

Flashcard as Teaching Aid: An Action Research on Students' Vocabulary Measurement

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Abstract. *This study aims to assess the extent of vocabulary mastery following the use of flashcards in students in the first grade of the school. The study's sample consisted of seven grades in the elementary school, and the questionnaire was administered to 15 students. The data collection for this action research involved a memorization test that served as a vocabulary achievement test. The researcher designed a lesson plan, created printable flash cards containing pictures and their meanings to help students expand their vocabulary, which is especially challenging for students in grades 1-7 at SDIT Al-Ikhlas Perbutulan and Cirebon, as they struggle to grasp the meaning of new words and memorize them. The research results showed that the mean score of the vocabulary achievement score used after the test was 80 (graph line 2), which exceeded the minimum score target (70).*

Keywords: *Flashcard Use, Vocabulary Measurement, EFL Students.*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menilai sejauh mana penguasaan kosakata setelah penggunaan kartu flash pada siswa kelas satu sekolah. Sampel penelitian terdiri dari tujuh kelas di sekolah dasar, dan kuesioner diberikan kepada 15 siswa. Pengumpulan data untuk penelitian tindakan ini melibatkan tes menghafal yang berfungsi sebagai tes pencapaian kosakata. Peneliti merancang rencana pembelajaran, membuat kartu flash yang dapat dicetak berisi gambar dan maknanya untuk membantu siswa memperluas kosa kata mereka, yang merupakan tantangan khusus bagi siswa kelas 1-7 di SDIT Al-Ikhlas Perbutulan dan Cirebon, saat mereka kesulitan memahami maknanya. kata-kata baru dan menghafalnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa rata-rata skor perolehan kosakata yang digunakan setelah tes adalah 80 (grafik baris 2) yang melebihi target skor minimal (70).

Kata kunci: Penggunaan Flashcard, Pengukuran Kosakata, Siswa EFL.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian education is currently undergoing a period of adaptation as the curriculum shifts from K-13 to Curriculum Merdeka. This is not an uncommon occurrence, as it frequently happens in the United States as well. Private and public schools in the US regularly experience changes to their curricula in order to reflect social changes and improve the quality of education (Nevenglosky et al., 2019). However, these changes can also present challenges for educators, who may feel poorly equipped to adapt to the new syllabus, methods, and materials (Parkyn, 2010; Olan, 2006). Similarly, administrators of education must navigate the same process, albeit with difficulty (Mandukwini, 2016). Despite these challenges, the researcher still utilizes the K-13 curriculum as a fundamental source to understand the learning objectives of the English subject in elementary school.

The researcher discovered that the Ministry of Education's learning objective for elementary school, Phase A, focuses on students using visual aids and non-verbal communication to enhance their communication skills. In line with this objective, the researcher devised flashcards containing pictures and their meanings to help students expand their vocabulary, which is especially challenging for students in grades 1-7 at SDIT Al-Ikhlas Perbutulan and Cirebon, as they struggle to grasp the meaning of new words and memorize them.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Flashcard

Flashcards are cards with either pictures or words, as used by Mathura and Zulu in 2021 and Sartika in 2020 (Farida, Dian, Hasna, and I, 2019). These cards can either be printed or hand-drawn by students. Flashcards improve teaching materials through engaging activities and help students understand their teachers' explanations. They can also be used to introduce new vocabulary, grab students' attention with colorful pictures, and provide additional meaning based on the teacher's native language if necessary. Repeating words during the learning process can help students recognize and memorize English words through the use of pictures. Students can store words in their memory more effectively due to repeated exposure.

The combination of images, text, and meanings is commonly used to teach children. Flashcards are suitable for use by students of various levels, and the teacher can customize the flashcards with games, quizzes, and various activities. Additionally, the words on the cards that are read aloud can help students recognize letter sounds and form words, which can be stored

in their memory banks (Miles & Ehri, 2017). The flashcards can be modified into double-sided cards, allowing the teacher to display different vocabulary on each side. These cards can offer more flexibility in vocabulary activities and can be used for self-testing. The teacher can display the picture on one side, and the student can guess the vocabulary in English. Then, the teacher can reveal the vocabulary or words in English and ask the student to identify the corresponding picture

Vocabulary

Teaching children English can be a challenging task, especially when it comes to introducing new vocabulary at every session. Vocabulary is a critical aspect of English learning that enables students to comprehend the subject (Sari & Aminatun, 2021). To help students enhance their vocabulary, flashcards can be used as a learning tool (Amiruddin & Razaq, 2022).

