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DEVELOPMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL-THEMED PICTURE CARDS TO IMPROVE ENGLISH VOCABULARY OF FIRST GRADE STUDENTS AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

This study was conducted due to the limited use of engaging and contextually relevant learning media, particularly in introducing environmental-themed English vocabulary. Teachers still apply traditional approaches, such as memorizing and translating words without the support of attractive visual media, causing students to lose interest quickly and experience difficulties in understanding the meaning of the vocabulary being taught. Students' difficulty in memorizing and understanding new words is one of the main problems in learning English vocabulary. The main objective of this study was to develop a learning media product in the form of picture cards for first-grade English learning on the topic "My Garden Is Colorful?" in elementary school. The picture card media was designed to be easy for teachers to use and to improve students' English vocabulary mastery in a more effective and engaging way. This study utilized the ADDIE development model for research and development (R&D), which consists of five stages: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. Data was collected through observations, questionnaires, and interviews. A Likert scale was used to analyse both quantitative and qualitative data. The results of this research and development showed that the validity score assessed by the material expert was 93.33%, the media expert was 94.67%, and the language expert was 90.67%, indicating that the media was considered valid and feasible for use. The evaluation conducted by the educational practitioner showed a practicality score of 4.73, while students' responses showed a practicality score of 4.80, which was categorized as very practical. Therefore, it can be concluded that the picture card media developed by the researcher met the criteria of validity and practicality and was appropriate for use in first-grade English learning at the elementary school level.

INTRODUCTION

One of the subjects instructed at the elementary school level is English. English is recognized as one of the most extensively utilized foreign languages globally, in both written and oral forms, whether as a second language or an external language. Within Indonesia, English remains categorized as a foreign language. The English language curriculum within the Indonesian educational framework is intended to cultivate the four language competencies listening, speaking, reading, and writing to enable students to

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communicate proficiently in English.

In contemporary times, English has emerged as a crucial language in the globalization era. Vocabulary stands as one of the essential elements that must be acquired. This is logical, considering that all four language skills depend on word knowledge, as they would lack effectiveness without adequate vocabulary mastery. The greater the vocabulary repertoire students possess, the more proficient their English proficiency becomes (Lindawati, 2018). Insufficient vocabulary resources will cause students to struggle in mastering reading and additional skills. Strong vocabulary mastery indicates that students have the capability to comprehend and utilize vocabulary appropriately.

Through preliminary observations, the researchers conducted interviews with first-grade classroom teachers and uncovered various difficulties in the English language acquisition process. Essentially, there exists a shortage of interactive and contextually appropriate educational resources, especially when presenting English vocabulary centered on environmental topics. Moreover, educators continue to depend on conventional methods including rote memorization and direct translation without the integration of captivating visual support, which leads to students rapidly losing enthusiasm and facing challenges in comprehending the vocabulary concepts being delivered.

Tafonao (2018) contends that the function of educational media within the instructional process constitutes a fundamental component of the educational framework that remains inseparable from it. English language instruction at the elementary school stage necessitates maximum support from educational media, considering its significant contribution in aiding students to acquire new vocabulary. Utilizing educational media that corresponds with learners' developmental stages enables them to internalize content more efficiently, while simultaneously stimulating their learning motivation and establishing a more dynamic and stimulating educational atmosphere.

Picture cards are learning aids in the form of cards that display images accompanied by specific vocabulary words, with the aim of helping students recognize and memorize new words. Generally, picture cards are small, practical to use, and visually appealing, making them effective in increasing student motivation, particularly in English language learning.

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A comprehensive examination of prior research literature has demonstrated that picture cards have been extensively employed as an instructional instrument to enhance English vocabulary acquisition among learners at the elementary school level. Nevertheless, up to the present moment, no investigation has deliberately created picture card media featuring an environmental theme tailored for first-grade elementary school English instruction. Consequently, the distinctive contribution of this present study resides in the creation of environmental-themed picture card media as a strategic initiative to strengthen English vocabulary proficiency among first-grade elementary school learners.Considering these problems, an appropriate learning solution is needed to help students understand and memorize English vocabulary more effectively, particularly those with an environmental theme. One learning medium that can be implemented is picture cards. This medium is considered suitable for first-grade students because it presents vocabulary in an engaging and concrete visual form, making it easier for students to associate images with word meanings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Picture card

According to (Hasan et al., 2021), the term “media” derives from the Latin word “medium,” which means “intermediary.” In the context of communication, media refers to the tools or channels utilised to transmit information or messages. Instructional media are instructional components that include messages, people, and equipment.

