

THE USING FLASHCARDS AS MEDIA TO IMPROVE ENGLISH VOCABULARY MASTERY AT SD NEGERI 2 SAMBONG

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USING FLASHCARDS AS MEDIA TO TEACH ENGLISH VOCABULARY AT SD NEGERI 2 SAMBONG

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the use of flashcards as a teaching tool or media to teach English vocabulary acquisition at SD Negeri 2 Sambong. The qualitative description method was used to describe the use of flashcards in the context of English language learning at the school. This research was conducted by collecting data through direct observation, test, and documentation related to the use of flashcards at SD Negeri 2 Sambong. The total of participants in this research is 28 students of the low-grades. From this research we find that Flashcards help students in remembering, adding new vocabulary, and understanding what they do not know in an interactive and fun way. The interaction between teachers and students was also seen to be more active and engaged during the use of Flashcards. The test score results show an improvement of the students' English vocabulary. The average score in the test before using flashcard is 76.00, in test after using flashcard is 85.00. It can be concluded that using Flashcard as media in teaching English vocabulary can help them remember the new words they learned.

Keywords: *Flashcards, Vocabulary, Students.*

Introduction

Language in human life has a very important role because language is a tool used by humans to convey information or certain goals and objectives. The ability to master various languages can affect a person in learning other things and fields. Good mastery of language makes a person able to express, express ideas, ideas or goals to others, therefore good language skills for a person greatly facilitate his life to interact with other people. Therefore, we must learn a foreign language other than our mother tongue from an early age or start entering primary school.

English is also referred to as a second language, because English is a target language, which is a language that is deliberately learned with a specific purpose (Brown, 2008). This underlies the consideration of English starting to be given to elementary school students (bsnpindonesia.org). Permendiknas RI. No. 23 of 2006 states that primary schools can make English a local content subject. English is an international language and is also the language of instruction for most primary, secondary and higher education for children learning English at school age (Brown, 2008). We should learn English from an early age because English is now easily found everywhere from food packaging, drink packaging, and story books almost all use English.

The basis of a language is vocabulary, if vocabulary does not exist then there is no such thing as language. The word "vocabulary" is a word that succinctly represents a collection of words in a language (Joklova, 2009). Vocabulary is the number of words that students know in a language. Vocabulary continues to grow with age which is very useful as a communication tool (Komachali and Khodareza, 2012). According to Mohammadnejad et al. (2012), vocabulary is a basic element of a language which is used to label things such as objects, properties and verbs to explain the meaning of what you want to convey. In Oxford learner's pocket dictionary (2008), explains that vocabulary is: (1) a number of words that students know and use, (2) a number of words used in language, (3) a word list consisting of words and their meanings. According to Komachali and Khodareza (2012), vocabulary usually develops and increases at every age level, and fundamentally functions as a means of communication. Before we learn a language, we must also learn the basis of a language, namely we must know the

basic vocabulary that must be owned, it will make it easier for us to learn English and other languages.

Vocabulary must be taught especially for foreign language teaching and learning activities, because even though students have mastered grammatical forms, they cannot communicate in a foreign language without mastering vocabulary. To master a language is not easy because some aspects of language are not easy to learn, it is impossible to learn a language without mastering vocabulary. Harmer (1998: 154) says that the general principle in the past was to teach more concrete words at lower levels and gradually become more abstract. Words like 'black', 'white', 'yellow', etc. have appeared in the beginner's syllabus because the things represented by those words are in front of the students and thus easy to explain.

Teaching vocabulary is one of the most discussed aspects of teaching English as a foreign language. Recent research shows that teaching vocabulary may be problematic because many teachers are not confident about the best practice in vocabulary teaching and at times do not know where to begin to form an instructional emphasis on word learning (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008). Vocabulary can be defined as sounds that express meaning and form an independent unit in a language. It can be said that vocabulary is the smallest unit of speech that processes individual meanings to speak and can be used to interact with each other and vocabulary can be said to be a group of words in a particular language as part of foreign language learning.

