IMPROVING VOCABULARY ABILITY BY USING COMIC
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ABSTRACT

Vocabulary mastery can not be separated in study English. In this case, the problems of the research were how to improve vocabulary using comic and how to motivate the students to apply it in their daily activity. The research was guided by a conceptual framework leading to the using comic to improve their vocabulary. The research type was an action research. The subject consisted of 26 students of the first semester of teaching English faculty of UNISKA class I-A in 2008-2009 academic years. The research data were collected using test (test after first treatment and test after the second treatment), observation for collecting data on the students' motivation in improving vocabulary ability using comic as the media. Data on vocabulary ability using comic were analyzed using the descriptive and statistic analysis, to know the improvement in mean students after the first cycle and the second cycle. Based on the first cycle, the students' average was 64.4, then, on the second treatment, the students' average increase to be 71.7. It can conclude that teaching vocabulary using comic can be used as media to improve students' vocabulary ability.

Kata kunci: Improving, vocabulary ability, using comic, peer work

ABSTRAK

Penguasaan kosakata tidaklah dapat dipisahkan dalam pembelajaran bahasa inggris. Dalam hal ini, masalah yang digali dalam penelitian ini adalah bagaimana meningkatkan kosakata menggunakan komik dan bagaimana memotivasi siswa untuk mempergunakan dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Penelitian ini didukung oleh sebuah kerangka konsep dalam penggunaan komik dalam meningkatkan kosakata mereka. Model penelitian yang digunakan adalah penelitian tindakan kelas. Subyeknya adalah pasa mahasiswa kelas I-A semester I Fakultas Keguruan Ilmu Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris UNISKA tahun akademik 2008-2009. Data penelitian yang dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan tes (sesudah perlakuan pertama dan perlakuan kedua), pengamatan untuk pengumpulan data pada motivasi siswa dalam peningkatan kemampuan kosakata dalam menggunakan media komik. Data pada kemampuan kosakata melalui komik dinalisa pada nilai rata-rata mahasiswa pada siklus pertama dan siklus kedua. Berdasarkan siklus pertama, kemampuan mahasiswa setelah perlakuan adalah 64.4, lalu pada siklus kedua kemampuan mahasiswa meningkat menjadi 71.7. sehingga dapatlah disimpulkan bahwa komik dapat digunakan sebagai media untuk meningkatkan kemampuan kosakata siswa.

1. BACKGROUND

Learning a language means mastering the elements of it. In English, there are four skills, which need our effort to apply, they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Those parts are connecting to one another, in other word we can say: "Nothing should be spoken before it has been heard, nothing should be read before it has been spoken, nothing should be written before it has been read, nothing should be listened before it has been heard, read and spoken" (Alexander, Practice and Progress, 1984:8).

Richard says, "Vocabulary is one of the most important aspects of foreign language learning" (1990:22). Vocabulary has been formed as a number of words list. Without words, we are not able to communicate well. "Vocabulary is basic of communication, it is also very important for the acquisition process" (Krashen, Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning, 1981:55). Krashen clarifies for this importance by saying "Acquisition depends crucially on the input being comprehensible. Thus, acquisition will not take place without comprehension of vocabulary" (1981:55).

Teaching vocabulary in Indonesia is considered to be the most difficult, pronunciation, structure, discourse, and the social context of culture and situation. In short, it needs the mastery of the linguistic and the cultural competence. Besides, as vocabulary is difficult, more effort is required on the part of the students and teachers. It is not enough for

the students to listen or to speech only. The teachers need to give the students' activities to practice the new speech among the four basic skills of language.**2.** Bourdons in Nunan (1993) stated that spoken language needs the mastery of vocabulary habit. This means that practice vocabulary needs much time to fulfil the requirements of the mastery of spoken English, either from school or the environment.

Teaching vocabulary at UNISKA is one of the main focuses in the English Teaching Department (FKIP). Therefore the English teachers should find out the effort on searching and creating a new model in presenting materials, in order to increase vocabulary ability.

