-65
4.	Poor	40-55
5.	Very poor	0-39

(Sainuddin Anita Anggraeni, 2019)

The researcher gets score from on cycle conducted in the research. It is to know how far the progress of the students in teaching and learning process. The researcher also used formula to find the final score based value KKM (70) of target score.

#### Observation Sheet

There are two kinds of observation sheets in data collection, namely teacher activities and student activities. During the observation, the researcher collected data on the teaching and learning process. that is what is taken from the observation sheet when teachers and students are in the teaching and learning process. The form of the word answers "yes" and "no". The situation observed was about using word square media in teaching vocabulary mastery and how to improve students while using word square media. The activity is continued by marking a checklist on each item.

#### Analyzing data from interview

Regarding the data from interview the researcher conduct analysis from Miles and Huberman (1994, p.10) in (Ansari, 2015) which divided of two components; data reduction and data display.

#### Data reduction

In the data reduction, the researcher reduced the data from interview in order to know participants' viewed from their explanation that related English vocabulary.

### Data display

In displaying the data from interview, the researcher displayed it in from of written data that has been reduced in order to make explanation participants' viewed from their explanation related to English vocabulary.

### Analyzing data from questionnaire

The data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed through calculating the percentage of each answer by following the formula, (Thahir, 2019):

$$\text{Percentage (\%)} = \frac{F}{N} (100)$$

Where :

P : Percentage

F : Frequency

N : Total of Number

100% : Fixed Number

The highest percentage of answers to each question is considered to determine students' responses in improving vocabulary.

### Finding

This research Classroom Action Research (CAR) which takes numerous weeks to complete, including the first meeting to conduct a pre-test. This study consisted of 3 cycles and every cycle was held in meetings. The pre-test is only given at the first meeting of the first cycle. Before giving treatment in the classroom action research or CAR, The researcher conducted a pre-test.

**Table 3. Frequency of the Students Score of Pre-test**

No	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percentage	Students Score	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Very good	80-100	0	0%	$\geq 70$	2	6.25%
2.	Good	66-79	4	12.5%			
3.	Fair	56-65	2	6.25%	$\leq 70$	30	93.75%
4	Poor	40-55	11	34.37%			
5.	Very poor	0-39	15	46.87%			
Total			32	100%		32	100%

Based on table 3, the results of the pre-test scores of students who did not complete the lowest score obtained have been 16 and the highest score was 72, the average value of the data was 42.31. It can be seen in the table above and the students' scores in the pre-test can be seen at a frequency of 4 out of 32 or 12.5% got good score, 2 out of 32 or 6.25% got fair score, 11 out of 32 or 34.37% got poor score, 15 out of 32 or 46.87% got very poor rating. None of the 32 students scored very good. The researcher found that the student's problem

was that students did not understand vocabulary mastery. This is reflected in the results of the pre-test scores that the students' vocabulary mastery is still very low.

### 1) The Result of Post-test in Cycle 1

**Table 4. Frequency of the Students Score of Post-test in Cycle 1**

No	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percentage	Students Score	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Very good	80-100	0	0%	$\geq 70$	4	12.5%
2.	Good	66-79	8	25%			
3.	Fair	56-65	21	65.62%	$\leq 70$	28	87.5%
4	Poor	40-55	3	9.37%			
5.	Very poor	0-39	0	0%			
Total			32	100%		32	100%

Based on table 4 the results of the post-test scores of students in cycle 1, 4 out of 32 or 12.5% of students who fulfill KKM 70 while less than 70 are 28 out of 32 or 87.5% of students. There were 8 out of 32 or 25% of students got good grades, 21 out of 32 or 65.62% of students got fair scores, 3 out of 32 or 9.37% of students got poor grades. Of the 32 students, none of them got very good and very poor grades. In addition, the average score of the data is 61.37. The lowest score obtained was 52 and the highest score was 76. The following is a table of students' post-test scores in cycle 1, which can be seen in the appendix.

### 1) The Result of Post-test in Cycle 2

**Table 5. Frequency of the Students Score of Post-test in Cycle 2**

No	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percentage	Students Score	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Very good	80-100	8	25%	$\geq 70$	27	84.37%
2.	Good	66-79	20	62.5%			
3.	Fair	56-65	4	12.5%	$\leq 70$	5	15.62%
4	Poor	40-55	0	0%			
5.	Very poor	0-39	0	0%			
Total			32	100%		32	100%

Based on table 5 the results of the post-test scores of students in cycle 2, 27 out of 32 or 84.37% of students who fulfill KKM 70 while less than 70 is 5 out of 32 or 15.62% of students. There were 8 out of 32 or 25% of students who scored very well, 20 out of 32 or 62.5% of students got good grades, 4 out of 32 or 12.5% of students got fair marks. Of the 32 students, none of them got poor or very poor grades. In addition, the average score of the data is 75.40. The lowest score obtained was 60 and the highest score was 88. The following is a table of student post-test scores in cycle 1 which can be seen in the attachment.