According to Khulilullah (2015), picture cards are usually made of stiff or thick paper, and on both the front and back sides there are words, phrases, or sentences. The size and content of the cards are typically tailored to the teacher’s preferences; the most important thing is that the text on the card must be visible to students standing behind it.

According to (Rachmayani et al., 2022), picture cards are a type of game where images are shown quickly to stimulate children’s brains so they can process the information presented to them, and are highly effective for helping at the

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earliest age possible, children learn to read, recognise letters, and recognise numbers. According to (Gowa, 2019), "picture cards are educational cards or illustrated cards accompanied by words."

It can be inferred from the judgements of professionals that picture cards are a card-based learning medium containing images and words to help students receive, recognize, and understand information more easily. The use of picture cards can facilitate the learning process in an engaging and effective manner, particularly in helping students recognize and remember new vocabulary.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Picture Cards According to Kadir in Zainidar (2021). Some advantages of picture cards include their concrete nature and greater realism in presenting key issues compared to verbal language; they can overcome spatial and temporal limitations as well as observational constraints; they clarify issues across various fields; and they are inexpensive, they are easy to obtain and use, and they serve as an effective instructional media technique because they combine facts and ideas clearly, powerfully, and coherently through the use of illustrated text.

As for the disadvantages of picture cards, they include the fact that images or photos rely solely on visual perception; images or photos of overly complex objects are less effective for learning activities; and their size is too limited for large groups.

It is clear from the explanation above that picture cards are an effective teaching tool because they present information in a concrete, engaging, and simple manner for pupils to comprehend. However, their use is limited by their size, and they are less effective when the images used are too complex.

The Role of Vocabulary in Improving Students' English Language Skills

In the fields of language learning and linguistics, vocabulary is a term often used to refer to the collection of words or lexicon possessed by an individual or within a language. (Amelia, 2021).

English vocabulary is one of the key aspects of learning and mastering a foreign language. Improving English vocabulary skills is crucial for individuals who wish to achieve effective communication in today's global context

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(Napitupulu et al., 2023).

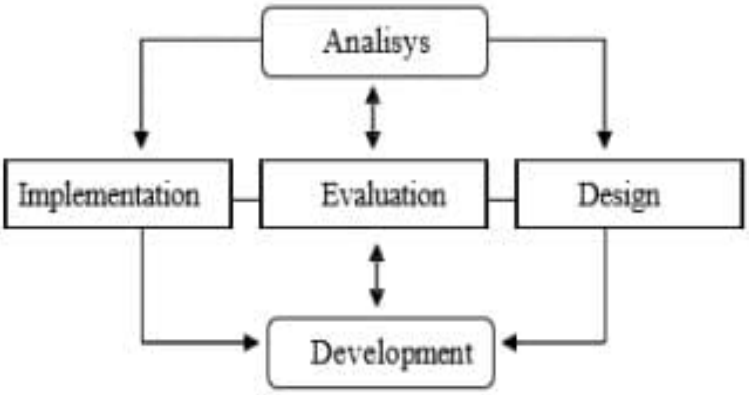
A person can speak and comprehend texts in the language they are learning more effectively if they have a large and varied vocabulary (Firdaus et al., 2020).

According to experts, vocabulary is the collection of words that a person possesses and uses in language to support the communication process. A strong command of vocabulary plays a crucial role in English language learning because it helps individuals understand information, communicate effectively, and improve their ability to comprehend texts and use the language more effectively.

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RESEARCH METHOD



Picture 1. ADDIE

The Research & Development (R&D) method is a research and development approach suitable for studies aimed at discovering new products or innovations and developing the products that have been discovered (p. 7).

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Conceptually, the five interconnected phases of the ADDIE model are Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. (Bulhayat et al., 2021). The ADDIE model was first introduced by Reiser and Mollenda and is still widely used today in research on the development of instructional media. This is because its steps are systematic and easily adaptable to educational settings.

This study was conducted at SDN Tanah Tinggi 7 in Tangerang City, involving 32 first-grade pupils as subjects of study. The selection of this class was based on observations and interviews that indicated that the students' English vocabulary skills still needed improvement, particularly regarding material related to environmental themes. Students still struggled to understand and remember new vocabulary provided by the teacher. Additionally, learning activities generally relied on conventional teaching methods, using objects found in the school environment as supporting media. This situation resulted in a limited variety of learning media, thereby preventing students' interest and participation in English language learning from developing optimally.