In order to arise the students attention and motivation in learning English especially vocabulary, the teacher should be able to choose and create a suitable material and method based on the students' condition. For the example, the teacher can use a song or make a game as teaching technique to enrich the students' vocabulary.

Based on the background above, the researcher formulates the following research questions: "How does comic improve students' vocabulary ability at the first semester of teaching English department of UNISKA?"

Related to the problem statement above, the objective of this research is then specified: "to describe comic in improving students' vocabulary ability at the first semester of teaching English department of UNISKA."

The result of this research is expected to be useful information to: (1) increase the teachers' knowledge of English and share experiences in improving vocabulary ability using comic; (2) encourage the teachers' colleagues in doing action research in improving their teaching as the professional practices; (3) give any contribution to the general public in increasing knowledge concerning about classroom action research and get any reflection for being perfection.

This research is done by the subject of the students of the first semester of UNISKA using comic through peer work to improve their ability to speak English. The researcher focused his research in improving vocabulary ability and the students' motivation in the process of teaching and learning using comic. The comic used in this research were: Naruto -2 and Naruto-3 which could be downloaded from www.onemanga.com. The comics here were fully in English. So besides they were interesting, they also challenged students' ability.

THE REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The researcher found some studies had been conducted using comic. Vocabulary is a list of words with their meaning, glossaries and some of words used in language. Those words have meaning and convey some message (Hart, 1976:14)

Vocabulary holds an important role in learning English because vocabulary is the basic of the language mastery skill. "Vocabulary is a list of words and usually in alphabetical order and with explanation of their meaning" (Longman, 1987:177).

Introducing new vocabulary means making the students know the meaning of word. How to make the students know the meaning of words without getting bored. The material should be interested, whether the students are inside the classroom. So the classroom atmosphere will be relaxing and enjoyable to make the students free from stress. The students will be more interested and they will focus their attention to the materials.

A. Teaching Vocabulary

In everyday conversation we speak of vocabulary in the singular; we speak of a person's vocabulary. This is actually an oversimplification. *The American Heritage Dictionary* defines vocabulary as "the sum of words used by understood by, or at the command of a particular person or group." However, it seems important to point out that in almost all cases there are some differences in the number of words that an individual understands and uses. Even the terms "uses" and "understands" need clarification. For example, the major way in which we "use" vocabulary is when we speak and write; the term *expressive vocabulary* is used to refer to both since these are the vocabularies we use to express ourselves. We "understand" vocabulary when we listen to speech and when we read; the term *receptive vocabulary* is used to refer to listening and reading vocabularies. Finally to round out the terminology, *meaning or oral vocabulary* refers to the combination of listening and speaking vocabularies, and *literate vocabulary* refers to the combination of our reading and writing vocabularies. Are our listening, speaking, reading, and writing vocabularies all the same? Are they equally large? Is our meaning vocabulary larger or smaller than our literate vocabularies?

Introducing new vocabulary means making the students know the meaning of word. The important thing is that how to make the students know the meaning of word without getting bored. Teacher, as a good facilitator and coordinator, should make the students learning process easy. Using nature language makes the students interested in the lesson that the teacher gives. Having no students interest in the subject will be no attention. According to Jeramy Harmer (1998:161), there are some aids, which can help teacher to explain the new words interesting and effective.

Vocabulary is the first step to be known before studying English because students will find the more difficult in English so introducing vocabulary is very important. Hopefully with introducing vocabulary students can increase their capability in learning English. Palmer said in Jack C. Richard's book entitled Approach and Methods in Language Teaching that "vocabulary was one of the most important aspects of foreign language learning "(1986:32). By understanding the statement above, it can be understood that teaching English vocabulary constitutes one of keys to be success in learning English. Therefore, it is logic that English teacher gives the teaching of English vocabulary to support the development of the four skills of the students language.

