

## VOCABULARY SELF-COLLECTION STRATEGY (VSS): AN EFFORT TO ENRICH STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY AT THE EIGHTH GRADE OF SMPN 1 SUNGGUMINASA

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### Abstract

This Classroom Action Research aims to enrich students' vocabulary mastery in the Eighth Grade of SMP Negeri 1 Sungguminasa using Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy. In this strategy, students find the meaning of difficult vocabulary that is important and interesting for them to know based on the topics that the teacher has given at the end of the previous lesson. The Classroom Action Research was carried out in two cycles which consisted of four stages, including planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects of this study were 30 students in VIII-E, consisting of 17 girls and 13 boys. The results of data analysis show that the average value of vocabulary mastery in cycle I is 67 and the average value of vocabulary mastery in cycle II is 94.3. The data results showed that the learning outcomes of vocabulary mastery in cycle I to cycle II experienced an increase of 27.3. Overall, this study showed that the learning outcomes of vocabulary mastery increased using Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy of VIII-E students at SMP Negeri 1 Sungguminasa. This strategy helps students to enhance their vocabulary mastery and self-directed study habits. In addition, they showed an increased interest in writing. It is recommended that English teachers should consider Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy to enrich students' vocabulary mastery.

**Keywords:** Classroom Action Research, Teaching Vocabulary, Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS)

## INTRODUCTION

Teaching English in Indonesia has been developed widely as an international language that is often used in the world as a means of communication. As global awareness grows, some individuals are interested in learning English. A person with strong language skills will take in and convey information more clearly, both in writing and verbally. The language skills that must be mastered to study English subjects are listening, reading, writing, and speaking. These four linguistic skills are intertwined. One skill depends on another skill. In junior high school, English is a compulsory subject. The purpose of learning English at school is to develop knowledge, language skills, and students' positive attitudes towards English (Sulaiman, 2015).

Language skills are determined by mastery of vocabulary. Vocabulary is a key element of communicative competence that must be acquired in all languages. The use of vocabulary greatly influences the mastery of language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Vocabulary is more than just a collection of words that we memorize and recognise, but also the learning process in assembling these words. In producing words, we need to have a collection of words to convey the meaning or concept we are trying to convey (Alqahtani, 2015). A student must actively processing vocabulary to get the greatest benefits. McKeown (2019) held the opinion that active processing is the manipulation of ideas surrounding words to increase and enhance understanding of the word, its uses, and its links to other words and situations. Vocabulary mastery is crucial in every stage of language development. The most

proficient learners have the most extensive vocabulary. Similarly, Khany (2014) stated that students who lack adequate vocabulary or word-learning strategies suffer throughout their academic careers. Therefore, the role of vocabulary is a main step in language learning that must be mastered by learners.

The researcher found that VIII-E students' learning interest in English was still low. They also lacked knowledge of the second form of a verb (V2) in past tense. It was only about a quarter of the class followed the lesson enthusiastically. Students encountered difficulties in understanding vocabulary in reading text. They struggled to remember new terms that had been taught. There were influenced by several reasons such as students have not practiced vocabulary in learning, difficult to understand vocabulary and word meaning, and some of them never learned English in elementary school. Students who lack a sufficient vocabulary and grammar skills not only struggle to communicate but also access information effectively. Thus, English class should provide appropriate learning strategies that attract and actively engage all students in their own learning.

Vocabulary is an essential component of language proficiency that significantly influences how well learners' abilities to listen, read, speak and write (Richard and Renandya, 2002). Passive vocabulary learning simply provides a basic understanding of new words. It is emphasized that teaching vocabulary is much more than simply words. Vocabulary entails lexical phrases as well as understanding of English vocabulary and how to learn and teach it, which is explored in the next chapter (Clouston, 2013). Vocabulary acquisition is essential for expressing our thoughts and emotions. Historically, it was assumed that teaching words is an important stage of language learning since languages are constructed on words (Thornbury, 2002). Furthermore, Mogadham (2012) put forward that it is crucial since lexical errors are the most common and they provide a significant barrier to communication. Mastering a language without words is nearly difficult; even human communication relies heavily on words. Richards and Renandya (2002) pointed out that students' expertise of vocabulary must include knowledge of synonyms, antonymic understanding, connections, and how to outline words in context to comprehend an English passage. Students' vocabulary mastery determines the ease of students in doing school work. Nunan (2003) highlighted principles in teaching vocabulary. The first is to improve students' focus on the most useful vocabulary that they use for listening, speaking, reading, or writing and whether it is employed in formal or informal languages. The second is to stimulate students to reflect on and take an active role in their own learning. However, one of the main problems in implementing learning strategies is the teacher's lack of understanding of individual differences between students. Teachers often do not realize that not all students in a class can absorb lessons properly. Hence, teacher's skills are actually needed in providing various learning strategies so it can be absorbed by all students at levels of ability.

