

Promoting Students' Vocabulary Mastery by Using Flashcards

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Abstract

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There is a problem with students' limited vocabulary, especially for EFL students. Vocabulary instruction through instructional media is one of the factors contributing to the issue. This study has aims to find out: 1) How the implementation of *flashcard* in teaching vocabulary, 2) How vocabulary is mastered by EFL students both before and after using flashcard media; and 3) The impact of flashcard media on students' vocabulary mastery. Pre-experimental design was used in a quantitative research methodology. There were 62 pupils in the population, and 31 individuals were selected for the sample using a systematic sampling procedure. The research instruments in this study was observation and multiple choice test. The research revealed that flashcard media brings significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery.

Kata kunci:

media flashcard,
penguasaan kosakata
siswa,
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Abstrak

Siswa yang belajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing mengalami keterbatasan dalam kosakata. Pengajaran kosakata melalui media pembelajaran merupakan salah satu faktor yang dapat memengaruhi penguasaan kosakata siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui: 1) Bagaimana penggunaan *flashcard* dalam pengajaran kosakata, 2) Bagaimana penguasaan kosakata siswa sebelum dan sesudah menggunakan media *flashcard*; dan 3) Dampak media *flashcard* terhadap penguasaan kosakata siswa. Desain pra-eksperimental digunakan dalam metodologi penelitian kuantitatif. Populasi siswa sebanyak 62 orang dan 31 orang dipilih sebagai sampel dengan menggunakan prosedur pengambilan sampel sistematis. Instrumen penelitian dalam penelitian ini adalah tes pilihan ganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa media *flashcard* memberikan pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap penguasaan kosakata siswa.

INTRODUCTION

One of the English language components that pupils need to master is vocabulary. One of the most crucial language learning components is expanding one's vocabulary. Students can effectively communicate in English and use the language by gaining vocabulary. The words that facilitate language learning and communication are known as vocabulary. As a result, this circumstance calls for our application, particularly for English language learners. Students must be able to master vocabulary in order to accomplish those goals when learning English in class, making it a fundamentally crucial language component.

Teaching vocabulary in the classroom should be acceptable in order to prevent issues with students' vocabulary mastery, as vocabulary has become one of the key components of the English teaching and learning process. It makes a substantial contribution to academic success in the areas covered in the school curriculum, both in spoken and written English (Sutrisna et al., 2018). It enables the speaker to express his thoughts and comprehend what others are saying. Put another way, a person's capacity to communicate is greatly impacted by their command of terminology. Therefore, a deficiency in vocabulary exacerbates the challenges associated with learning the four components of the English language: reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

Unfortunately, TEFL learners struggle with language mastering. Students at SMP Swasta Sariputra in the seventh grade lack vocabulary. It was seen when the researcher assessed the vocabulary of the students by administering a test to gauge their level of vocabulary knowledge. Multiple-choice was used throughout the test. It was discovered that out of 40 questions, students could only correctly answer 25 of them. It was discovered that the students' vocabulary was quite limited. They had trouble telling the difference between an adjective and an adverb, like quickly and fast, as well as between a noun and an adjective, such beautiful and lovely, easy and easy, etc. The information revealed that their vocabulary is not well-versed.

Vocabulary is one of the most important concepts to grasp when learning a foreign language, especially when studying English. (Chonnia & Izzah, 2022).

Mastering vocabulary is crucial to learning English as a foreign language since vocabulary is necessary for all other language skills (Aristi et al., 2017)). It significantly enhances the effectiveness of English communication (Maya & Al Halim, 2021). That makes it very evident that mastering vocabulary is an essential component of learning English. Understanding vocabulary is essential for all English-speaking abilities, making it a crucial component of communication proficiency. Therefore mastering vocabulary is one of the main focus in English language teaching (Rachmaida & Mutiarani, 2022).

