
Uses Flashcards to Increase the Vocabulary of Elementary School Students

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Abstract

The current post-pandemic Covid-19 situation has a very significant impact on people around the world. Education in this situation is required to change mindsets and learning systems that prioritize the use of technology that is currently developing in the digital 5.0 era. This study aims to determine the benefits of using Flashcards in the learning process for 4th grade elementary school students at SDN 3 Alasangker. This research is also intended to find out the problems faced by teachers and students, as well as the benefits of applying Flashcards in the learning process. In collecting data, the researcher applied several data collection instruments consisting of interviews, observations, document analysis, and giving questionnaires. The subjects of this study were grade 4 elementary school students. The results of this study indicate that most students find it easier to remember and memorize vocabulary by using flashcards than being explained directly.

Keywords: Flashcards; Young Learners; Vocabulary.

INTRODUCTION

In most schools, especially in Indonesia, English is applied and implemented for junior high school students. Most students in elementary school have not received English as a compulsory subject applied in the curriculum (Syafiana Putri, 2022). English at the elementary school level is mostly applied as a local content subject, so it cannot be implemented optimally. Teaching English to elementary school students poses a significant challenge for teachers, primarily due to the inherent difficulty in shaping children's characters to embrace new learning experiences, particularly in foreign languages (Kusmaryati, 2020). To enhance students' comprehension and learning outcomes, appropriate media is essential. There are various types of learning media available that can be utilized in teaching, particularly in the context of fourth-grade English learning. Teachers must select suitable media based on the students' characteristics. Examples of such media include technology, picture ledgers, Flashcards, and others.

In teaching English to elementary students, teachers should carefully choose and focus on different aspects and skills of English teaching. Using media can facilitate students' understanding of the material. According to Ardiyanti et al (2018), media is a tool that can aid in understanding learning materials more easily. Implementing learning media can provide

students with new learning experiences and environments, motivating and engaging them in the learning process (Ardiyanti et al., 2018). One of the learning media in teaching English as a foreign language is Flashcards. Flashcards are learning media that provide material in the form of interesting images so that they can motivate students to learn. Flashcards are a collection of cards that provide a variety of data and information related to words, numbers, and names of fruits, vegetables, and others applied in interesting images (Aulia, n.d.).

Teaching English to children is a dynamic process that requires careful consideration of their developmental stage and learning needs. Children have open minds and flexible thinking, making them ideal candidates for language acquisition, especially in English, which introduces them to foreign cultures (Febria Zananda, 2019). To teach English effectively to children, teachers must use suitable teaching methods and materials that match the curriculum and appeal to the students' interests and personalities. Soekarno emphasizes several learning principles for teaching English to children, including learning through direct experiences, social contexts, and understanding language use. These principles highlight the importance of using engaging and interactive teaching techniques to create a fun and motivating learning environment for children.

This research was also conducted by Ardiyanti et al. (2018) in Putri Sahasti j, Suyitno d (2018) who expressed a similar opinion that Flashcards are learning media in the form of pictorial cards that can help students more effectively collect information related to learning materials, especially vocabulary (Putri Sahasti & Suyitno, n.d.). Flashcards make it easy for students to know words, numbers, spelling letters, and more through the picture cards applied. Flashcards have the advantage of being very practical and easy to carry everywhere and can be used anywhere. The results of research conducted by Sitompul (2013) showed that students' mastery of vocabulary increased after students followed the learning process by applying Flashcards and wordlists. Students find it easier to collect and understand important and frequently used words and feel motivated and encouraged to follow the learning process that runs fun. His research says that Flashcards can help students improve their vocabulary understanding and can help teachers teach vocabulary that can help students more easily understand vocabulary (Sitompul, n.d.).

