

# Using Flashcard as Media to Teach English Vocabulary in SD N 2 Sambong

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

### 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 foundation of a language lies in its vocabulary, if vocabulary does not exist then there is no such thing as language. The term "vocabulary" succinctly denotes a compilation of words within a language (Joklova, 2009). It represents the extent of words a person knows in a particular language with this knowledge expanding over time, proving to be a valuable tool for communication (Komachali and Khodareza, 2012). As noted by Mohammadnejad et al. (2012), vocabulary serves as a fundamental component of language, enabling the labeling of objects, properties, and verbs to articulate intended meanings. The Oxford learner's pocket dictionary (2008) defines vocabulary as (1) the number of words students are familiar with and employ, (2) the quantity of words used in language, and (3) a list comprising words and their meanings. Komachali and Khodareza (2012) further emphasize that vocabulary naturally develops and expands at each stage of life, fundamentally functioning as a tool for effective 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.

The teaching of vocabulary is crucial in foreign language instruction and learning, as proficiency in grammatical structures alone does not enable students to effectively communicate in a foreign language. Acquiring mastery over vocabulary is essential for language mastery, and mastering a language proves challenging due to certain intricacies that are not easily learned. As Harmer (1998: 154) suggests, the historical approach was to introduce more concrete words at lower proficiency levels, gradually progressing to more abstract terms as learners advanced. 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 stands out as a widely discussed aspect in the realm of instructing English as a foreign language. Recent research indicates that instructing vocabulary poses challenges because many educators lack confidence in determining the most effective practices and are sometimes uncertain about where to initiate an instructional focus on word acquisition (Berne & Blachowicz, 2008). Vocabulary, defined as the sounds conveying meaning and constituting an independent linguistic unit, serves as the smallest component of speech that conveys individual meanings and facilitates communication. It can be construed as a collection of words within a specific language, forming an integral part of foreign language acquisition.

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 compact cards featuring images, text, or symbols designed to prompt or guide students toward associations related to the depicted images. They serve as a tool for practicing spelling and expanding additional vocabulary. It is essential for the text and images on flashcards to be sufficiently large to ensure visibility for all members of the class (Muhammadnejad et al., 2012). According to John Haycraft (1978: 102), flash cards are cards containing printed or illustrated words and/or images. Employing flashcard drills offers students a method to commit essential information to memory. The scope of information that can be covered through flash card drills is diverse, encompassing subjects such as math facts, sight words, national capitals, foreign language vocabulary, and more. Given the versatile applications of flashcard instruction, teachers stand to benefit from understanding research-based guidelines to optimize the effectiveness of this strategy. Flashcards contribute to enhancing students' visual perception, as the information presented is more easily absorbed with the inclusion of visually appealing images.

Moreover, as stated by Chesla cited in Huda (2021), flashcards represent a straightforward yet highly efficient educational tool employed by teachers. These cards consist of images used for instructional purposes. The term "image" denotes a two-dimensional representation. In essence, flashcards can be defined as cards featuring pictures or images on the front side, accompanied by a corresponding vocabulary description and instructions on how to interpret it. Additionally, Schmitt (1997: 212) asserts that acquiring new words is facilitated by associating them with images depicting their meanings, rather than relying on definitions.

Based in the problems, the researcher endeavors to integrate flashcards as a teaching medium for English vocabulary at SD N 2 Sambong. This approach aims to facilitate an enjoyable and active learning process for students, aiding them in comprehending and expanding their vocabulary. The simplicity of creating and transporting flashcards, coupled

with their potential for use in educational games, adds to their versatility. 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. Utilizing flashcards as a learning tool proves effective in aiding students to quickly memorize and retain newly acquired English vocabulary. Beyond its efficacy in vocabulary enhancement, flashcards also play a role in motivating students and generating interest in English learning, preventing boredom. Students actively engage with the teacher during flashcard sessions, demonstrating attentiveness and enthusiasm by eagerly responding to questions about the words presented. Brown (2008) emphasizes that flashcards contribute to creating a more engaging learning environment, as teachers can infuse liveliness into the classroom and boost children's enthusiasm by incorporating playful elements. 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 initially observed the participants' memory and administered a test. This observation process helped identify the research subjects, leading to the implementation of both pre-test and post-test assessments. The pre-test was conducted prior to the utilization of any instructional media, with the researcher solely writing vocabulary on the blackboard. Notably, before the introduction of flashcard media, students exhibited signs of boredom and lack of motivation, resulting in ineffective learning experiences. The subsequent use of flashcard media involved the presentation of cards to the students during the learning process. Following the introduction and application of flashcard media, the researcher administered a post-test to gauge the impact on learning outcomes. In the subsequent meeting, the researcher focused on observing the memory of the previously identified research subjects and administered a prepared test. During this session, additional vocabulary related to quantities on the flashcards was introduced. Alongside these observations, the researcher also distributed post-test questions for students to complete.

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, the research findings emphasize the crucial significance of mastering English vocabulary at SD Negeri 2 Sambong. Prioritizing this mastery is essential for enhancing English speaking proficiency, and one effective approach is through engaging educational tools such as flashcards. The use of flashcard media proves instrumental in elevating elementary school students' command of English vocabulary, as evident in the outcomes of observations and interviews conducted by the researcher. The incorporation of flashcard media aligns with the existing thematic curriculum, providing a targeted method for students to enhance their English vocabulary skills. Utilizing flashcards in English vocabulary learning facilitates quick memorization and retention of learned words. Moreover, beyond its efficacy in vocabulary

acquisition, flashcards contribute to motivation and generate students' interest in the learning process.

### 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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