In Indonesia, the materials of each subject being taught including English, have been determined by the curriculum conceptor. However, it does not mean that the teacher's duty just presenting all items in the prescribed text books without paying attention to the teaching objectives. What the teacher should know well is doing determine what materials be bring into the class.

In teaching vocabulary, a teacher should consider the following things:
1. The selection of words should be based on usefulness for the students.
2. The words should be introduced in the context.
3. The teaching of new vocabulary must be interesting.
4. If there is no special purposes introduce variety of areas (art, science, technology, etc), variety of type (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, idiom).

There are essential principles in teaching new vocabulary; they are active vocabulary and passive vocabulary.

"Active language is when you meet a new English word, decide whatever you really need it for your active vocabulary in note book and make sure your practice using it in some oral or written book" (O'dell, 1989:12)

The theory tells us that although we directly learn English, sometimes we find new words in daily life. "Passive vocabulary is when you meet a word that you do not know. It is important to you also not to panic and usually the meaning is clear enough from the context" (O'dell, 1989:12). It means that there are many English words, which are learned by the students. Even though they do not know the meaning of the words, they also do not worry if they meet unknown words in a book.

Based on *Oxford Learner Dictionary*, "Vocabulary is list of word that used in teaching English" (Hornby, 1989:1425) it means that all word can be identified into vocabulary, for example: noun, verb, adjective, and adverb. From definition above, it can be conclude that vocabulary has an important to build up a language. So we can say that human beings express their knowledge using vocabulary.

The sentences can be arranged from combined words but for getting good sentences, people must have special ability to choose word. It is known that not all people have ability in mastering a lot of vocabulary well. So that vocabulary mastery depends on the ability of the people in mastering a language, because in choosing words people must understand the culture of where the words of language exist.

By knowing the unique characteristic of the children, an English teacher has to be careful to select activities and sources, which are interesting for young learners. Vocabulary as one of language component should be mastered by the learners for communication and expressing idea in the target language and it has equal function with other elements, so in teaching vocabulary, an English teacher can integrate other elements in one presentation. To make the students of Junior High School easier to understand the words, of course, the teacher must use the teaching aids to make the students interested in the lesson.

The writer will present the technique to teach new vocabulary by using song and game. In this paper, the writer hopes that the techniques will make the students interested in understanding the lesson.