EFL students struggle to acquire English language abilities because they lack a large vocabulary (Chonnia & Izzah, 2022), then they are unable to differentiate between and comprehend the speech part (Habibi et al., 2022). The ability to differ them will assist students to have a large vocabulary mastery. To address this, educators must employ effective methods or strategies when teaching vocabulary in order to help pupils overcome their challenges (Fatiani et al., 2021). The ability to select effective teaching methods is necessary for students' vocabulary to grow (Purba et al., 2022). Since it was made obvious above that a student's vocabulary impacts their level of English proficiency.

In this instance, the researcher attempts to use instructional material in an unconventional manner to teach vocabulary in English. Teaching media are instructional aids that support the subject matter being taught during the teaching and learning process. The following are some examples of instructional materials: flashcards, cue cards, sort cards, card matches, and more.

A flashcard is a type of educational material that takes the shape of a card with words and images on it that can be resized to fit the hand size of the students which designed to pique their interest in expanding vocabulary (Chotimah, 2021). You can create your own or utilize ones that are already produced. In order to create a flashcard, you can either utilize pre made ones or create your own using words and images that may be resized to fit the needs of the students (Santika, et.al 2023).

The using of flashcard has been researched by many researchers. Hidayah, et. al 2023 in their research “A Flashcard Journey” said that there is an impact of flashcards on learning English at a transformative level SDN Potrobangsang 3. With the aid of flashcards, inactive listeners can become actively involved in language decoding. Flashcards not only help with listening comprehension but also enhance one's confidence when speaking out loud. It is different with the focus of this study whether to prove the significant effect of flashcard on vocabulary mastery, because the large vocabulary influences the language proficiency.

Then Kumaat, et. al., 2023 in their research “Improving Students’ Vocabulary Mastery through Flash Cards” found that flashcards improved students’ vocabulary and motivation in learning English in SMP Negeri 5 Tondano. This study has aim to find out the significant effect of using flashcards on students’ vocabulary mastery by comparing pre ad post-test, which aspect of vocabulary significantly affected and how the flashcard media affects the vocabulary learning process.

The researcher is motivated to explore the significant impact of including the flashcards on students’ vocabulary mastery based on prior research. To this end, the research hypothesis posits that the adoption of the flashcards has a major effect on vocabulary mastery.

METHOD

This study was conducted at SMP Swasta Sariputra, located at 423 Jl. Sudirman, Padangsidimpuan. This study used quantitative method by employing a pretest-posttest design with one group as the subject. Thirteen seventh grade students, who made up the population of this study, were selected for the sample using a systematic sampling procedure.

The research used observation to measure the implementation of flashcard and vocabulary test, it was multiple choice questions to gauge students’ vocabulary mastery. The questions measured students’ ability to identify and master the speech parts such as adjective, verb, adverb and noun. The vocabulary

markers served as the basis for the construction of this test.

The implementation of flashcard was measured by score below.

Table 1 The Score Criteria of Implementation Flashcard

NO	SCORE	CATEGORY
1	3.1 – 4	Very good
2	2.1 – 3	Good
3	1.1 – 2	Enough
4	1	Bad
5	0	Fail

Then students' test results were examined using the scoring standards listed below.

Table 2 The Score Criteria of Vocabulary Mastery

NO	SCORE	CATEGORY
1	80-100	Very good
2	70-79	Good
3	60-69	Enough
4	50-59	Bad
5	0-49	Fail

Before utilizing flashcards, students take a pretest to gauge their vocabulary. Following treatment, a posttest using flashcards was given to determine the students' vocabulary. Subsequently, the investigator investigated the hypothesis regarding the potential impact of flashcards on vocabulary mastery. Both descriptive and inferential analysis were used as data analysis techniques in this study. The hypothesis was then tested using the t-test formula.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

With a mean score of 3.6, the use of flashcards to teach vocabulary from observation sheets was shown to be highly effective because it was categorized very good. Next, a description of the students' vocabulary competence will be provided.