Vocabulary is a unit of speech, a component of language, and a symbol of foreign language ideas that individuals produce to interact with other people (Sholikhah, 2013). It includes nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. The simplest way to understand vocabulary is as a word that has meaning or the alphabet with meaning. However, it is important that the vocabulary on the flashcard is easy to read from a distance and seen by the students (Yüksel, Mercanoğlu, & Yılmaz, 2020).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is an action research conducted in SD IT Al Ikhlas Perbutulan in Cirebon, which took place in September 2022. The study's sample consisted of seven grades in the elementary school, and the questionnaire was administered to 15 students. Action research is typically carried out by teachers, counselors, researchers, principals, school counselors, or other stakeholders in the teaching and learning environment to gather information on how the teacher teaches, how the school operates, and how well the students learn (Mills, 2000). The phases of action research are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (Henning, Stone, & Kelly, 2008). However, the steps of action research are planning, collecting data, analyzing, and reflecting (Henning et al., 2008).

The data collection for this action research involved a memorization test that served as a vocabulary achievement test, measuring the extent of vocabulary mastery following the use of flashcards. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the pre-test and post-test scores of cycles 1 and 2, with a minimum score target of 70 points set by the researcher. The format of

the vocabulary achievement test was

Table 1. Vocabulary Achievement Test

No	Amount of vocabulary memorized/mastered	Score	Grade
1	1 Vocabulary	10	
2	2 Vocabularies	20	
3	3 Vocabularies	30	
4	4 Vocabularies	40	
5	5 Vocabularies	50	C
6	6 Vocabularies	60	
7	7 Vocabularies	70	B
8	8 Vocabularies	80	
9	9 Vocabularies	90	A
10	10 Vocabularies	100	

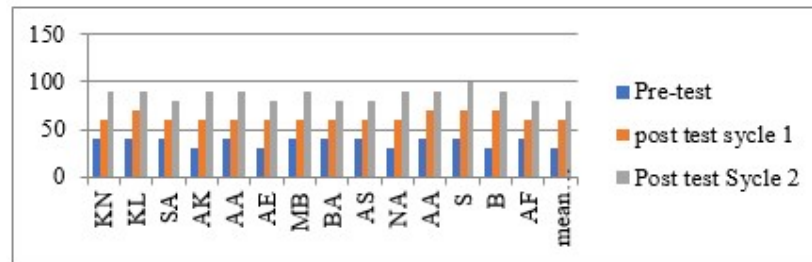
Source: Researcher Analysis (2022)

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

In the planning stages, the researcher designed a lesson plan, created printable flashcards, and developed score sheets for vocabulary mastery assessment, including pre-test and post-test forms. During data collection, the researcher implemented the lesson plan and used the vocabulary mastery score sheet to assess the students' progress by having them line up and answering vocabulary questions one by one. The data were also collected through observation in the third phase, and the results were evaluated during the reflection phase.

Report of Pre-test

Before the pretest, the researcher discovered that the students were unfamiliar with the names of the animals in English. As shown in Column 1, the mean pre-test score was 30, which indicates that the students knew only three animals in English. However, based on the form-score test presented in Table 1, mastering three vocabularies meant that the student's score was 30. See Table 1 for all score meanings. The mean score of the pre-test was very low and it was far from the minimum score target.



Source: SPSS (2022)

Column 1. Mean Score of All Tests

Report of Cycle 1

This cycle will be conducted on September 15, 2022. The first session was a pretest. The researcher in the pretest only showed students pictures on a whiteboard using a printed picture on A4 paper. From the 10 animal pictures, only 2–4 animals can be mentioned. From the students' responses, the teacher asked the students one by one and input their scores on the vocabulary form test (see Table 1).

Planning

Based on the results of the pre-test, the researcher decided to use the flashcard and made a flashcard using sticker glossy paper, where one paper contained six pictures of animals cut into six pieces of a flashcard. This paper is glossy, and all pictures were viewed by the students. The front card contained only the animal picture and the back card contained the name of the animal in the English language.

Acting

In SD IT Al-Ikhlas Perbutulan Grade 1, the English subject became extracurricular. This caused the researcher to take an hour out of formal study hours. The first meeting was held on September 20, 2022. As usual, the researcher checked the attendant list and sang a song about animals, and the main activity was to hang the flashcard on the whiteboard using white isolation. The researcher drilled the English vocabulary of all the pictures five times in a row. After drilling, the teacher asked students in Bahasa Indonesia, and the students answered the name of the animal in English. Fifteen minutes before going home, the teacher asked the students to make a long line, the researcher showed the front flashcard piece every piece, and the students guessed the animal's name.