Several similar studies apply to Flashcards as a medium of teaching English, especially vocabulary. First, Thalia, et al (2021) with the research title Using Flashcards for Improve Vocabulary, this research was conducted at Mt Hidayatul Islam Tanjungharjo with a total of 26 students. The results of his research show that using Flashcards is an interesting media because it could attract the students' interest and it can improve students vocabulary (Thalia et al., 2021). Second, the research conducted by Wulandari (2017) entitled The Use of Bilingual Flashcards in Teaching English Vocabulary the Eighth-grade students of Mts Mannilingi Bulobulo (pre-experimental research), this research was conducted at Mts Mannilingi Bulobulo with 98 students as participants. The results showed that the student's achievement average score increased in line with the increase of the student's achievement average score in each. Students' mean score on the pre-test is 6.5 and after being given the treatment the students get a mean score post-test of 8.2. The result of this research shows that the use of Flashcards in teaching vocabulary to the eighth-grade students' of MTS Mannilingi Bulobulo in the academic year of 2017/2018 can improve students' understanding (Wulandari, 2017).

Third, the research conducted by Lisa (2019) entitled the effectiveness of Flashcards on the provocation to increase English vocabulary among the fourth abecedarian academy, this research was conducted at SDN 71 Palembang which comported of 30 4th grade abecedarian academy scholars. The results show that there's a significant difference between the provocation to learn English vocabulary among the abecedarian academy fourth- grade scholars before the perpetration of Flashcards and that after the perpetration (76.6), there's a significant difference between English vocabulary mastery in abecedarian academy fourth-grade scholars tutored by using Flashcards and that of those tutored without using Flashcards ($t = 7.74$) (Lisa, 2019). Fourth, the research conducted by Nurhalimah, et al (2021) entitled the effect of Flashcards on scholars in writing vocabulary at seventh grade of mts al ulum, this research was conducted at mts al ulum with several party assessments conforming of 20 grade 7 inferior high academy scholars.. The results of his research show that the treatment of the scholars in writing vocabulary is an increase. It can be seen from the performing test after treatment. It means Flashcards are suitable for perfecting scholars' jotting chops, especially for seventh- grade scholars who freshman's position in English (Nurhalimah et al., 2021).

Fifth, research conducted by Andalas (2017) with the research title the use of flashcard tutoring strategy to increase scholars' English vocabulary mastery (a classroom action research at the fifth grade scholars of SDN 024 Bengkulu utara in academic time 2017/2018), this research was conducted at SDN 024 Bengkulu utara with the number of actors conforming of 26 abecedarian academy scholars. The results of his research show that the flashcard tutoring strategy was effective to ameliorate scholars' English vocabulary mastery chops. The mean score of the pre-assessment was 58.46 the were no scholars who could pass the minimal absoluteness criteria (KKM) at the pre-assessment. The mean score of cycle i was 65.38 for scholars who couldn't pass the minimal absoluteness criteria (KKM). The mean score of cycle ii 73.65 scholars who couldn't pass the minimal absoluteness criteria (KKM). The mean score of cycle iii was 83.08 for scholars who could pass the minimal absoluteness criteria (KKM). So the flashcard tutoring strategy was a good strategy that could ameliorate scholars' English vocabulary mastery chops in the fifth grade of SDN 024 Bengkulu (Andalas, 2017).

English tutoring focuses on four aspects: spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, and the alphabet. Additionally, there are sections, including speaking, listening, writing, and reading, that are essential for perfecting students' English skills. This study will concentrate on vocabulary, an important aspect for improving English language skills. Vocabulary plays an important role in understanding English and is the basis for understanding (Dakhi, 2019). Accessing vocabulary is very important for learning English, as it directly affects students' speaking, writing, listening and reading abilities. Thornbury highlights the significance of vocabulary in language literacy, stating that learners can not progress beyond their eventuality without a sufficient understanding of vocabulary and its use. thus, it's essential for preceptors to use effective strategies and media to educate vocabulary, especially to youthful learners who are still developing their language chops. Vocabulary is the introductory understanding that becomes the foundation for learning languages, especially English. Mastery of vocabulary can help in learning chops in the language. The deeper the understanding of vocabulary, the better the understanding of the use of language, so that it causes vocabulary is veritably important to be learned in understanding language. According to Syarifudin, et al (2014)

vocabulary is a veritably important element in language literacy, especially English (Syarifudin et al., 2014).