A.   The Importance of Vocabulary
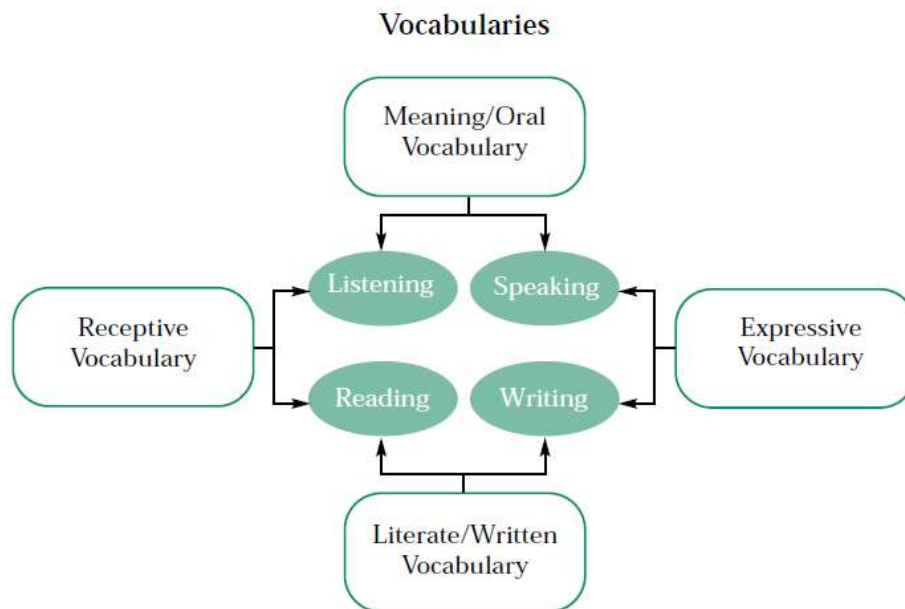
Vocabularies

Figure 1

Pilkuski, Eds (2004:2) states stat Figure 1 shows the relationship of the eight different terms. For the first five years or so of their lives, children are involved in the process of acquiring a meaning/oral vocabulary—words that they understand when they hear them and that they can use in their speech. During this period, children have essentially no literate vocabularies. Most children acquire reading and writing skills upon entering school. They need to acquire a basic knowledge of how printed letters relate to the sounds of spoken words and how printed words relate to spoken words. Being able to translate or transcode print into speech allows children to use what they know about meaning/oral vocabulary for their literate vocabulary. Therefore, for very young children, their meaning vocabularies are much larger than their literate vocabularies.

The acquisition of decoding skills leads to rapid expansion of literate vocabularies by allowing children to transcode their meaning vocabularies into their literate vocabularies. This is so much the case that for older students and for adults our literate vocabularies are probably larger than our meaning vocabularies. We tend to have a larger group of words that we use in reading and writing than we use in our own speech. This is because written language is more formal, more complex, and more sophisticated than spoken language.

A student who lacks of vocabulary will find difficulties in the language learning process. Vocabulary is necessary to bring the language to the real use in communication. Vocabulary, indeed, is important in studying English as a foreign language. In Warner's English grammar book, vocabulary means using new words. While in oxford grammar, we may find that vocabulary means a list of words used by language or book and it is consider as a branch of linguistics science.

Some linguistics believes that a student that in order to be to communicate seriously are necessary. Without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed. Language learners are advised to know the rules of the language they are learning, as pointed by Wilkins (1972:187): "It is not expected that a student should speak like the native speaker, however teacher of EFL should put in mind that every language has its own rules and systems. It is advised that the students know and are able to apply the rules and the systems of the language they are studying".

It is known that vocabulary is important in learning of language especially in a second language or a foreign learning. considering the importance of vocabulary, Seville (1976:19) states " Acquiring an

adequate vocabulary is the most obviously important need in learning a second language. The statement is similar to Deighton (1971:461) : "Vocabulary is the most important component of the language power. In using the language, students who are rich in vocabulary will be successful both in expression skill, speaking and receptive skills, listening and reading. But those who are poor in vocabulary will get trouble in those skills".

The ability of vocabulary mastery is defined as the ability of someone in having and choosing English words and using those words in sentences which are suitable to the context. The role of mastering vocabulary has a big rule in creating either written or spoken communication well. If the students have ability in vocabulary mastery widely, they will be able to write and communicate well. The ability of vocabulary mastery has important role as the base of the ability of language usage especially writing ability. By mastering vocabulary will be able to develop ability of communication activity because the more vocabulary mastered the more idea will be produced. The influence of communication depends on the ability of someone in having, choosing, and using their ability properly. Quality and quantity of someone's vocabulary influence the success of someone in language usage, according to Tarigan in his book Menulis Sebagai Suatu Ketrampilan Berbahasa, explains " Kuantitas dan kualitas kosa kata seseorang turut menentukan keberhasilan seseorang dalam kehidupan berbahasa" (1986:2)

There are many important components in language skills, but the most two important things are grammar and vocabulary. The vocabulary development in human living is more valuable than the addition of new vocabulary. The addition of new vocabulary also means the increase of the concept in better living.

The research of Ehri {1994.1998) is particularly informative. Her research strongly suggests that high-frequency words should be introduced without written context so that students focus on their visual composition, that they should be practiced in materials that are at an appropriate level of challenge, and that they should be practiced several times in order to allow developing readers to recognize them instantly or, in other words, at sight. She also makes the important point that although many of these words do not conform completely to phonic generalizations or expectations (e.g. *was),* they nonetheless very frequently do have elements **that** are regular. For example, the w in was is regular and the *s* at the end of that word sometimes does have the /z/ sound. Ehri's research strongly suggests that these phonic regularities are powerful mnemonics for remembering the words and should be pointed out, rather than expecting that students will remember the vague shape of the word, as was the tradition with flash-card instruction for many years.

