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## Flashcards as A Media in Teaching English Vocabulary

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### Abstract

This article aims to observe the using of flashcard as media in teaching English vocabulary. The importance of language element is vocabulary because it is the vital organ of language. Teaching language needs media to deliver material to motivate the students and to put material easy to be understood. Therefore, this article examines two questions, namely how flashcard was used as media in teaching English vocabulary and is flashcards media effective in teaching English vocabulary. Classroom Action Research was used as a research method in this research. The result showed that the flashcard was prepared by teacher according to his/her creativity, such as the size and the content of words on the flashcards. The teacher used models of teaching vocabulary using flashcards, namely rhyme and lines flashcards, vocabulary introduction, find the pictures, story cards, categorizing vocabulary, and flashcard memory game. All the models have their steps. The result of research also showed that flashcard as a media is sufficient to improve the students' vocabulary. It is indicated through the achievement of a pretest, where only two (2) students have 500 words. However, 6 (six) students got 1200 words in the posttest.

### Keywords:

*Flashcard  
 Media;English  
 Vocabulary;  
 Rhyme and Line  
 Flashcard*

### Abstrak

Tulisan ini bertujuan meneliti penggunaan kartu kata sebagai media dalam pengajaran kosa kata bahasa Inggris. Kosa kata adalah unsur penting dari bahasa, karena merupakan organ vital dalam sebuah bahasa. Pengajaran bahasa membutuhkan media untuk menyampaikan materi dalam rangka memotivasi siswa dan membuat materi yang disampaikan lebih mudah dipahami. Oleh karena itu, tulisan ini menjawab dua pertanyaan penelitian yaitu, bagaimana kartu kata digunakan sebagai media dalam mengajarkan kosa kata bahasa Inggris dan apakah media kartu kata efektif digunakan dalam pengajaran kosa kata bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian tindakan kelas Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kartu kata dipersiapkan sesuai dengan kreativitas guru. Misalnya dari segi ukuran dan kata-kata yang digunakan pada kata tersebut. Guru menggunakan model-model pengajaran kosa kata menggunakan kartu kata, yaitu, kartu kata irama dan garis, kartu kata pengantar kosa kata,

kartu kata menemukan gambar-gambar, kartu kata cerita, kartu kata mengelompokkan kosa kata dan kartu kata permainan memori. Setiap model-model tersebut mempunyai langkah-langkah pengajarannya tersendiri. Selain itu, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kartu kata efektif digunakan dalam meningkatkan jumlah kosa kata siswa. Hasil *pretest* menunjukkan terdapat 2 siswa yang mempunyai kosa kata 500, tetapi hasil *posttest* menunjukkan terdapat 6 siswa yang mempunyai kosa kata 1200.

## A. INTRODUCTION

A teaching and learning process needs to fulfill the requirements of the teaching and learning process itself. They are a method, media, and content material. Those items will keep the teaching and learning run well and success. They are known as the teaching components. They have an essential role in teaching and learning because they support and relate to each other. The teaching method is method and technique which are used by the teacher in doing his/her instruction to the students, to deliver the content material and the students get knowledge about the material given. Content material is a set of knowledge material which are consisted of fact, concept, principle, and generalization, which is based on the curriculum.

The other components of teaching and learning are the media. Media has a function to help the teaching and learning goes well because it is directing students' motivation and making achievement in the classroom. Teaching media should be various and qualified. Teaching media is as graphic tools, photographic, or electronic to catch process and reconstruct information visually or verbally. Learning media is media, which is deliver instructional message or information.

In using various media, a teacher needs a creative mind. Media is created according to students' need by considering students' interest, and facilities are prepared. Some good media criteria are durable, interesting form and colorful, simple and easy to be applied, fix size, give the real concept, picture, or diagram, stimulate students' abstract thinking, elicit students to be active in manipulating the media.

In teaching the English language mainly in elementary school and primary school, media has a crucial role because it gives motivation to students. Why motivation is fundamental in these levels because elementary and primary students do not have internal motivation, they study English because it is on their school curriculum.

Therefore, their internal motivation should be elicited, one way to do is creating teaching and learning media which can attract their interest and easy to be used.

Talking about English teaching and learning, language element is vital to be taught is vocabulary. Jeremy Harmer in his book *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (1992) said that if language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabularies that provide the vital organs and the flesh. When structure allows us to generate sentences, then vocabulary helps us to express our meaning and thought. However, the level of an English learner, they need to study vocabulary. Patsy and Nina Spada (2009) said that the first element of language acquisition is vocabulary.