Vocabulary is a introductory step that becomes the foundation in learning a language that can help scholars to achieve their pretensions in learning languages. Vocabulary mastery is veritably different, ranging from alphabet, pronunciation, spelling, and other aspects that come the base of understanding language. As the research conducted by Sari and Wardani (2019) vocabulary is the main key to language mastery, understanding speaking chops in the language learned, and perfecting jotting chops, so vocabulary is veritably important to be learned in language literacy, especially English (Sari & Wardani, 2019). Zhihong Bai's research on English vocabulary literacy strategies suggests that achieving vocabulary mastery is told by several factors, including individual differences, age, provocation, gender, and social terrain (Bai, 2018). Individual factors such as unique characteristics and backgrounds require personalized approaches and media to ensure understanding. Age is a factor, as younger learners require specific, detailed explanations appropriate for their age. Motivation, especially crucial for young learners, relies on a positive teacher-student relationship to cultivate a love for learning. Gender differences exist, with boys typically having stronger memories but requiring teaching methods that suit their playful nature to sustain understanding. Additionally, the social environment initially impacts learning outcomes, with a supportive environment enhancing literacy development.

Several factors affect scholars' achievement in vocabulary understanding conforming of first, styles and ways carried out in the vocabulary literacy process applied by preceptors. Second, the media available in supporting the vocabulary literacy process is less effective for scholars. Third, utmost scholars don't have the interest and provocation to learn English. colorful ways can be applied to working the problems faced by these scholars. In similar situations, preceptors can apply media that's intriguing and follow scholars' interests so that they can motivate the system in literacy. Learning media has an important part in working problems faced by scholars. This research discusses how the impact of the use of Flashcards in English literacy for 4th- grade abecedarian academy scholars at SD Negeri 3 Alasanger.

METHOD

a. Research design

In this study, the researcher applied descriptive quantitative research as a method of research. In this study, the researcher uses a quantitative descriptive method which is a research design that will describe how the results of the research will be carried out. In quantitative research, data collection is structured in the form of interviews, observations, and questionnaires to participants either individually or in groups. Data observation is usually obtained by observing participants in the learning process. Quantitative data were used to answer questions about the effect of using Flashcards on improving students' vocabulary understanding, the achievement of 4th-grade elementary school students in learning English and the challenges faced by teachers in teaching English in 4th-grade elementary school, and student responses to the use of Flashcards as an effective learning medium. Will be explained in descriptive form.

b. The subject of the study

The subjects in this study consisted of teachers and students. In the case of this study, the subject consisted of 1 English teacher and 4th-grade elementary school students.

c. The object of the study

The object of this research is Flashcards to teach English, especially in vocabulary, to grade 4 elementary school students at SDN 3 Alasanger. In this study, the researchers chose to conduct research at this school for several reasons, firstly there were no researchers who conducted research at this school before, the second the researchers had never conducted research at this school, the third, the researchers found out how the condition of the students in mastering the language English in this school so that researchers try to research to respond to the problems faced by students in learning English.

d. Data collection

In data collection, the researcher applies action research which is used in the data collection process. This action research consists of interviews, observations, and questionnaires to research participants.

1. Interview

The interview is one of the techniques that can be used in collecting data that gives questions to research subjects so that they get responses that follow what is needed in research. Interviews can be done directly (face to face) or can also be done by giving interview sheets to research subjects.

2. Observation

Observation is one of the data collection techniques in research that applies the process of direct observation of research subjects, assessing and evaluating the progress of students in learning.

3. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is one of the data collection techniques that implements the data collection process by providing a collection of questions that have been prepared in a medium that will be answered by the research subject to obtain the appropriate data desired in the study.

4. Document analysis

Document analysis is one of the data collection techniques carried out by analyzing files, files, and other supporting documents that can provide information related to the development of research subjects that can assist in collecting research data.

e. Research instrument

There are four instruments applied in this study consisting of interview guide, observation sheet, pre-test sheet, and post-test sheet.

1. Interview guide

An interview guide is an important instrument in the data collection process. In this section, the object of research is the English teacher and principal of the school under study. Researchers will use direct interviews with the object of research and also provide interview sheets so that they can collect data according to the needs of the research.

2. Observation sheet

An observation sheet is one of the data collection media that is very important in helping to complete the required data. Observation sheets are given to find out the potential of students, and the problems they face, and to collect auxiliary data needed in research. The researcher observes the learning process and also notes important points in the observation, noting the problems faced by students and teachers in the learning process so that they can determine the actions that will be taken to deal with problems properly.