The role of vocabulary mastery is very important because it is part of language life. That is why, it is expected that the students of Junior High School must be able to master vocabulary more and more for developing their English skills.
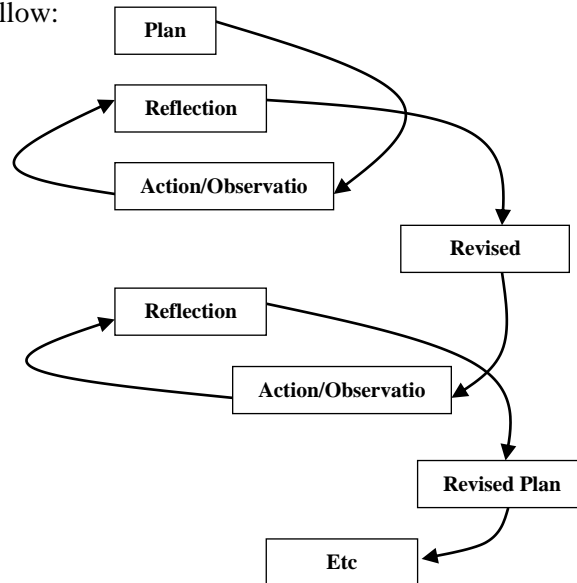
Many native English teachers in Japan are assigned listening and vocabulary classes, with limited opportunities to teach the other skills areas. There is, however, a general movement on many fronts to shift this once generic class towards more content-based or ESP courses. The result has been that English now becomes more than a mere frill to a true vehicle to disseminate one's ideas. With the emergence of such a need, comics can fill this gap because of its multi-dimensional nature, combing both words and pictorial images.

The classes that researcher teach generally meet twice a week for 90 minutes over 20 weeks. The underlying framework behind group-oriented projects takes root in the concept of cooperative learning, where the groups' efforts are focused on accomplishing a meaningful task with shared rewards. Here is one of a group of five projects I carry out during the year.

3. METHOD

The method used in this research was classroom action research (CAR) focused on improving vocabulary ability using comic. The subject of the research consisted of 20 students of the first semester of UNISKA in 2003-2009 academic year.

The diagram is as follow:

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          ┌──────┐
          │ Plan │
          └──────┘
      ┌───────────────┐
      │  Reflection   │
      └───────────────┘
      ┌────────────────────┐
      │  Action/Observatio │
      └────────────────────┘
                    ┌──────────┐
                    │ Revised  │
                    └──────────┘
      ┌───────────────┐
      │  Reflection   │
      └───────────────┘
          ┌────────────────────┐
          │  Action/Observatio │
          └────────────────────┘
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │ Revised Plan │
                    └──────────────┘
          ┌──────┐
          │ Etc  │
          └──────┘
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This research had one dependent variable and one independent variable: (1) the independent variable of this research was the teaching device using comic. Using comic means comics belong to the students (e.g. comic taken from www.onemanga.com) (2) the dependent variable of this research was vocabulary ability. It was empirically by the students' mastery of using comic.

To collect data, the instruments to be used: (1) test and; (2) observation. Test after the first treatment and test after the second treatment administered to find out the improvement of the students' vocabulary ability, the formative test was administered to measure about the improvement of their vocabulary ability from the cycle 1 and cycle 2. The observation was administered to measure the characteristics of the students towards the application of using comic through peer work, and questionnaire was administered to support the data of the students' improvement in vocabulary English ability.