### 1) The Result Post-test of Cycle 3

**Table 6. Frequency of the Students Score of Post-test in Cycle 3**

No	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percentage	Students Score	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Very good	80-100	26	81.25%	$\geq 70$	31	96.87%
2.	Good	66-79	5	15.62%			
3.	Fair	56-65	1	3.12%	$\leq 70$	1	3.12%
4	Poor	40-55	0	0%			
5.	Very poor	0-39	0	0%			
Total			32	100%		32	100%

Based on table 6 the results of the post-test scores of students in cycle 3, 31 out of 32 or 96.87% of students fulfill the KKM, namely a score of 70 while less than a score of 70 is 1 out of 32 or 3.12% of students. There were 26 out of 32 or 81.25% of students got very good grades and 5 out of 32 or 15.62% of students got good grades, 1 out of 31 or 3.12% got fair scores, no 32 students got poor and very poor scores. The lowest score obtained by students was 64 while the highest score was 92 and the average value of the data was 81.37.

**Table 7 The Students' Average Progress of Pre-test , Post-test 1, Post-test 2, and Post-test 3**

Average	Pre-test	Post-test 1	Post-test 2	Post-test 3	Progress
	42.31	61.37	75.40	81.37	5.97

Based on the data above, it can be seen that the average progress of students on the pre-test and post-test in cycle 3, for an explanation of the average pre-test was 42.31, the score of post-test cycle 1 was 61.37, the score of post-test cycle 2 was 75.40, the score of post-test cycle 3 was 81.37. the score of progress from pre-test to post-test 3 was 5.97. That is, students' vocabulary mastery increases by using word square media in students' vocabulary mastery.

#### Students Responses Using Word Square Media

Based on the results of the questionnaire data distributed to students to find out student responses, using word square media. Then the results of student questionnaire data after using word square media that has been done can be seen that 93.45% of students gave responses very positive in learning by using word square learning media because the material presented is easily understood by students, so students can be motivated in learning and help students in the learning process.

As for the negative responses of students in using word square media in the learning process of vocabulary mastery, namely only 6.55%, where there were students who did not like English lessons, so they were less active in participating in the on going learning process.

So the responses of students in using word square media that has been done is very positive and and word square media can be said to be practical and easy to use for students,

which can be seen from the enthusiasm of students and their spirits when they first used word square media.

## **Discussion**

Vocabulary mastery can be improved by using Word Square media. Word square media has the benefit of helping students to practice increasing vocabulary. Therefore, it is proven that Word Square media can be an interesting medium for teaching students' vocabulary mastery.

### **Result of Students Learning**

According to (Aprianto, 2018) who stated that improvement is an effort made by learners (teachers) to help students to improve learning outcomes. Learning is said to improve if there is a change in the learning process, learning outcomes and quality of learning experience changes in quality.

As said by (Usman & Amin, 2020) Gain is the difference between the post-test and pre-test scores. Gain shows an increase in students' understanding or mastery of concepts after learning is carried out by the teacher.

#### **Result of students Pre-test**

In this phase, the researcher presented a pre-test to measure students' vocabulary abilities before carrying out the treatment. Researchers obtained data through tests in the form of multiple choices and essays about vocabulary in parts of speech material. Based on the pre-test results, it was found that 30 students (93.75%) were unsuccessful and 2 students (6.25%) were successful. So the average pre-test N-Gain is 42.31.

#### **Result of students Post-test 1**

In this research, to determine students' vocabulary abilities after carrying out the treatment, the researcher conducted post-test I. This was carried out on May 15 2023. Based on the results of the post-test, it was found that 28 students (87.5%) were unsuccessful and 4 students (12.5%) succeed. So the average result in post-test I was 61.37 and in pre-test 42.31, so there was an increase in N-Gain of 19.06. This means that the results of post test I research did not reach the success indicator because the success indicator requires 70% of students to pass the KKM.

#### **Result of students Post-test 2**

At this stage the researcher continued to cycle II because the results of cycle I were less successful. Researchers presented post-test II to measure students' vocabulary mastery abilities after implementing the treatment. Based on the results of post-test II, it was concluded that 26 students (84.36%) were successful and 5 other students (15.62%) were unsuccessful. The results of post test II obtained an average of 75.40, higher than post test I in cycle I, namely 61.37, so there was an increase in N-Gain of 14.03. This means that the research success indicator has been achieved, namely >70% of students obtained a score of 70.