This study involved four experts: a content expert, a media expert, a language expert, and an education expert (teacher). They assessed and evaluated the picture cards before they were used in the classroom. Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, expert consultations, and expert evaluations ranging from one-on-one tests, small-scale tests, and medium-scale tests.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Results of the Expert Assessment

The ADDIE model is the development model utilized in this investigation. This model was developed by Walter Dick and Lou Carey (1996). This research and development project will result in an educational media product in the form of illustrated vocabulary cards on the theme of the environment. Conceptually, Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation are the five interconnected phases that make up the ADDIE model (Bulhayat et al., 2021).

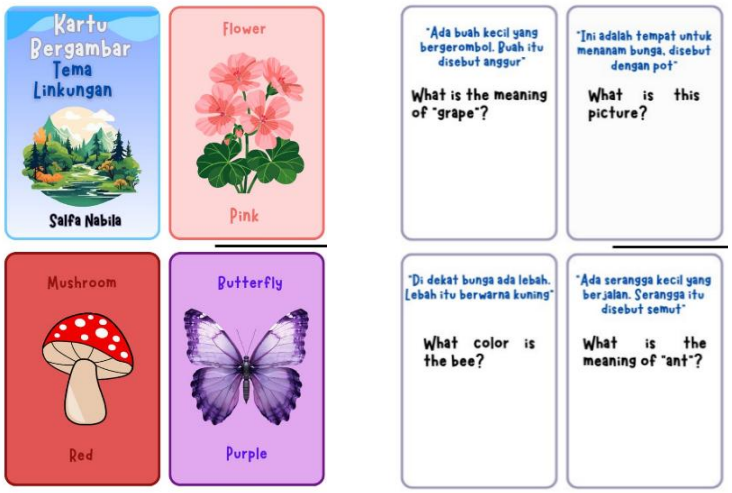
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Analysis

In this development study involving picture card media, the analysis stage was conducted. The results of the analysis of student characteristics indicated that students tended to be passive during the learning process. This was the case even though teachers had utilized concrete media such as objects found in the school environment. Learning still relied heavily on textbooks or worksheets, leading to low student interest and boredom. Therefore, the researcher developed environment-themed picture cards deemed suitable for first-grade students.

Design

During the design phase, the researcher selected vocabulary related to the environment, particularly objects found in a park. The media created consists of double-sided picture cards: the front displays an image along with the English word, while the back contains a short description and simple questions. The researcher also designed an attractive cover and layout tailored for first-grade students.



Picture 2. The card

Development

During the development stage, the researcher began developing the picture card materials based on the plan formulated during the design stage. The researcher then sought feedback from subject material experts, media experts, and language experts to evaluate the materials' suitability before piloting them with

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students.

Implementation

During the implementation stage, the picture card materials were used to teach English vocabulary to first-grade elementary school students using the lesson “My Garden Is Colorful?”. The teacher used the picture cards as a medium to introduce vocabulary to students through images related to the environmental theme. Students observed the images shown, then named and understood the vocabulary on the cards. Afterward, students answered the questions on the back of the cards as a form of practice to assess their level of understanding of the vocabulary they had learned.

Evaluation

An evaluation phase was conducted to determine the suitability and practicality of the picture card media that had been developed. The evaluation included validation results from subject material experts, media experts, language experts, and education experts, as well as student responses to the use of picture card media in learning. The evaluation results were used as a basis for improving and refining the media so that a final product suitable for use in English vocabulary learning for first-grade elementary school students could be obtained.

This study produced several sets of evaluation data obtained from the validation and assessment process conducted by experts. The assessment involved subject material experts, media experts, language experts, and education experts to determine the suitability of the picture card media that was developed. The validators assessed the content, media design, language use, and the media’s suitability for first-grade elementary school students. Table 1 displays the findings of each validator's evaluation.

Table 1: Results of the Expert Validation Assessment

No.	Expert Test	Score	Percentage	Category
1.	Material Expert	4,6	93,33%	Well worth it
2.	Media Expert	4,73	94,67%	Well worth it
3.	Language Expert	4,5	90,67%	Well worth it
4.	Education Expert (Teacher)	4,73	94,67%	Well worth it

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Based on Table 1, the expert validation results for the material achieved an average score of 4.6 with a percentage of 93.33%, which falls into the "highly acceptable" category. These results indicate that the material presented on the picture cards aligns with the learning objectives and the characteristics of first-grade elementary school students, and supports the learning of English vocabulary related to environmental themes.

The media expert evaluation yielded an average score of 4.73 with a percentage of 94.67%, which falls into the "highly suitable" category. These results indicate that the visual aspects, design, size, color, and presentation of the picture card media were deemed attractive and appropriate for use in learning activities.

Furthermore, language experts gave an average score of 4.5 with a percentage of 90.67%, which also falls into the "highly suitable" category. These results indicate that the vocabulary, spelling, and language used in the media are appropriate for the developmental level and abilities of elementary school students.