A myriad of research on vocabulary confirmed that Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy has a tremendous impact on students' mastery of vocabulary. This is supported by Hutauruk (2023) entitled "The Effect of Using Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy on Student's Vocabulary Mastery", this strategy enhances student's vocabulary skills. Yanto (2020) applied this strategy to fifty college students of the third year in English Education department. The finding showed that students enhance their knowledge, motivation and achievement through vocabulary self-collection strategy. Based on earlier researchers that conducted the same study, it can be claimed that the use of vocabulary self-collection strategies has a significant effect on improving students' vocabulary knowledge. Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS) was promoted by Martha Rapp Haggard in 2002. It is aimed to stimulate students to expand their vocabulary mastery by developing new words with

meaningful experiences. Haggard (2002) mentioned some procedures of Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy as follows:

1. Teacher defines what VSS is. Through a group nomination procedure, students can learn and discover new and interesting words from their readings that they are expected to uncover.
2. Teacher's example of how to select and recommend keywords from the text. Teacher explains why the selected word is significant. For example, to show students that if they don't know that word, they might not understand the phrase and the words around it - or they might suggest the word because they think it is interesting and useful for their own work.
3. Teacher gives an illustration of how to learn a word's meaning by using context and other materials. Students may utilize its context or provide a dictionary, glossary, diagram, or illustration to uncover the meaning of a word.
4. Teacher writes the word, sentence or the phrase in which was used in the text, as well as the meaning and reason for selecting the words.
5. Teacher involves the students in the VSS process. In small groups of three to five, students and teacher read a brief section from the book. Teacher guides them in deciding the word they want to choose. Teacher shows how to use context and additional resources to discover a word's meaning. Each small group then nominates one word for study after the students and teacher collaborate to build a rationale for their word choices.
6. Once students have gained confidence in this strategy, teacher provides guided practice to promote the use of VSS while reading. Teacher splits students into small reading groups. They include a short synopsis of the strategy as well as an introduction to the book.
7. The small group of students discusses the words they want to choose. They discuss each word in their small groups and the reasons why they believe the class should learn it. They choose a few words by consensus.
8. A word that is discovered is presented by each group. Write the word on the board, together with its definition, meaning, and the rationale for choosing it.

## METHOD

This research was carried out in SMPN 1 Sungguminasa at Jl. Habibu Kulle No.25, Kabupaten Gowa, Sulawesi Selatan. The subjects of this research comprised eighth-grade students during the academic year 2023/2024 which consisted of 38 students. The VIII-E class was selected as the focus of this research since the researcher carried out pedagogical practice within this class. The researchers collaborated with an English teacher in this research. The teacher supported the research's findings as an observer. Based on the findings derived from preliminary observations, it showed that the students were lack of engagement with vocabulary.

The kind of this study was classified as classroom action research (CAR). Classroom action research refers to investigations carried out by researchers within their own classrooms by implementing specific strategies aimed at addressing the challenges encountered in the learning process. This methodological approach is employed to explore the phenomena, with the advantages of this research paradigm include the enhancement of learning attitudes, the improvement of teaching skills, augmentation of self-esteem, and the advancement of knowledge related to the research subject (Cohen et al., 2007). This research is designated as a classroom action research due to its framework and procedures to elevate the quality of educational experiences within the classroom. In this investigation, the researchers propose the

implementation of a Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS) to enhance students' mastery of vocabulary.