#### **Result of students Post-test 3**

At this stage the researcher continued to cycle III because the results from cycle II were still not optimal. Researchers presented post-test III to measure students' vocabulary mastery abilities after implementing the treatment. Based on the results of post-test III, it was concluded that 31 students (96.87%) were successful and 1 other student (3.12%) was unsuccessful. From the results of post test III, the average was 81.37. Higher than post test II in cycle II, namely 75. 40. So the improvment between post-test II and post-test III N-Gain is 5.97. This means that the research success indicator has been achieved, namely >70% of

students got a score of 70. This shows that students' vocabulary mastery abilities have improvement.

### **Results of student responses using Word Square media**

According to (Yuliana, 2021) who stated that response is a reaction or dependent answer to this stimulus, a response only arises when the individual is faced with a stimulus that requires an individual reaction. A person's response can be in the form of good or bad, positive or negative, pleasant or unpleasant.

Based on the results of student responses after using word square media, it can be seen that 93.45% of students gave very positive responses in learning using word square media. The students' negative response to using word square media in the vocabulary mastery learning process was only 6.55%, where there were students who did not like English lessons so they were less active in participating in the ongoing learning process. So the student response in using word square media that has been carried out is very positive and word square media can be said to be practical and easy for students to use, this can be seen from the students' enthusiasm and their spirit when they first used word square media.

### **Comparison of Average Students' Progress on Pre-test, Post-test 1, Post-test 2, and Post-test**

**Table 13.**  
**Comparasion of Average Students' Progress of Pre-test , Post-test 1, Post-test 2, and Post-test 3**

<b>Average</b>	<b>Pre-test</b>	<b>Post-test 1</b>	<b>Post-test 2</b>	<b>Post-test 3</b>	<b>Progress</b>
	42.31	61.37	75.40	81.37	5.97

Based on the results of the pre-test, post-test I, post-test II and post-test III which have been researched, Word Square media can improve students' vocabulary mastery. Therefore, the researcher concluded that this research was successful because the success indicators in this research had been achieved.

In teaching vocabulary mastery to students at SMK Negeri 3 Metro, especially eleventh grade students, researchers chose Word Square media to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Researchers use this media to help students add new vocabulary in English. Apart from that, this media can make it easier for teachers to improve students' vocabulary mastery and make it easier for students to add new vocabulary. So it can be said that this media motivates students to add new English vocabulary that students have not understood before.

Based on the explanation from cycle I and cycle II, it can be seen that the use of Word Square media can improve students' vocabulary mastery. There was progress in students getting a score of >70 from the pre-test, 6.25% or 2 students, with an average pre-test N-Gain of 42.31. post-test I 12.5% or 4 students, the average result on post-test I was 61.37 and on the pre-test 42.31, resulting in an increase in N-Gain of 19.06. post-test II 84.36% or 26 students. The results of post-test II obtained an average of 75.40, higher than post-test I in cycle I, namely 61.37, resulting in an increase in N-Gain of 14.03 and post-test test III was 96.87% or

31 students. From the results of post test III the average was 81.37. Higher than post test II in cycle II, namely 75.40. so the increase in N-Gain between post test II and post test III is 5.97. It was concluded that there was an increase in student completion scores and the minimum number of students passing scores from pre-test, post-test I, post-test II to post-test III. From this explanation, the researcher concluded that the research was successful and could be stopped in cycle III because the success indicator of 70% of students who obtained a score of >70 was achieved.

### **Conclusion And Suggestion**

Researchers provide conclusions based on the formulation of research problems as follows: Word square media can improve students' vocabulary mastery at eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 3 Metro, this can be seen in the progress of the pre-test and post-test cycle 1 to cycle 3. the average pre-test score was 42.31% and the post-test in cycle 1 was 61.37%, the average value in post-test 2 was 75.40% and the average score in cycle 3 was 81.37%. pre-test and post-test cycle 1 to post-test cycle 3 there was an increase of 5.97%. it means that the results of the post test have reached indicators of success that can be achieved on the results of this post-test.

Students responses in using word square media that have been done can be seen that 93.45% of students gave responses very positive in learning using word square learning media and word square media can be said to be practical and easy to use for students, this can be seen from the enthusiasm of students and their spirits the first time using word square media.

For suggestion, For English teachers, It is recommended for English teachers to use non-monotonous media so students do not get bored and can make students more active. English teacher are better off use using word square media especially for learning vocabulary. For students, Students, suggested to be more active in the learning process in order to understand the material and improve learning outcomes, especially vocabulary mastery. For other researchers, it is recommended for other researchers to carry out further research on similar discussions, especially in using word square media in teaching vocabulary. This method is very important because it will provide researchers with knowledge and the benefits of using word square media in teaching vocabulary mastery.

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