

THE USE OF FLASH GAME IN IMPROVING STUDENTS'
VOCABULARY
(A Classroom Action Research on the Third Grade Students of
Extracurricular English Class of SD Islam Al-Azhar 21 Pontianak in
Academic Year 2013/2014)

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Abstract: This research was held to improve students' vocabulary by teaching using flash games. It was a Classroom Action Research which is conducted in two cycles. The subject of this research was the Third Grade Students of Extracurricular English Class of SD Islam Al-Azhar 21 Pontianak in Academic Year 2013/2014. The data was collected by using observation checklist, fieldnotes and written test. The data was analyzed by describing the observation checklist and fieldnotes. It also used mean score to score the test and percentage to score the observation checklist. The results indicate the students' vocabulary improved by teaching using flash games. The mean score in the first cycle was 66.5 and in the second cycle was 93.5. The average score on meaning aspect in the first cycle was 57.50 and 97.50 in the second cycle. The average score on spelling aspect in the first cycle was 63.33 and 86.66 in the second cycle. The average score on usage aspect in the first cycle was 73.33 and 95.00 in the second cycle.

Key words: Vocabulary, Flash games

Abstrak: Penelitian ini dilaksanakan untuk meningkatkan kosa kata siswa dengan mengajar menggunakan permainan flash. Penelitian ini adalah Penelitian Tindakan Kelas yang dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus. Subjek dalam penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas tiga SD kelas ekstrakurikuler Bahasa Inggris di sekolah Islam Al-Azhar 21 Pontianak tahun ajaran 2013/2014. Data penelitian dikumpulkan melalui ceklis observasi, catatan lapangan dan tes tertulis. Data tersebut dianalisa dengan mendeskripsikan ceklis observasi dan catatan lapangan. Analisa data juga dilakukan dengan cara mencari nilai rata-rata dalam menilai tes dan persentase dalam menilai ceklis observasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan kosa kata siswa meningkat dengan mengajar menggunakan permainan flash. Nilai rata-rata siswa di siklus pertama adalah 66.5 dan pada siklus kedua adalah 93.5. Nilai rata-rata pada siklus pertama dalam aspek arti adalah 57.50 dan 97.50 pada siklus kedua. Nilai rata-rata pada siklus pertama dalam aspek ejaan adalah 63.33 dan 86.66 pada siklus kedua. Nilai rata-rata pada siklus pertama dalam aspek penggunaan adalah 73.33 dan 95.00 pada siklus kedua.

Kata kunci: Kosa kata, permainan flash

Vocabulary has an important role in learning foreign language. Cameron (2003, p.94) stated “Vocabulary has been seen as a major resource for language use”. Vocabulary is one element that links the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing all together. Harmer (1993 cited in Kateřina, 2009) said that if language structures are the skeleton of language, then the vocabulary is the vital organ and the flesh. Keith (2004, p.3) also stated that “Lack of grammar knowledge can limit conversation; lack of vocabulary knowledge can stop conversation.” It is supported by Cameron (2003, p.72) who said that “building up a useful vocabulary is central to the learning foreign language at primary level”. That is why vocabulary as the basic part of language should be taught since childhood.

Teaching for students of elementary school is not the same as teaching adult because they have different characteristics and motivation. Because of the different way of learning, teacher should understand and be smart in choosing interesting teaching-learning technique. As Sukarno (2008, p.60) said that teachers need specific skills and intuition that differ from adult teaching to teach young learners a second or foreign language successfully.

Based on the researcher’s discussion with the English teacher of the Extracurricular English Class, third grade students of Al-Azhar still get the difficulties in learning vocabulary. They loved to play with their friends rather than listened to teacher’s explanation about the vocabularies. The teacher tried to teach vocabulary to the students by using movie, but the result was the students focus on the movie itself and did not pay attention on the vocabulary. The teacher also tried to teach them by using songs, but the result was the students could pronounce the words well but could not spell it well. Whenever the teacher gave them written exercise about vocabulary, only some students could answer it correctly. The teacher found that the students’ difficulties were related to meaning, spelling and word usage of vocabulary.