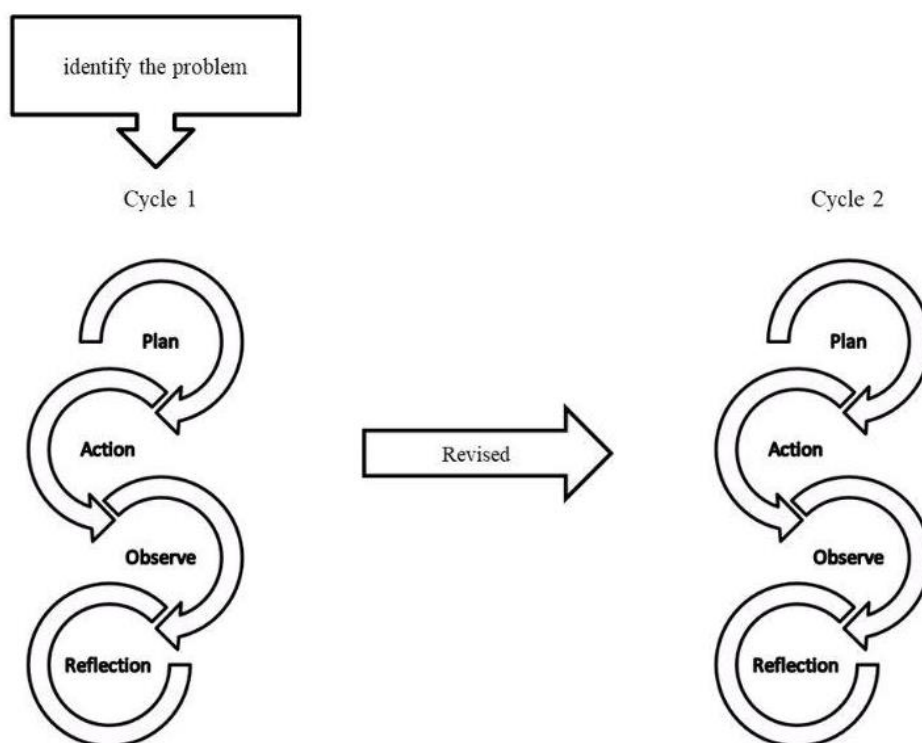


Figure 1. Steps of Classroom Action Research (Adapted from Kemmis and Mc Taggart)

Kemmis and McTaggart classified four distinct phases in the cycle of classroom action research. These phases encompass planning, action, observation, and reflection (Burns, 2010). During the planning phase, the researchers initiate by administering a pre-test to the students aimed at identifying the problem, designing the lesson plan, making an observation checklist to monitor student progress, and designing a scoring rubric. These actions culminate in an action plan tailored to a specific focus area. The action phase shows the implementation of the planned strategies within the learning process. In this phase, the researchers demonstrate the learning objective and begin a Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy in line with the lesson plan. Next, the researchers assess students' worksheets, analyze the data, and conclude the data result. After that, the researchers engage in observations to investigate the impact of the implemented actions. This stage is also referred to as the data collection stage where the researcher uses tools to gather information about what is going on. The last phase is reflection. It is conducted to evaluate the performance of the students. Finally, cycle II begins by modifying and analyzing the action as the improvement to reach success criteria.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

#### *a. Research Results on Observation*

This score is used to figure out whether students' vocabulary mastery improves significantly after treatment with the Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy. The researchers identified vocabulary mastery as the primary problem to be solved after conducting observation and interview with the students and English teacher. Everything relating to English was challenging for students to comprehend. Students' pretest score at the pre-cycle stage are proven in the following table:

Table 1. Students' learning outcomes for vocabulary mastery at the pre-cycle stage.

Score	The number of students	Percentage.	KKM score
The number of students scored $\geq$ 70	12	40	
The number of students scored $\leq$ 70	18	60	
Highest score	90		70
Lowest score	70		
Average score	46,6		

According to the table presented above, it can be inferred that only 12 out of 30 students, representing only 40% achieved the KKM score, whereas 18 students, or 60%, did not meet this criterion. At this stage, the highest score recorded by a student was 90, whereas the lowest score stood at 15. Therefore, it can be concluded that the learning outcomes of students in comprehending reading texts remains significantly low..

According to the data above, it can be inferred that the mean score of students in terms of vocabulary mastery did not meet the criteria. Teachers continue to rely on traditional teaching models with a predominant emphasis on the teacher, a methodology referred to as teacher-centered learning. Consequently, the engagement of students in the learning process is minimal, leading to a lack of activity among students during the class. It is essential for teachers to enhance students' engagement in the learning process by implementing more innovative pedagogical strategies. Therefore, the researchers employed the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy to facilitate the enhancement of students' vocabulary mastery.

*b. Research Results on Cycle I*

The data from the analysis of students' learning outcomes in cycle I shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Data on students' vocabulary mastery related to learning outcomes in the cycle I

Score	The number of students	Percentage	KKM score
The number of students scored $\geq$ 70	18	60	
The number of students scored $\leq$ 70	12	40	
Highest score	100		70
Lowest score	30		
Average score	67		

The data above shows that students' learning outcomes have improved, with an average score of 67 and a 60% passing grade, up from 40% pre-cycle. In this cycle, the highest score achieved by students was 100, while the lowest was 30. The results inferred that students' vocabulary mastery has improved, with more students receiving a complete score (KKM score  $\geq$ 70) compared to the classical average score. However, this cycle's student passing grade did not meet the classical passing grade criteria. As a result, the following step is required, as summarized in cycle II.