Learning vocabulary can be delivered in teaching through the media of flashcards. Flashcards is a set of picture cards which are equipped with a word. It is introduced by Glenn Doman, a brain surgery from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The pictures on the cards can be classified into animal, fruits, clothes, color, shapes, and numbers. The contents of the flashcards can be modified according to the level of students, whether they are basic, intermediate, or advanced.

Those paragraph above indicate that vocabulary is important to be learned when someone learn the language, however to make it easy to be understood and to attract the students' motivation, it should be used media. Flashcard becomes one of the popular media in teaching English vocabulary. Therefore, this research answers the question of how flashcards were used in teaching English vocabulary and are the flashcard effective in teaching English vocabulary. This article aims to describe the process of using flashcards in teaching English vocabulary.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research used Classroom Action Research (CAR) referring to the model of John Elliot with four steps, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. The syllabus and the lesson plan were prepared in the planning stage and the model of teaching English vocabulary using flashcards was included. The action was applied in two cycles, four meetings in first cycle and four meetings in second cycle. Every meeting was conducted in one hour and thirty minutes. The observation step was conducted during the classroom action. Based on the observation and posttest in the first cycle, the reflection step was done. The result of reflection in the first cycle was used to

come to the second cycle by repairing the action step. The students' vocabulary did not achieve the minimum standard have been determined, where at least 50% of students master 1200 words. They need additional meetings. In the second cycle, the step of research directly went to action, observation, and reflection. The observation was still done in the second cycle to check the students' response to the activity in applying flashcard. The reflection step was done to determine whether the process of using flashcard was right. There were ten students be the samples of this research. They are at the junior high school level.

## C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The planning step both in first cycle and in the second cycle was done by preparing 6 (six) models of teaching vocabulary by using flashcards. They are listed on the lesson plan as follows:

#### 1. Rhyme and Lines Flashcards

<b>Course</b>	: basic vocabulary
<b>Grade level</b>	: beginner
<b>Objectives</b>	: to learn vocabulary through short story
<b>Method</b>	: group
<b>Time</b>	: 90 minutes
<b>Preparation</b>	: 10-15 minutes, to print and laminate the cards
<b>Media needed</b>	: flashcards, LCD
<b>Content material</b>	: Legend of "Malin Kundang"
<b>Description</b>	: Present story with key vocabulary and pictures using flashcards and encourage your learners to interact both verbally and non-verbally through actions, mime and repetition. Show the flashcard pictures as they are mentioned in the story. Let the students to watch the story again, this time you only show the cards.

#### 2. Vocabulary Introduction

<b>Course</b>	: basic vocabulary
<b>Grade level</b>	: beginner/intermediate
<b>Objectives</b>	: to learn vocabulary through short story
<b>Method</b>	: group

- Time** : 90 minutes
- Preparation** : 10-15 minutes, to print and laminate the cards
- Media needed** : flashcards
- Content material** : Legend of “rabbit and Crocodiles”
- Description** : Introduce each vocabulary item with the flashcards and ask the students to explain/describe additional details (e.g. explain what an elephant looks like, how it moves, what sound it makes).

### 3. Find the Picture

- Course** : basic vocabulary
- Grade level** : beginner/intermediate
- Objectives** : to learn vocabulary through short story
- Method** : group
- Time** : 90 minutes
- Preparation** : 10-15 minutes, to print and laminate the cards
- Media needed** : Picture flashcards
- Content material** : Mixed picture on noun
- Description** : Place the flashcards around the classroom (on the wall, door, window, chairs, floor) and ask your students to point to, or go up to the correct flashcard when they hear it.

### 4. Story Cards

- Course** : basic vocabulary
- Grade level** : beginner/intermediate
- Objectives** : to learn vocabulary through short story
- Method** : group
- Time** : 90 minutes
- Preparation** : 10-15 minutes, to print and laminate the cards
- Media needed** : Picture flashcards
- Content material** : Mixed picture on legend story.
- Description** : Place the cards on the table and ask the students to tell you a story connecting all the pictures.

### 5. Categorizing Vocabulary

- Course** : basic vocabulary

<b>Grade level</b>	: beginner/intermediate/advanced/adult
<b>Objectives</b>	: to learn vocabulary through short story
<b>Method</b>	: group
<b>Time</b>	: 90 minutes
<b>Preparation</b>	: 10-15 minutes, to print and laminate the cards
<b>Media needed</b>	: Picture flashcards
<b>Content material</b>	: Mixed pictures on animal, fruits, and household the story is “Monkey and Turtle”

**Description** : Give each group a set of flashcards and ask the students to sort them into categories. For young children, a mix of different flashcards can be categorized into colors. For older children and adult students, use more difficult categories. For example: Animal flashcards – sorted into four legs, two legs; those that can fly those that can’t. Food cards can be sorted into fruits, vegetables, sweet and sour, to be eaten cooked or raw. Household items can be sorted into wood, plastic, solvents and fabrics.