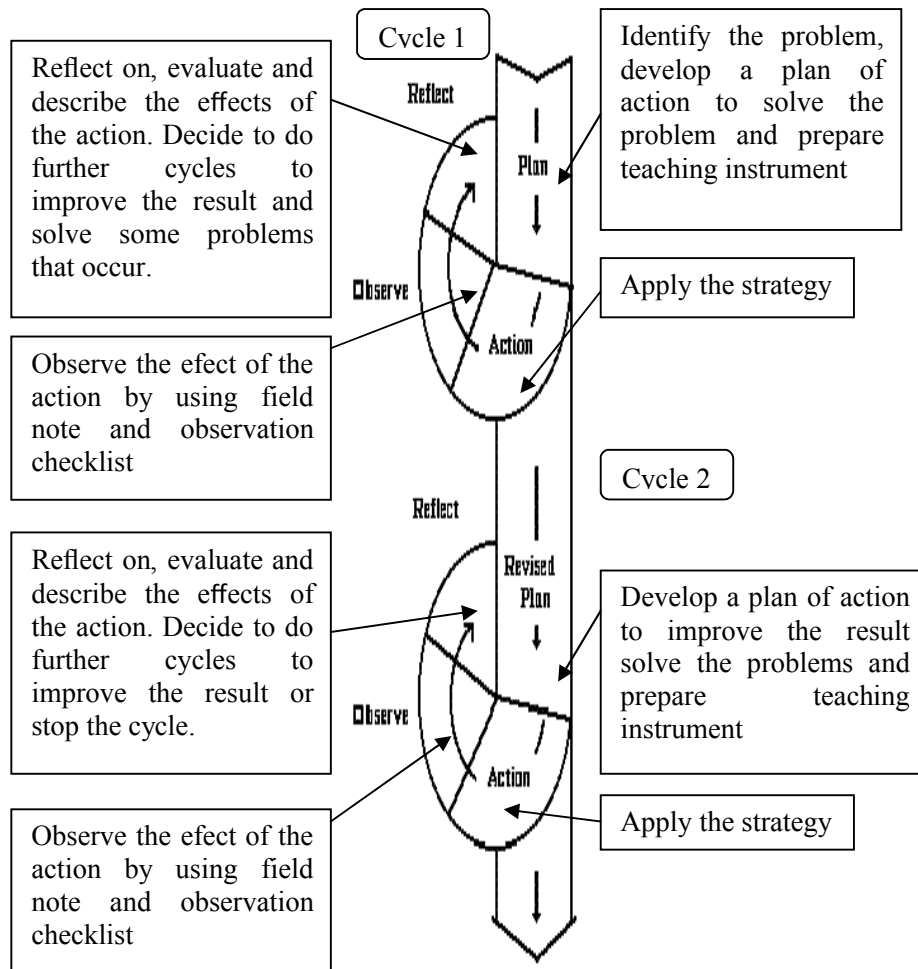
Flash game is a computer game that runs in the flash player; most of the time, it was embedded in a web browser and can be played online, but some of these games are also available to be downloaded and can be played offline. Flash games are designed for a wide variety of age groups, from young kids to adults. The vocabularies that appear on these games are the vocabularies existing in children’s daily life. This Flash Game can be one of good techniques to teach vocabulary.

Based on the problems, the researcher intended to conduct a Classroom Action Research in improving students’ vocabulary by teaching using flash game on the third grade students of Extracurricular English Class at SD Islam Al-Azhar 21 Pontianak in academic year 2013/ 2014. Another reason is because most of the teacher at SD Al-Azhar 21 did not use flash game on computer game in teaching vocabulary. Researcher believes that Flash Game is an effective way to teach vocabulary.

METHOD

The form of this research is Classroom Action Research. Classroom action research is research carried out in the classroom by the teacher of the course, mainly with the purpose of solving a problem or improving the teaching/learning process. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) cited in Burns (2010), CAR involves four phases in a research cycle. The first cycle may become a continuing, or iterative, spiral of cycles which repeat until achieving a satisfactory outcome and feels it is time to stop.

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) cited in Burns (2010), there are four phases in CAR: Planning, Acting, Observing and Reflecting.