3. Pre-test sheet

The pre-test sheet is a data collection media that is used to collect data related to the development and understanding of students in the context of understanding vocabulary. A pre-test sheet will be given in print media by providing some basic questions related to vocabulary to determine students' initial understanding of vocabulary.

4. Post-test sheet

The post-test sheet is a data collection media that is used to collect data related to the development of students' learning processes in the context of understanding vocabulary. The post-test will be given at the end of the lesson in printed media by asking some questions related to the vocabulary that has been taught at the beginning of the lesson so that it can collect data related to student learning development.

f. Data analysis

The description method is a method that researchers use in analyzing the data obtained. This research is the research conducted by the researcher himself who examines the development of student learning and will present the results of his research in the form of a description. The stages carried out in this data analysis consist of data collection, display data, conclusion, and reduction data. The first stage begins with data collection, in this stage, the researcher collects various data needed in research, to be able to know the condition of the research subject. Researchers sort out good data and fit what is needed before proceeding to the second stage. The data display stage is the appropriate data sorting stage, followed by data reduction which aims to obtain relevant and consistent data. At the conclusion stage, the researcher concludes the results of data collection which is carried out gradually and repeatedly to obtain consistent data, then the researcher concludes the data obtained from the previous stages. In data analysis, the researcher assessed students' understanding according to the categories developed by Hughes. The ability to understand the vocabulary is assessed by calculating the highest score from the pre-test and post-test and then comparing the two scores to see if there is progress in the student's score. The value scale starts from 20-100. The specifications of the test are as follows:

Scores	Classification
80-100	Excellent
60-80	Good
40-60	Average
20-40	Poor
0-20	Failed

Then, the students' scores will be analyzed by using statistical analysis, to find out if there is any significant effect of using the direct method on the students' speaking comprehension ability. Thus, the different mean is analyzed by using descriptive tests through SPSS 26 version.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the results of the research conducted, the researchers found that the results of teacher observations and interviews showed that the learning process was still ongoing using the teacher centered learning method by means of the teacher only explaining the material and then students taking notes on the material provided. The existence of printed English books or books to support English learning is still minimal so teachers only find material randomly via the internet. In observations, it was also found that the use of technology in learning was very rare so that this was not in accordance with the curriculum guidelines. Apart from that, the teacher-centered learning process also does not provide opportunities for students to learn individually or in groups with other students and the learning process carried out does not contain interactive activities so that students are not motivated to take part in learning.

The lack of English learning media also creates difficulties for students in learning English because the teacher only provides randomly selected material via the internet and then applies the LKPD provided to evaluate students' understanding of the material that has been provided. So, the learning material in class 4 is not in accordance with the available ATP nor is it in accordance with the Merdeka curriculum guidelines. Apart from that, with the unavailability of supplementary English material, students have difficulty understanding the learning context because there are no illustrations or examples provided by the teacher, so this is one of the reasons for implementing Flashcards as an English learning medium to improve students' vocabulary understanding. Before the implementation of Flashcard media as a learning medium, students were still very minimal in understanding and remembering vocabulary. This can be seen from the results of observations and pre-test results conducted by researchers which state that from the pre-test scores the majority of students are still very poor in understanding vocabulary. This is caused by the use of teaching media that does not suit students' interests and needs in the learning process. However, after implementing Flashcard as a learning medium, especially in understanding vocabulary, students experienced an increase in remembering and understanding the new vocabulary taught by researchers. This shows that the application of flashcards in learning helps students understand new vocabulary. The following are the results of the analysis conducted by the researcher:

		Statistics	
		pretest	posttest
N	Valid	25	25
	Missing	0	0
Mean		67.6000	84.8000
Median		65.0000	85.0000
Mode		75.00	80.00 ^a
Variance		66.917	51.000
Minimum		55.00	70.00

Maximum	80.00	100.00
Sum	1690.00	2120.00

Frequency Table

		pretest			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	55.00	3	12.0	12.0	12.0
	60.00	5	20.0	20.0	32.0
	65.00	5	20.0	20.0	52.0
	70.00	3	12.0	12.0	64.0
	75.00	6	24.0	24.0	88.0
	80.00	3	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	25	100.0	100.0	

		posttest			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	70.00	1	4.0	4.0	4.0
	75.00	2	8.0	8.0	12.0
	80.00	7	28.0	28.0	40.0
	85.00	6	24.0	24.0	64.0
	90.00	7	28.0	28.0	92.0
	100.00	2	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	25	100.0	100.0	