## 6. Flashcard Memory Game

<b>Course</b>	: basic vocabulary
<b>Grade level</b>	: beginner/intermediate/advanced/adult
<b>Objectives</b>	: to learn vocabulary through short story
<b>Method</b>	: group
<b>Time</b>	: 90 minutes
<b>Preparation</b>	: 10-15 minutes, to print and laminate the cards
<b>Media needed</b>	: Picture flashcards
<b>Content material</b>	: Food pictures flashcard
<b>Description</b>	: Give each group of students a set of flashcards with two copies of each card. Spread the cards face down on the table. In turn, each player turns up two cards and says what they are. If they turn up the same cards, they keep the pair and have another go. If the cards are different, they replace them and the next player has a go. The player with the most pairs is the winner.

## Discussion

The action, both in first cycle and in the second cycle was done in accordance to the model above. However, the result of posttest in the first cycle showed that the students did not achieve the minimal standard of vocabulary have been determined, namely 1200 words. The reflection result in first cycle showed that the students needed additional meetings. Therefore, the second cycle was done. However, the observation sheet, both in the first cycle and in the second cycle showed that the students have high motivation in following the activity, because it is like playing game. They were put in group, and the end of action, the teacher made a competition between groups by presenting a quiz about the vocabulary have just learned.

Before doing the action, the students done pretest to know their prior ability. The pretest result showed that five (5) students have 100 words, three (3) students have 450 words, and two (2) students have 500 words. The result of posttest in the first cycle showed that three (3) students have 500 words, two (2) students have 800 words, and five (5) students have 1000 words. In the second cycle the result of posttest showed that two (2) students have 800 words, two (2) students have 1000 words, and six (6) students have 1200 words.

The result in the first cycle and in the second cycle proven that the students will easy to remember the words given when constucting into proper media for them. It is also proven that the students will get good impression about the material, when the content material is a story. Besides, it can attract the students interest, maintance the students' memory, and increase their motivation. The impressed moment has very good impact on students' long term memory.

Moreover, flashcard and legend short story material is easy to be applicated in teaching and learning process. The students can independently make his/her own flashcard and browse or download the legend short story according to their own preference. The important thing is the teacher give guidance to them to make the flashcard and to browse the story. The students who we were given treatment, got their very good progress in vocabulary, because they did not only study during the teaching and learning process, but also carried their own flashcard at their house. In other words, they study independently.

Vocabulary is the content of language, because it is building the skeleton of

language. In doing function of language as mean of communication, we need words which are giving meaning to our communication. If we are going to describe how we feel at this very moment, we have to be able to find a word which reflects the complexity of the feeling. The words we choose to use when we want to invite someone out-especially if we think they may be reluctant-can make all the difference between acceptance and refusal.

Teaching vocabulary is not as easy as we image, because vocabulary or word has its own component. They are meaning, pronunciation, usage, and diction. One of the problems of vocabulary teaching is how to select what words to teach. Dictionaries for upper intermediate students frequently have 55,000 words or more and there may be many meanings for a word. A word is representing a small fraction of all the possible words in a language. Therefore, we have to make sense of this huge list and reduce it to manageable proportions for the learners.

A general principle in the past has been to teach more concrete words at lower levels and gradually become more abstract. Words are such as 'table', 'chair', 'book', etc are easy to be introduced and understood by the students, because they appear in front of the students. The idea of teaching vocabulary by selecting words is on the track with the children development of acquiring their first language. some theories about how language is acquired have almost the same claim that language need is learned by preparing stimulus and response as Stephen Krashen theory in behaviorist theory, because they already have competence to say the language. It is said by Noam Chomsky with cognitive theory.

There are some methods can be used to teach vocabulary such as using pictures, realia, etc. To direct the method then the teacher need media. One of media is teaching and learning vocabulary is flashcards. Flashcard is introduced by Glenn Doman, a brain surgery from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Nowadays, it becomes very popular as teaching media particularly for teaching English language. We can find it in many kinds of book resources and also in online references. Some website offers the flashcard to teach and learn English for example, [learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/flashcards](http://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/flashcards).

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

From the discussion above, some conclusion can be drawn as follows: Flashcard is effective media to teach vocabulary because it can be modified in accordance to what the students need. Flashcard is effective in maintaining the students' interest and motivation in learning, because it is designed colorful and well-structured. Legend short story is able to attract the students' motivation to involve effectively in teaching and learning process. Legend short story can be used to keep students' long term memory, thus they will easy to memorize the vocabulary give

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