CAR Cycles

In order to make the cycle above clear, below is the explanation of those steps:

1. Planning is the phase to identify a problem or issue and to develop a plan of action in order to bring about improvements in a specific area of the research context. In other word, it is a phase for the researcher to plan the way how to make good activity in the classroom in order to solve the problem faced by the students.
2. Acting is the phase where the researcher apply the strategy that has been planned before. In other word, this phase is a step to act the plan in the real treatment for the students.
3. Observing is the phase where the researcher observes systematically the effects of the action and documenting the context, actions and opinions of those involved. It is a phase to gather evidence and analyze whether the treatment, strategies or solution is successfull or not.
4. Reflecting is the phase where the researcherreflect on, evaluate and describe the effects of the action in order to make sense of what has happened and to understand the issue which have explored more clearly.

The researcher followed this cycle and conducted two cycles. The researcher planed some activities that could overcome the problems appeared in the classroom. The researcher as the teacher used flash games in teaching vocabulary in order to help the students for achieving a better result and process of learning.

In the planning phase of the first cycle, the researcher made a lesson plan with the flash game as the technique. Then, the teacher prepared the teaching-learning process resources, learning aids, students' attendance list, observation checklist, field notes and written test. In acting phase, the researcher as the teacher implemented the teaching vocabulary by using flash games and the collaborator observed the activity in teaching learning process. In observing phase, the collaborator observed all of the activities in teaching learning process by using observation checklist and field notes. In reflecting phase, the researcher and the collaborator observed the outcome of the treatment by looking at the students' achievement score. The researcher and the collaborator discussed about the weaknesses and the strengths in the teaching learning process, and decided to do further cycles of CAR because the result of the activities was not satisfactory.

In the planning phase of the first cycle, the researcher had identified and mapped the reflection from the first cycle, revised the lesson plan, and added some activities to overcome the problems in the first cycle. Then, the teacher prepared the teaching-learning process resources, learning aids, students' attendance list, observation checklist, field notes and written test. In acting phase, the researcher as the teacher implemented the teaching vocabulary by using flash games and the collaborator observed the activity in teaching learning process. In observing phase, the collaborator observed all of the activities in teaching learning process by using observation checklist and field notes. In reflecting phase, the researcher and the

collaborator observed the outcome of the treatment by looking at the students' achievement score and made decision that the result of the activities was satisfactory. Therefore, the researcher decided to stop the cycle.

The subject of this research was the third grade students of Extracurricular English Class at SD Islam Al-Azhar 21 Pontianak in academic year of 2013/2014. The number of the students is 15 students. The researcher only took the students that came constantly during the research which is 10 students. In collecting the data, the researcher used observation checklist, fieldnotes and written test.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After conducting teaching by using flash games for two cycles, the students' vocabulary improved, especially especially in meaning, spelling and word usage aspect. The process in the classroom activity also improved from the first cycle to the second cycle. Below is the further explanation of each improvement:

1. Students' mean score

Based on the result of the written test, the students' score improved from the first cycle to the second cycle. The improvement was shown by the result of students' mean score and also the students who passed the standard minimum score. The improvements can be seen in the chart below:

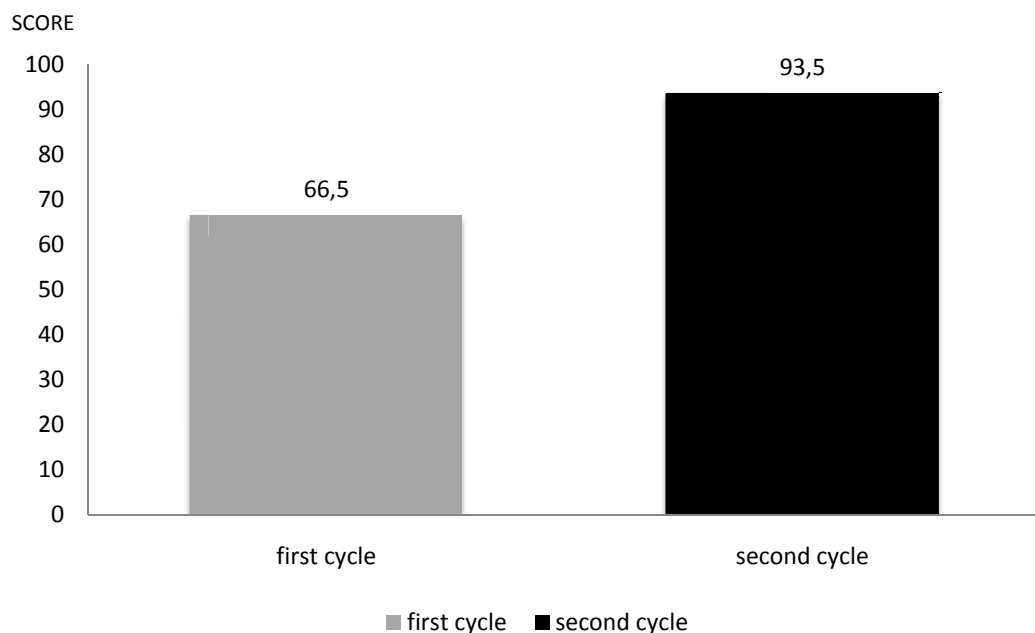


Chart 1. Students' Mean Score on Each Cycle

The students vocabulary was improved by using flash games in teaching learning vocabulary. This was proved by the result of mean score of students' individual score. In the first cycle, the mean score of the students' individual score was 66.5 and the the mean score of the students' individual score in the second cycle was 93.5. This improvement is strengthened by the percentage of students who passed the standard minimum score, as described in the chart below:

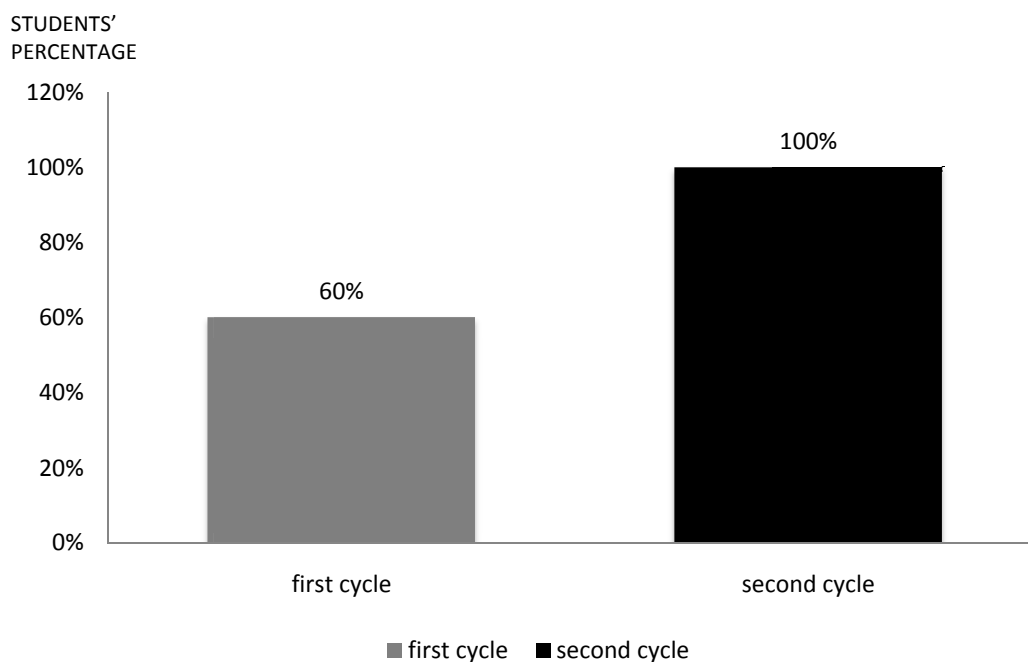


Chart 2. The Students Who Passed the Standard Minimum

In chart 2, there is a significant improvement of the students who passed the standard minimum score. In the first cycle, the percentage is only 60%. Meanwhile in the second cycle, the percentage improves to 100%. This happened because in the second cycle more students answer the questions correctly.