The activities of the research used the following procedures:

1. The researcher observed the previous students' vocabulary average.
2. The researcher planned the action, constructing the lesson plan for the first cycle using comic.
3. The researcher implemented the fist action cycle (giving treatment, using comic).
4. The researcher observed the classroom while implementing the actions in first cycle.
5. The researcher gave reflection to the results of the observation by using the guide of observation in the form of checklist.
6. The researcher analyzed comic and then classified them qualitatively.
7. The researcher constructed the lesson plan for second cycle.
8. The researcher implemented the second action cycle.
9. The researcher observed the classroom while implementing the second action cycle.
10. The researcher reflected the results of class observation in the second cycle.
11. Analyzing the results of reading test in the second cycle quantitatively and then classified them qualitatively,

In the first treatment, the researcher did some activities related to the using of comic. The topic chosen was "Naruto-3". The first treatment activities were:

a. **Warm up:**
   1. Opening. This activity is as like greeting and asking students' condition.
   2. Brain storming to the matter. This activity was done to guide students to the matter given.

3. Distributing the comic.
b. Whilst:
1. The teacher asked the students to guess comic and asking the difficult vocabulary related to comic.
2. The teacher wrote the difficult vocabularies related to comic on the board.
3. The teacher drilled the difficult vocabulary related to comics.
4. The teacher asked them to read the comic
5. The teacher asked them to discuss with their partners about comic and the plot of the story.
6. The teacher asked them to tell comics in front one by one.
c. Closing
1. The teacher asked their difficulty and their problem in vocabulary process.
2. The teacher gave motivation in studying and closing the lesson.

From the first treatment, the research got the problem as bellow:
1. "Naruto-3" comic was not so interesting.
2. Many students did not bring dictionary so they disturbed their friend to ask the meaning of difficult word.
3. The researcher needed to pay attention more to the students who were weak in vocabulary in guided them to make the story.

After analysing the problem above, the researcher need to solve the problem. So on the second treatment, the researcher would be easy in attempting the method. Then after choosing the interesting pictures, the researcher made a lesson plan. Then the researcher did some activities in implementing the second treatment. The treatment was as follow;

5.

a. Warm up:
1. Opening. This activity is as like greeting and asking students' condition.
2. The teacher gave brain storming to the matter. This activity was done to guide students to the matter given.
3. The teacher distributed the comic.
b. Whilst:
1. The teacher asked them to pay attention to comic.

2. The teacher asked the students to guess the content of the comic and asking the difficult vocabulary related to comic.
3. The teacher wrote the difficult vocabularies related to comic on the board.
4. The teacher drilled the difficult vocabulary related to comics.
5. The researcher asked them to read the comic.
6. The teacher asked them to discuss with their partners.
7. The teacher asked them to present their story in their group first.
8. The teacher asked each group to give correction and suggestion to their friend's error.
9. After the correction, the teacher asked every student to tell comics in front.
10. The teacher asked another friend to give suggestion and correction
Closing
1. The teacher asked their difficulty and their problem in vocabulary process.
2. The teacher gave motivation in studying and closing the lesson.

Based on those activities, the problems on the first treatment could be eliminated. Here, the researcher gave more assistance and support to the weak students. Besides that, the correction and suggestion from their partner in peer work cold eliminate the error when they deliver their story in front. The topic about daily activity and comic chose were so interesting and made them enthusiastic to deliver their story.

DATA ANALYSIS
Before the treatment, students mean in vocabulary was 60.0. Then, researcher prepare Then after the treatments, data on the students' vocabulary skills were collected in line with the instruments (tests, questionnaires, and observation) and were analyzed using the scoring system, tabulating, percentage, classification, calculating the mean score, from the first treatment, the researcher got the mean of the students reached 64.4. The data is as follow:

No.	Name	Value
1	ISTIQOMAH	70
2	FIRDAUS FEBRIA WIDODO	60
3	M YUSUF IRANA	60
4	ENDANG AGUSTININGSIH	60
5	MOVIA PUTRI AYU SI N	60
6	RINA FITRIANI	70
7	ROBIATUL ADAWIYAH	75
8	DWI SHOLIHATIN	60
9	RENI NURMALA SARI	70
10	YENI LINARSIH	60
11	KIKIS MELIA	60
12	CATUR SUPRAYOGI	60
13	AJI YUKI WIBIMASKO	60
14	LINDA ARIYATI	60
15	SUSILOWATI	65
16	ARIS SUMIANTO	65
17	VISTA FEBRIANINGSIH	70
18	RIAN SIGIT GESANG	75
19	CITRA ALDILASARI	70
20	NURRINDA FEBRIANI	60
21	BINTANG S BRILIANTIKA	60
22	MOH. KIDZFIRUL NADZIR	60
23	ALI MASHADI	60
24	SEPTIAN RAHARJO	65
25	NINA KURNIANINGTYAS	70
26	M. MUKHLAS HADI	70
Average		64.4

After the second treatment, the researcher got the data from their vocabulary performance. The students' mean increased to be 71.7.

The data is as follow:

No.	Nama	Value
1	ISTIQOMAH	70
2	FIRDAUS FEBRIA WIDODO	65
3	M YUSUF IRANA	60
4	ENDANG AGUSTININGSIH	70
5	MOVIA PUTRI AYU SI N	70
6	RINA FITRIANI	70
7	ROBIATUL ADAWIYAH	80
8	DWI SHOLIHATIN	70
9	RENI NURMALA SARI	80
10	YENI LINARSIH	70
11	KIKIS MELIA	70
12	CATUR SUPRAYOGI	65
13	AJI YUKI WIBIMASKO	65
14	LINDA ARIYATI	70
15	SUSILOWATI	70
16	ARIS SUMIANTO	80
17	VISTA FEBRIANINGSIH	80
18	RIAN SIGIT GESANG	85
19	CITRA ALDILASARI	75
20	NURRINDA FEBRIANI	70
21	BINTANG S BRILIANTIKA	70
22	MOH. KIDZFIRUL NADZIR	65
23	ALI MASHADI	60
24	SEPTIAN RAHARJO	75
25	NINA KURNIANINGTYAS	80
26	M. MUKHLAS HADI	80
Average		**71.7**

Based on the observation after the treatments, it indicated that among students had more selves confidences and had more participant in vocabulary.

The rating scale (band) used for measuring the improvement of the students' vocabulary skill was taken from Sujiono (1992: 47):

Interval	First treatment		Second treatment		Criteria
	Number of Students	Percentages	Number of Students	Percentages	
80-100	0	0.0	7	55.0	Very Good
70-79	9	60.0	13	40.0	Good
56-69	17	40.0	6	5.0	Fair
45-55	0	0.0	0	0.0	Less
0-44	0	0.0	0	0.0	Poor
Total	26	0	26	0	

6.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION
5.1
CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous parts, the following conclusions are:
(1) The implementation of teaching English in this action research-using comic as teaching strategy could improve the students' motivation in improving their ability to speak English at both the first cycle and second cycle. It can be shown from the students' increasing average in vocabulary score. In the first treatment, the students' average was 64.4, then, on the second treatment, the students' average increase to be 71.7; (2) the use of comic through peer work as teaching strategy could improve vocabulary ability significantly. This led to the conclusion that using of comic through peer work as a teaching strategy is a need in English language teaching and learning in improving their ability to speak English in the term of vocabulary, grammar, and their performance based on the context of situation
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6.2   SUGGESTIONS

The first is addressed to the first semester of UNISKA dealing with the classroom implementation of the findings. The second one is addressed to the foreign language teaching researchers.
1) The classroom implementation of the findings

Since the implementation of using comic has been proven to be successful in improving their ability to speak English, it is strongly suggested that such teaching strategy "improving vocabulary ability using comic" could be continually implemented in teaching vocabulary. Assistance and giving motivation to the students is much needed, besides choosing interesting topic and title in analyzing comic.
2) Further researchers

The emphasis of conducting this research was the improving vocabulary ability using comic. The result of this research showed that vocabulary ability could get significantly improvement.

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