Observing

Observing the acting process, the researcher found that some students who got low scores played when the researcher drilled the vocabulary. From the results, the researchers suggested having more fun activities and games to make the student very busy with the flashcard and to do many repetitions without the student realizing it. Challenging activities required Moreover, the mean score post-test using the vocabulary achievement score was 60 (see column 1).

Reflection

In the reflections, the researcher analyzed the entire experience, lack and advantages found in cycle 1. Some reflections have been made for the second cycle. In terms of activity, the teacher needed a game and an activity that prompted students to repeat the name of the animal. The second reflection was that teachers needed to make 3 flashcard packs for the next meeting in the "open-and-closed arm game". This can also help students to have equal opportunities to practice vocabulary, repeat words, or perform repetitions. By considering the results of the average score of the pre-test compared to the average score cycle 1, the students' vocabulary performance improved moderately.

Report of Cycle 2

This cycle was a week after the first cycle on Wednesday 27 September 2022. This second cycle was conducted according to a regular schedule for the English subjects as an extracurricular course taught by the researcher.

Planning

The researcher completed three packages of flashcards and handmade flashcards. It was the same as before. The flashcard was printed on a glossy sticker paper and a lesson plan was also made. The researcher also prepared a class setting plan using an open and closed arms game and an activity of "run and grab cards".

Acting

The second meeting was held on 27 September 2022. Usually, the researcher checked the associated list. The researcher went directly to the main activity. The researcher reviewed the material for 5 minutes. After review, the researcher divided the students into three groups. A group consisted of 5 students, while a group received a set of animal flashcards. The

researcher gave students examples of "open and close" arm games. One student chose a flashcard and placed the card under two arms, while the other members of the group knew what animals were in his arm. 4 students predicted and one student concealed the card inside the arms. The game lasted 15 minutes and went smoothly, and the students enjoyed the game.

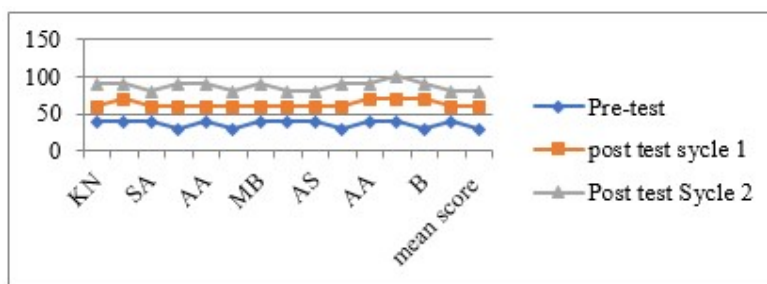
The next activity was to "run and grab the card". Students were divided into two large groups, while the researcher prepared a package of animal flash cards that the students would take. The students made two long lines and the mansion animal of the teacher that the students seized in a number of three the first students in each line of the group ran to grab the pictures yelled by the teacher. After they capture, the students return to the rear of the line. This activity was carried out after all the photos had been taken. The last activity before returning home was to verify the vocabulary of the students using a vocabulary performance test (see table 1).

Observation

Observing the process of action, the researcher found that students achieved average scores above the minimum score target (70), which is set by the researcher. Students do not realize that time passes quickly because they enjoy the game of "open and close arms" and the activity of "running and grabbing cards". As a result, researchers were satisfied with the fact that students enjoyed the class and actively participated in both games and activities. Furthermore, the mean score of the vocabulary achievement score used after the test was 80 (graph line 2), which exceeded the minimum score target.

Reflection

At this stage, all information and experience from cycle 2 were analysed. Cycle 2 is very favorable and runs well as lesson plans are made. Students are actively involved in the same way. It also showed that average scores in cycles 1 and 2 had increased more and more. This result indicated that the use of flash cards effectively helped students understand vocabulary beyond the minimum score target (70).



Source: SPSS (2022)

Graphic 2. Mean score of all tests of 15 students

The flash card is colourful, bright, easy to carry and colorful. Flash cards can also be matched to many activities and games. The entire creation of lessons, media, games, and activities in classrooms depends on the teacher's creativity. The important part of this action research is that the students are actively involved in the activities and appear to be very happy during the game.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions and discussions above have helped students in the first grade of SDIT Al-Ikhlas Perbutulan with the flashcard on the topic of animals. The averages for cycles 1 and 2 were met. The average scores in the tests were 30, 60, and 80. This result showed that the use of flash cards helped students to master vocabulary beyond the target of minimum scores (70). Flash cards also made students very interested in English subjects, especially because they were very excited to wait for the next class with different subjects.

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