Based on the observation in SD N 2 Sambong, the teacher said, most of the students get much difficulty to learn English vocabulary. The student's achievement in English is low. One of the ways to introduce English to elementary school students is by using teaching media flashcards, which will facilitate the introduction of English vocabulary to students in low-level elementary schools or grades 1, 2 and 3. Flashcards are small cards that contain images, text, or symbols that remind or lead students to something related to the images that can be used to practice spelling and enrich additional vocabulary. The size of the text and images in flashcards must be made large enough so that all class members can see the content in the flashcards (Muhammadnejad et al., 2012). John Haycraft (1978: 102) states flash cards are cards that contain printed or drawn words and/or pictures. Flashcard drills provide a means for students to memorize important information. The information that can be acquired through flash card drills is varied and can include math facts, sight words, national capitals, foreign language vocabulary, and so on. Due to the wide potential uses of flash card instruction, teachers can benefit from knowing the research-based guidelines to gain optimal effectiveness from this strategy. With flashcards, students' sense of sight can be helped, so that the information provided can be maximally absorbed because flashcards usually feature images that are attractive to students.

In addition, Chesla in Huda (2021) says that flashcards are a simple yet highly effective learning tool. Flashcards refer to pieces of images used by teachers to teach. The term image refers to a two-dimensional representation. From the definition of flashcards, we can conclude that flashcards are picture cards that contain photos or images on the front page and there is a vocabulary description according to the image on the front page and a description of how to read it. In addition, Schmitt (1997: 212) says that new words can be learned by learning them with pictures of their meanings, not with definitions.

Based in the problems, the researcher tries to implement Flashcard as a media in teaching English vocabulary in SD N 2 Sambong. It will make it easy for students to learn, enjoy and be active in the learning process. They learn and know something that is available in vocabulary by using flashcards to help students in enriching students' vocabulary. It is also easy to make, carry, and can also be a media for playing games. In this study, researcher is interested to conduct a research with the title "Using Flashcard as Media to Teach English Vocabulary in SD N 2 Sambong".

Methods

This research is descriptive qualitative method. This research was conducted by collecting data through direct observation, vocabulary test, and documentation related to the use of flashcards at SD Negeri 2 Sambong. The data include the use of flashcards in learning, interaction between teachers and students, students score in vocabulary test, and student responses to the use of flashcards. The researcher conducted direct observation of the process of using flashcards in lower grades or grades 1, 2 and 3 of English lessons at SD Negeri 2 Sambong. Grade 1 students consist of 7 students, grade 2 students consist of 15 students, and grade 3 students consist of 6 students, so the total of sample data is 28 students. These instruments includes observing how students interact with flashcards and how flashcards are used in learning activities then to descriptively describe the use of flashcards as a tool to improve mastery of English vocabulary understanding at SD Negeri 2 Sambong.

The use of flashcards is carried out starting from week 5 of the assignment period at school precisely for class 1 to carry out the use of flashcards on Friday during English lessons at the last hour of the lesson, then in class 2 on Thursday English lessons and in class 3 on Wednesday at the last hour of English lessons. This interpretation can include the benefits of using flashcards, the effectiveness of teaching using flashcards, as well as recommendations for developing the use of flashcards in English learning at SD Negeri 2 Sambong especially in low grades. This qualitative descriptive method can provide a clear and detailed description of learning media using flashcards as a tool to improve English vocabulary acquisition at SD Negeri 2 Sambong.

Finding and Discussion

Based on the research results obtained, flashcards can improve students' English vocabulary skills at SD Negeri 2 Sambong in the lower grades. Learning using flashcards media can help students memorize and remember English vocabulary quickly the words they have learned. In addition to effectively increasing vocabulary, flashcards can also motivate and make students interested in learning English, they do not feel bored. Students pay close attention to the teacher in front and focus on the flashcards given, they are also enthusiastic to point their hands when given questions about the words. Brown (2008) points out that flashcards can also make the learning atmosphere more interesting, teachers can create a more lively learning atmosphere and increase children's enthusiasm in learning English, because this can be done by playing. Playing while learning using flashcards will affect students' affective which will affect the success of learning words (Brown, 2008). Learning while playing also makes the atmosphere of the class relaxed, this can be seen from the students' desire to come forward to show their memorisation skills.

Flashcards can help students recognise new words and also help students recognise new objects from the pictures on the flashcards (Nugroho et al., 2012). The thing that really affects students' memory when the picture is in its concrete form, which is about fruits and colours. The student tried to recall the word in the picture such as the picture of mango fruit and also mentioned the colour of the fruit. This shows that pictures provide another code that is independent of the verbal code (Pavio in Stephen, 2011). Flashcards are presented randomly by the teacher, the teacher guides students to pronounce English and the meaning of the word on the flashcards, this is repeated three times to make it easier to understand and remember new vocabulary in English.