In the action phase, the researcher formed six groups which each consisted of five students and gave them a Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy worksheet. The students began to discuss and choose words that they are interested in and discover the meaning of new vocabularies with the researchers' assistance in the group. However, the action in the cycle I was less effective. Students wrote much less than the researcher expected and much less than they need to do in order to develop their vocabulary skills. They were lack of interest in reading and less motivated in learning vocabulary.

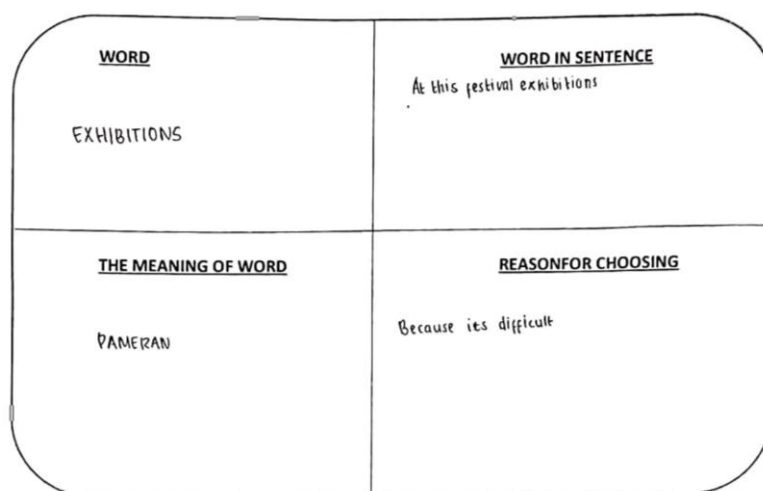


Figure 1. Student's worksheet in the cycle I

In the reflection phase, the researchers evaluate the worksheet. However, the researchers inferred that actions given to understand the problems in Cycle I were less effective.

*c. Research Results on Cycle II*

According to the data analysis of learning outcomes in cycle II, it can be grouped into categories of passing grade of student learning outcomes shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Student learning outcomes for vocabulary mastery in the cycle II

Score	The number of students	Percentage	KKM score
The number of students scored $\geq$ 70	29	96,8	
The number of students scored $\leq$ 70	1	3,2	
Highest score	100		70
Lowest score	30		
Average score	94,3		

As shown in the table 3, the class average score rose from 67 in the first cycle to 94.3, and the learning passing grade went from 60% in the first cycle to 96.8% in cycle II. In cycle II, the first cycle rose to 96.8%. Participants in this cycle achieved a maximum score of 100 and a minimum score of 60. The aforementioned data indicates that students' vocabulary mastery average learning outcome is 94.3, meeting the traditional passing criterion of an average score of at least 70 on the KKM score. Students who received a full score based on the KKM score in this cycle achieved 96.8%.

In the action phase, the researchers found that students wrote more words. In their group discussion, students explored more words that they are interested in and discovered the meaning of new vocabularies. They also presented the words in front of the class with its definition, meaning, and the rationale for choosing the words enthusiastically.

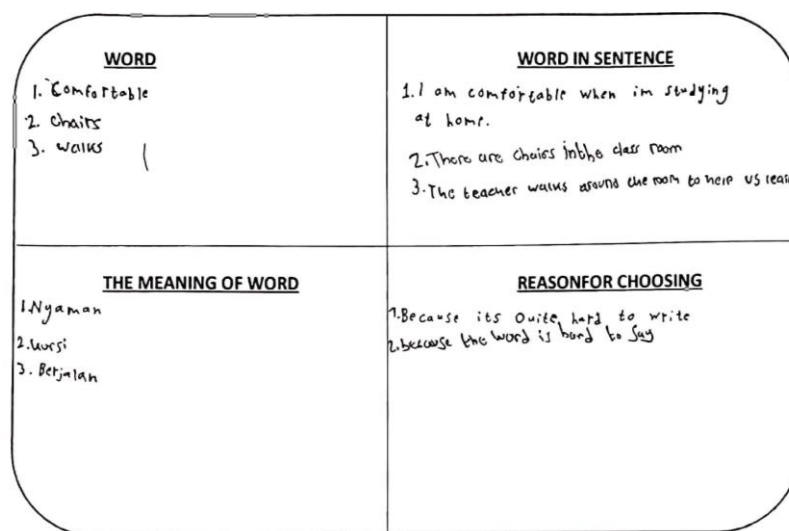


Figure 1. Student's worksheet in the cycle I

In the reflection phase, the researchers evaluate the worksheet, understand and make a conclusion of the activity. It is indicated that students' vocabulary mastery enriches significantly when they use Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy. Ruddell (2002) provided support for this claim, stating that the Self-Collection Strategy's goal is to increase students' motivation to learn new vocabulary by encouraging the long-term acquisition and development of academic discipline vocabulary. On the basis of the good results in the cycle II, the researcher did not need to continue the research.