From the data that has been analyzed, the researcher compares student scores on the pre-test and post-test to determine the benefits and uses of Flashcards as learning media. From the results of this analysis, it can be determined that the average score of students in the pre-test is 67.6, which is in the good category, but when viewed from the overall score of students in the pre-test, most of the student scores are still included in the category average, so this needs to be improved to prepare students to learn more difficult material in the following semester. However, after implementing Flashcards in the learning process, student scores increased in the post-test, this can be seen from the average student score in the post-test which reached 84.8 which was included in the excellent category. When viewed from the overall score of the post-test, students have experienced an increase in understanding vocabulary which can be seen from the student scores, most of which have reached the good category. Thus, it can be said that the application of Flashcards in the learning process can help students improve their vocabulary understanding, especially for students who are just starting to learn English.

DISCUSSION

The research findings reveal several key issues regarding the current state of English learning in the observed classroom. Firstly, it is noted that the predominant teaching method is teacher-centered, with minimal use of technology and limited availability of printed materials. This approach lacks interactivity and fails to engage students, hindering their motivation to learn. Additionally, the lack of supplementary materials makes it challenging for students to grasp English concepts, as they rely on randomly selected internet resources. To address these challenges, the researchers introduced Flashcards as a supplementary learning tool to improve vocabulary understanding. The decision was based on the observation that students had difficulty remembering and understanding new vocabulary. The implementation of Flashcards resulted in a significant improvement in students' vocabulary retention and comprehension, as evidenced by the increase in post-test scores.

Comparing pre-test and post-test scores, it is evident that the use of Flashcards had a positive impact on students' learning outcomes. The average score increased from 67.6 to 84.8, with the majority of students showing improvement. This indicates that Flashcards effectively support vocabulary learning, particularly for students at the early stages of English acquisition. Overall, the findings suggest that incorporating interactive and supplementary learning tools, such as Flashcards, can enhance the effectiveness of English language instruction. Moving forward, it is essential for educators to continue exploring innovative teaching methods to create a more engaging and effective learning environment for students.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights the challenges faced by teachers in teaching English to elementary school students, particularly in implementing effective teaching methods and providing suitable learning materials. The role of teachers is crucial, as they need to tailor their teaching approach to suit the young learners' needs and interests. Vocabulary acquisition is emphasized as a key aspect of English learning, essential for developing students' language skills. Flashcards are identified as an effective teaching tool, particularly for improving vocabulary understanding among young learners. The research methodology involved descriptive quantitative research, focusing on the impact of using Flashcards on students' vocabulary understanding. The study found that the traditional teacher-centered approach, with minimal use of technology and limited supplementary materials, hindered students' motivation and engagement in learning. However, the introduction of Flashcards as a supplementary learning tool resulted in a significant improvement in students' vocabulary retention and comprehension.

The findings suggest that incorporating interactive and supplementary learning tools, such as Flashcards, can enhance the effectiveness of English language instruction, particularly for young learners. Moving forward, it is essential for educators to continue exploring innovative teaching methods to create a more engaging and effective learning environment for students. Based on these findings, research on the effect of using Flashcards in teaching vocabulary comprehension for 4th-grade students of SDN 3 Alasanker. Researchers need to make the following conclusions: 1. Students' ability to understand vocabulary before being taught using Flashcards is still very minimal. After doing the research, the student's vocabulary comprehension ability before being taught using Flashcards was categorized into the average

level. 2. Students' ability to understand vocabulary after being taught using flashcards has increased. After conducting the research, the student's vocabulary comprehension ability after being taught using Flashcards was categorized into the Excellent level. 3. This shows that there is a significant difference in the student's vocabulary comprehension skills before and after being taught by using Flashcards in the learning process. This shows that the use of Flashcards in the learning process can help students improve their understanding of vocabulary and make it easier for students to remember the vocabulary they have just learned so that students can improve their understanding of vocabulary.

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