The use of flashcards is carried out starting from week 5 of the assignment period at school, precisely for class 1 to use flashcards on Friday English lessons at the last hour of lessons, then in class 2 on Thursday English lessons and in class 3 on Wednesday at the last hour of English lessons, students are very enthusiastic in using this flash card teaching media, because it not only introduces English vocabulary but they also get to know the calculations or sums that exist, students are also introduced to songs and dances while using this flash card teaching media. Students are not easily bored and are more focused on paying attention to the

material provided and also memorizing vocabulary such as fruits, colours and quantities in the flashcards.

At the first meeting, the researcher observed memory and then conducted a test. Through observation, the researcher determined the research subjects and then conducted the pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was conducted before the researcher used the media. The researcher only wrote the vocabulary on the blackboard. Before using flash card media, the students looked bored and unmotivated, and learning became ineffective. Flash card media was used during learning by showing cards to students. After introducing and using flash card media, the researcher gave a post-test. On the second meeting, the researcher only observed the memory of the research subjects that had been determined previously and gave the prepared test. At this meeting, the researcher added to the vocabulary given, namely about quantities in the flashcards. In addition to making observations, researchers also distributed post-test questions that students had to do.

Based on the first vocabulary test before using flashcards media to find out the extent of students' understanding of English vocabulary, the average score of 28 students (grade 1, 2, 3) is 76.00. This result shows that students' understanding of English vocabulary is still low. Then, after the application of flashcard media to student learning, researchers conducted a posttest with the same question format as the pretest. The result shows that the average score of low grade students is 85.00. It means using flashcard as media to teach English vocabulary has a positive impact on understanding and adding English vocabulary or vocabulary to students because with the use of flash card teaching media students become easier to memorize and remember English vocabulary, students also become happy in English lessons, which initially students really dislike English lessons when there is the latest innovation in learning students become very enthusiastic in learning. The visual nature of flashcards helps students to make it easier to understand vocabulary or English vocabulary by using images, colours and providing explanations or descriptions of these images making the learning process more interesting and memorable and making students not bored in learning English vocabulary. Furthermore, the interactive nature of flashcards encourages active participation and stimulates students' interest in learning English. Students are very enthusiastic in learning English by using these flashcards to help increase students' vocabulary.

In conclusion, based on the results of research on the mastery of English vocabulary at SD Negeri 2 Sambong, mastery of English vocabulary is very important. It needs to be prioritized to make it easier and faster to speak English, namely by being taught through interesting media such as flash card media. interesting media such as flash card media to improve elementary school students' mastery of English vocabulary. Here, flash card media can improve students' English vocabulary acquisition skills. This can be seen from the results of observations and interviews conducted by researchers. The implementation of learning English vocabulary mastery of students' English vocabulary mastery through flash card media is adjusted to the existing theme. Learning English vocabulary by using flashcard media can help students memorize and remember quickly the vocabulary that has been learned. In addition to effectively improving vocabulary acquisition, flashcards can also motivate and make students interested in learning.

Conclusion

The researcher can conclude some conclusions as follows: flashcards in English learning at SD Negeri 2 Sambong can increase student engagement. Flashcards provide interesting visualization and help students to be more active in learning English learning by looking at the pictures and words listed on flashcards, students can understand the meaning of understanding and adding English vocabulary. The use of flashcards can help students to improve their memory of English lessons. Through repetition using pictures from flashcards, students can remember vocabulary better and more clearly. The use of flashcards can also

increase the interaction between teachers and students. Teachers can use flashcards as a tool to ask questions to students, thus building more active communication in English learning.

Although the use of flashcards has significant benefits, it should be noted that the use of flashcards as a tool to improve English vocabulary acquisition at SD Negeri 2 Sambong can also face some obstacles. These constraints include the limited number of flashcards available, the suitability of flashcards with the curriculum, as well as the challenge in motivating students to continue using flashcards outside the school environment.

In order to increase the effectiveness of using flashcards, it is suggested that in the future teachers at SD Negeri 2 Sambong can develop and continue a variety of activities involving flashcards, such as comprehension games, group exercises, or independent use of flashcards at home. Thus, the use of flashcards can be an effective tool in improving the mastery of English comprehension at SD Negeri 2 Sambong.

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