2. Students' vocabulary aspect achievement

Students' vocabulary aspect achievement is related to the meaning aspect, spelling aspect and usage aspect. From the first cycle to the second cycle, the students' vocabulary aspect achievement related to the meaning aspect, spelling aspect and usage aspect was improved. The improvement can be seen in the charts below:

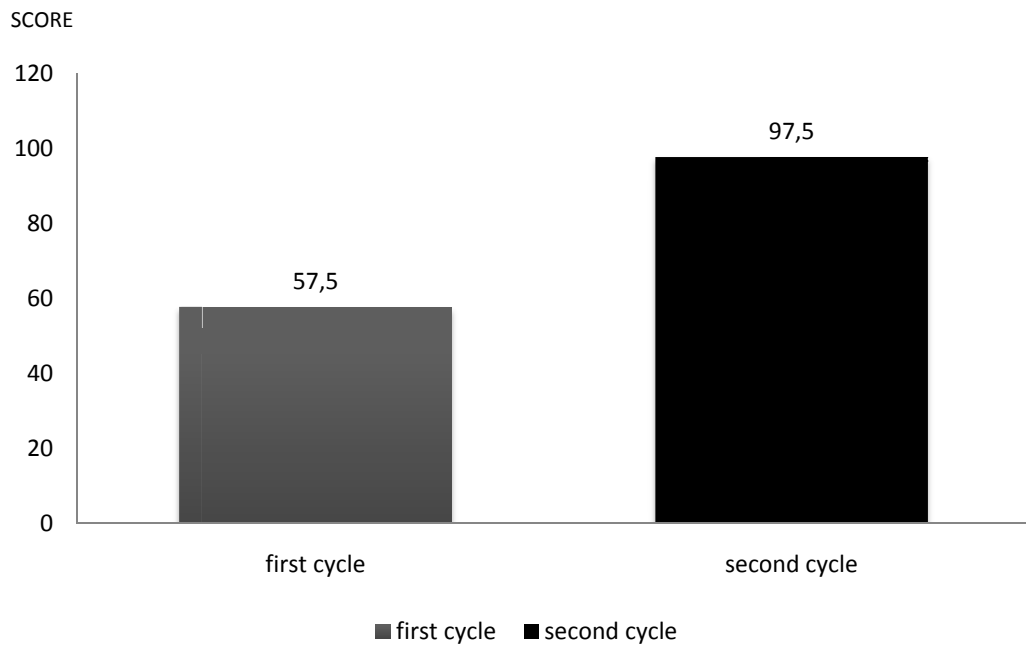


Chart 3. The Average Score of Students' Achievement on Meaning Aspect

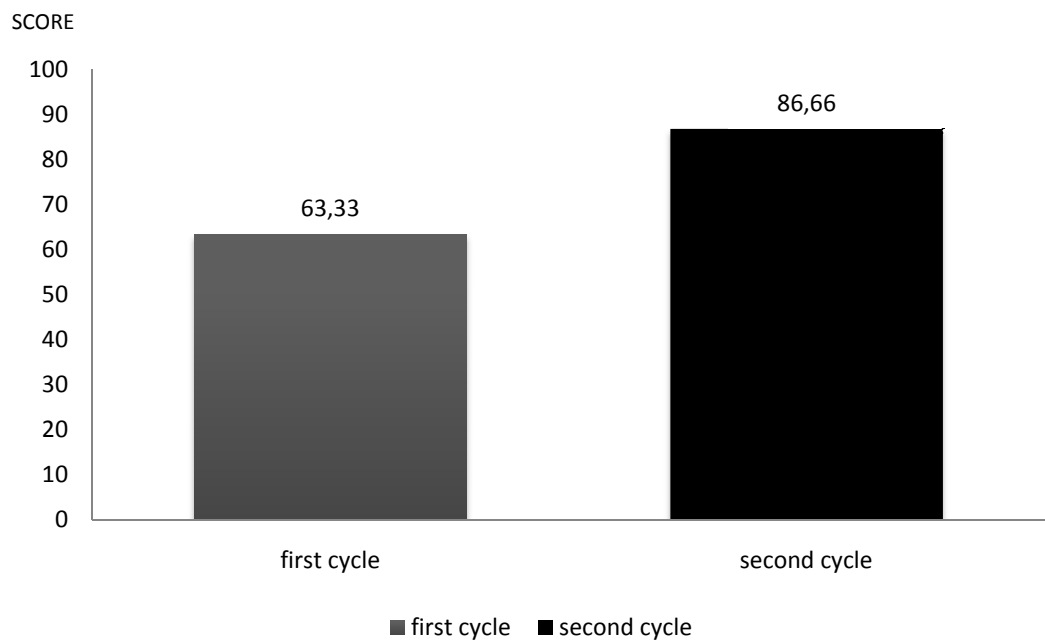


Chart 4. The Average Score of Students' Achievement on Spelling Aspect

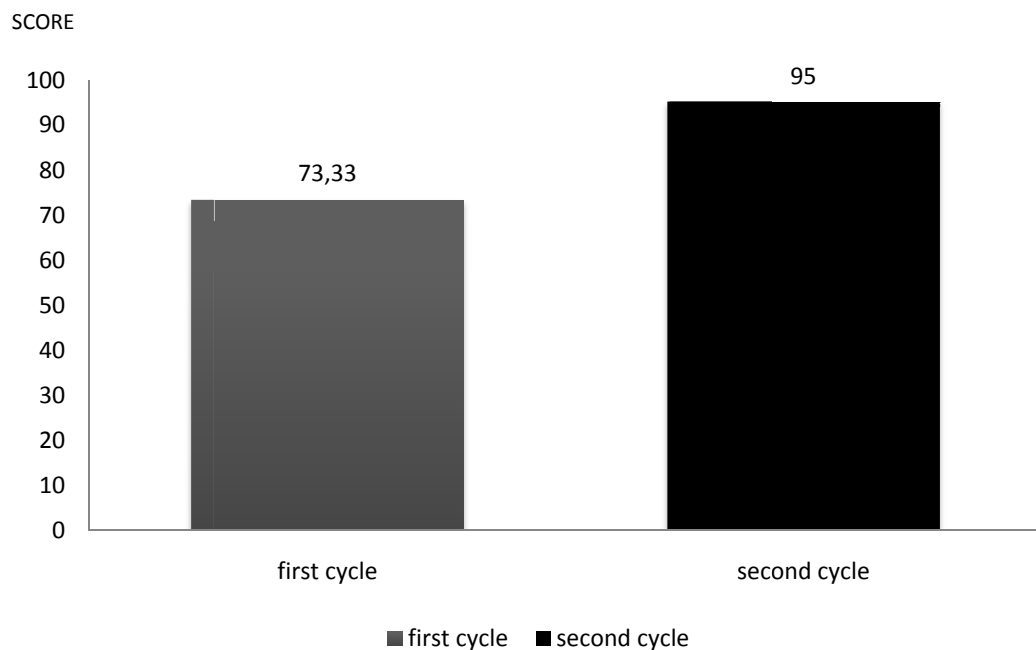


Chart 5. The Average Score of Students' Achievement on Usage Aspect

Chart 3, 4 and 5 above show the improvement of students' vocabulary aspect achievement related to the meaning aspect, spelling aspect and usage aspect. The average score of students' achievement on meaning aspect in the first cycle was 57.50 and 97.50 in the second cycle. The average score of students' achievement on spelling aspect in the first cycle was 63.33 and 86.66 in the second cycle. The average score of students' achievement on usage aspect in the first cycle was 73.33 and 95.00 in the second cycle.

3. The result of observation checklist

The teaching learning process was improved by using flash games in teaching learning vocabulary. This was proved by the result of the field notes and observation checklist from the first cycle and the second cycle. The improvement can be seen in the charts below:

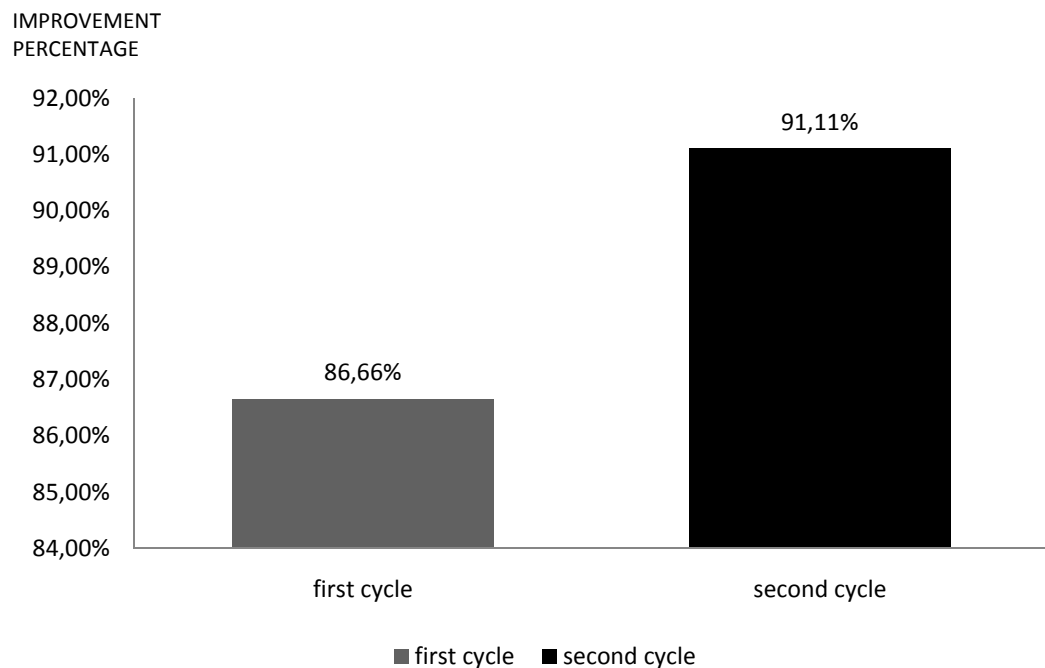


Chart 6. Improvement of The Result of Observation Checklist

The result of the observation checklist in the first cycle was 86.66% and the result of the observation checklist in the second cycle was 91.11%. It is clear that there was improvement from the first cycle to the second cycle.

In the first cycle, the teacher taught the students the vocabulary by using flash games. They were enthusiastic and curious about the game. the students' listened to the teacher about the vocabulary pronunciation and also about how to play the game. The teaching learning process ran well until the teacher asked them to make 3 groups and play the game. The other students yelled the answer at the group that played, so that group just played the game based on their friends instruction without thinking. It can be conclude that,in playing the game, the students did not analyze the game instruction by themself and it was not their pure answers. This problem affected their understanding. As the result, they could not do the written test well.

There were only six students that could pass the minimum standard of completion. The mean score of the students' individual score was 66.5. The average score of students' achievement on meaning aspect was 57.50, the average score of students' achievement on spelling aspect was 63.33, and the average score of students' achievement on usage aspect was 73.33. Meanwhile, the result of the observation checklist in the first cycle was 86.66%. From the observation checklist and the field notes, the main problem was the students that were too obsessed to play the game. They could not wait their turn and started to yell the answer to the group that played.

In the second cycle, the teacher taught the students the vocabulary by using flash games again. The teacher gave a task for the students. They were asked to memorize a list of words given by the teacher when their friends play the flash game. The teacher told them that at the end of the game there would be a quiz related to that listed vocabulary. At first, the problem could be handled by reminding the students about the task and the quiz. But the problem occurred again and again until the third group played the first flash game. Then the teacher said that if they did not follow the rules, the teacher would stop the game. It made the students follow the teacher's instruction and made the class under control and affected their understanding. As the result, they could do the written test well. All of the students could pass the minimum standard of completion.

CONCLUSION

Teaching vocabulary by using flash games has improved the students' vocabulary especially in meaning, spelling and usage aspect on the third grade students of Extracurricular English Class at SD Islam Al-Azhar 21 Pontianak in academic year of 2013/2014. The improvements are related to both the activeness of process in the classroom and the students' achievement on the test. Finally, the researcher hopes the result of this research can be a reference for the English teacher to enhance their technique in teaching, in order to help their students improve their vocabulary.

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