## Discussion

The aim of this study is to enhance vocabulary mastery of 8th graders at SMP Negeri 1 Sungguminasa by solving students' practical problems. Based on the pre-test findings, it was discovered that Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy had a significant and positive effect on both the students' achievement and motivation. Students responded positively to the Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy for improving vocabulary mastery, with an average response of 27.6. Students agree that using the Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy improves their vocabulary mastery. In order to help students develop multiple meanings for new vocabulary and advance their vocabulary mastery, this study offered VSS to teach unfamiliar vocabulary using texts, stimulating students' prior knowledge and promoting vocabulary mastery. Alahmadi & Foltz (2020) highlighted a positive relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and language skills providing empirical evidence of a linear relationship between vocabulary knowledge and text comprehension. The easiest and simplest way to measure students' vocabulary size is to evaluate the reception of words (passive vocabulary) based on the meaning of the words. Their analysis showed that vocabulary size caused significant variance in students' performance in listening, reading, and writing assessments. These findings suggest that vocabulary knowledge is not only the basis for reading proficiency but also plays an important role in speaking ability. Previous research conducted by Yanto (2013) mentioned that implementing a vocabulary self-collection strategy improves students' vocabulary size and comprehension of text. Students are allowed to choose words that pique their interest and learn the meaning of new vocabulary. This strategy focuses on the words that students choose and need to know, curious about and gets interested in. As stated by Haggard (2014), Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy is a learning process that allows students to experience individually.

Lastly, Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy discovered that students also need individual services depending on their own interests, motivation, and needs. In the study by Hairrell (2008) claimed that effective vocabulary strategy can serve as a catalyst for stimulating student motivation, thus stimulating students' deeper dedication to reading. The significance of effective vocabulary strategies in motivating students is a vital area of research that has evolved over the years. The exploration of effective vocabulary instruction methods can not only enhance students' comprehension but also foster their engagement and motivation to learn. In this research, the researchers were able to prove that improving vocabulary mastery takes time and engagement. Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy worksheet is a visual evidence of how much students' vocabulary has developed. Students solved the complexity of word knowledge collaboratively. This perspective aligns with Liu (2022) findings that enjoyment in learning experiences is a significant predictor of academic engagement, as it encourages students to take action and strengthens their educational motives which can lead to increased motivation and engagement in learning. It also has a significant and positive effect of using Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy on EFL vocabulary mastery as was the opinion of previous researchers.

## CONCLUSION

This research explored issues surrounding students' vocabulary mastery by using Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy. This study proved that there was an increase in the percentage of students' vocabulary mastery in Cycle I and Cycle II where all of the students met the minimum passing grade criteria (KKM) and indicators of the research have been reached. The results of this strategy indicate an increasing enthusiasm and engagement during the learning process.

Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy helps students to enhance their vocabulary mastery while also increasing their self-directed study habits. Some research also proves that vocabulary self-collection strategies are more effective than traditional methods (Arisman, 2021) while traditional approaches may still be useful for some students. In contrast, the change to VSS shows a rising awareness of the need for more participatory and contextually relevant vocabulary learning in modern education (Fengyu, 2023). Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy stimulates students' active participation, resulting in increased motivation and positive classroom behavior (Simbolon et al., 2020). These results support the statement from Anuthama (2010) that teachers must discover effective strategies to eliminate incidental, boring and inefficient vocabulary learning.

Students utilize this strategy to learn the meaning of difficult vocabulary that they believe is important and interesting to understand. While the VSS has shown positive outcomes, some learners may still struggle with self-directed learning, indicating a need for more assistance in vocabulary acquisition strategies. The researcher is interested in employing this strategy since it can enable students to become autonomous word learners. Students can select relevant words from the text that they believe are significant to add to their vocabulary list. It is in line with the purpose of VSS to improve vocabulary retention and application through word collecting, promoting deeper knowledge (Sameen & Ayaz, 2022).

Some recommendations addressed to the teacher based on the results of the Vocabulary Self-collection Strategy implementation. It could provide teachers with new examples of innovative and effective vocabulary building skills to create a classroom environment that encourages excellent learning outcomes. Moreover, it is also dedicated to the students to be more engaged in their English study.

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