Meanwhile, education experts (teachers) gave an average score of 4.73, representing 94.67% of the total, which falls into the "highly suitable" category. This assessment indicates that the picture card media is easy to use in the classroom, meets students' needs, and is effective in facilitating the process of learning and mastering English vocabulary.

Based on the validation results from content experts, media experts, language experts, and education experts, the developed environmental-themed picture card media received a "highly suitable" rating. Thus, this media can be used as an English learning tool to help improve vocabulary mastery among first-grade elementary school students.

Product Test Results

After the picture card materials were deemed suitable by experts through a validation process, the next step was to conduct trials with students. The trials were conducted in stages: a one-to-one trial involving 3 students, a small-scale trial involving 5 students, and a medium-scale trial involving 10 first-grade

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students from SDN Tanah Tinggi 7 in Tangerang City. The purpose of these pilot tests was to determine the practicality of the picture card media and to obtain direct feedback from students regarding the developed media. The results of the students' evaluations at each stage of the pilot tests are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Product Testing Phase

No	Test Phase	Score	Percentage	Category
1.	One to one	4,2	84,4%	Worthy
2.	Small Group	4,4	88,33%	Well worth it
3.	Medium Group	4,80	96,17%	Well worth it

Based on the results of one-on-one trials, small-scale tests, and medium-scale tests, the picture card medium received an excellent response from students. The improvement in assessment results at each stage indicates that the developed medium is highly practical. Students gave positive feedback on the media's presentation, the clarity of the images, and the ease of understanding English vocabulary related to environmental themes. Thus, the picture card media developed is considered practical and suitable for use as a learning tool to help improve the English vocabulary mastery of first-grade elementary school students.

The assessment findings gathered from subject matter specialists, media specialists, linguistic specialists, and pedagogical specialists reveal that the developed environment-themed picture cards demonstrate an exceptionally high degree of viability. These outcomes establish that the produced media fulfill educational benchmarks, correspond with the developmental traits of first-grade elementary school learners, and align with the English vocabulary content being taught. These discoveries align with Gowa's (2019) claim that picture cards function as an educational medium that merges visual and textual components, thereby aiding learners in grasping the content more efficiently. Additionally, Hasan et al. (2021) highlighted that educational media function as an instructional communication pathway that transmits educational content more successfully and productively to learners.

The outcomes of product evaluations conducted across the one-on-one, small-group, and medium-group stages demonstrated a progressive improvement

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in achievement scores at each evaluation tier. This signifies that the picture card medium created possesses a substantial degree of practicality and was met with approval by the learners. The learners exhibited heightened eagerness towards engaging in the educational activities, considering that the medium employed incorporates visually appealing and easily comprehensible imagery. These outcomes find confirmation in the investigation conducted by Rachmayani et al. (2022), which posits that the implementation of picture card media can bolster learner involvement and intrinsic drive owing to the fact that content is delivered through visual representation and in a more relatable manner when contrasted with traditional methodologies.

The implementation of environment-themed picture cards likewise contributes to aiding learners in recognizing, comprehending, and retaining English vocabulary with greater efficiency. By means of tangible visual representations that connect to daily experiences, learners experience less difficulty in connecting objects with the definitions of the vocabulary they are acquiring. The discoveries of this investigation correspond with the conclusions of Mulyanti and Sya (2023), who assert that picture card media serves as a productive instrument for strengthening elementary school learners' command of English vocabulary. Additionally, Firdaus et al. (2020) clarify that proficiency in vocabulary acquisition constitutes a pivotal component in nurturing learners' linguistic and communicative competencies. Consequently, the picture card media created can function as a viable alternative instructional instrument for strengthening first-grade elementary school learners' English vocabulary repertoire.

CONCLUSION

This development study created learning materials in the form of illustrated vocabulary cards with an environmental theme to enhance first-grade students' vocabulary in English class. The objective was to determine the quality of the learning materials based on their validity and practicality through evaluations by subject matter experts, media experts, and language experts, as

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well as student responses via a questionnaire. This study employed the Research and Development (R&D) method using the ADDIE development model. The results of this study indicate that, according to the content expert, the validity level is 4.6 (93.33%); according to the media expert, it is 4.73 (94.67%); and according to the language expert, it is 4.5 (90.67%). The evaluation by the educational expert indicates a practicality level of 4.75 (94.67%). In the one-to-one test, the results of the student response questionnaire obtained by the researcher showed an average score of 4.2 (84.4%); in the small-scale test phase, the score was 4.51 (90.33%); and in the medium-scale test phase, the score was 4.80 (96.17%).

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