Students' Vocabulary Mastery Before Implementing Flashcards

A vocabulary exam with forty questions was administered by the researcher. The students' scores, which the researcher obtained, are displayed below.

Table 1 Students' Vocabulary Score before Implementing Flashcards

No	Item	Score
1	Mean	40
2	Median	42
3	Mode	46

The researcher then examines the pupils' grasp of vocabulary using the indicators listed below.

- Students' vocabulary mastery in noun aspect, the score was 48, the category was "Fail"
- Students' vocabulary mastery in verb aspect, the score was 50; the category was "Bad".
- Students' vocabulary mastery in adjective aspect, the score was 57; the category was "Bad".
- Students' vocabulary mastery in adverb aspect, the score was 28; the category was "Fail".

Students' Vocabulary Mastery after Implementing Flashcards

Following their use of flashcards to teach vocabulary, students received scores that are displayed as follows.

Table 2 Students' Vocabulary Score After Taught by Flashcards

No	Item	Score
1	Mean	63
2	Median	62
3	Mode	61

The researcher then examines the pupils' grasp of vocabulary using the indicators listed below:

- Students' vocabulary mastery in noun aspect, the score was 66, the category was "Enough"

- b. Students' vocabulary mastery in verb aspect was 58.38, the category was "Bad".
- c. Students' vocabulary mastery in adjective aspect was 74.83, the category was "Good".
- d. Students' vocabulary mastery in adverb aspect was 50.64, the category was "Bad".

Then, the hypothesis testing stated that t_{test} was 3.75 then t_{table} was 2.04. T_{test} is higher than t_{table} , it clearly means the alternative hypothesis was acknowledged. Therefore the using of flashcards has a major impact on students' ability to master vocabulary.

Discussion

Research findings show that there was a considerable impact on students' vocabulary mastery by using flashcards especially in noun and adjective aspect. As the reseacher presumed that flashcards is appropriate in teaching vocabulary, it gives the substantial impact on the students' understanding of vocabulary. Not only the vocabulary mastery, students also become more actively interact in classroom by using this media.

The significance occurred as a result of the excellent use of flashcard media in teaching vocabulary to students. In teaching vocabulary, a teacher needs to be able to design a learning which help students learn language more easily and motivate them by using media (Vermunt, 2023). Teacher can use image based learning materials such as flashcards to help students learn language more quickly with greater interest in classroom (Farmasari, et.al. 2021).

This media increased students' engagement and made the learning process more enjoyable. Students encourage one another to learn even when the outcomes aren't perfect, but they attempt to differentiate and advance their vocabulary mastery. This indicates that flashcard materials have a significant impact on students' ability to recognize and form new words in English.

Why is it that after using flashcard media to teach vocabulary, students can learn it more? The reason for this is the using of interesting media brings interesting lesson. Students have a good interaction in a classroom which contributes to their vocabulary (Pramadanti, 2023).

Due to the fact that the researcher sits comfortably in front of the students, arranges the flashcards in the order she would like to present them, holds the cards at chest level and faces the students, shows the students the front of the flashcard, which consists of word cards that are said in English, and asks the students to repeat after explaining the material several times to ensure they can pronounce it correctly after which the instructor instructs the class to search for photos before rushing to the box to retrieve the cards.

When one is engaged in learning a vocabulary word, the brain will record it more readily by using flashcards. Naturally, students will find it simple to add basic vocabulary from foreign languages to learning process activities using flashcard media, and they will also find it easy to memorize, which will encourage students to participate in learning activities that involve doing, observing, and asking questions (Azhima, et.al., 2021)

CONCLUSION

Following flashcard instruction, there has been a notable impact on students' vocabulary mastery. With the use of flashcards, which pique students' interest in learning and help them acquire a large vocabulary, this media increases students' enthusiasm and activity levels in the classroom. Another enjoyable activity in the classroom that promotes vocabulary learning is the use of flashcards.

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