

INTRODUCING ENGLISH VOCABULARY TO YOUNG EFL LEARNERS AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEVEL BY USING FLASHCARDS

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ABSTRACT

This project aimed to introduce English vocabulary to young EFL learners at the elementary school level by using flashcards as a visual and interactive tool in order to increase the effectiveness and engagement of vocabulary learning among young learners. It was carried out at BPI Fajar Kasih Siulan, with four boys and six girls in grades 1 to 3 of elementary school participating. The project consisted of three phases, namely observation, teaching phase using flashcards, and evaluation. The use of flashcards is expected to improve vocabulary acquisition among young learners by increasing their understanding, memory, and motivation to learn English. The evaluation stage showed positive results in the form of improved ability to recognize and recall vocabulary, and less reliance on dictionaries—indicated by 97% recall at the end of the project for all vocabularies introduced, compared to only 45% initially. This project has potential implications for parents, schools, teachers, education authorities and young learners. It may pave the way for future development by exploring the use of technology and gamification to further enhance English language learning.

Keywords: English vocabulary, flashcards, recognition, recall, young learners

1. Introduction

In the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, the field of internet technology is developing remarkably along with this rapid development English has become important for the whole world. Many aspects of life require English, especially in the fields of government and education, therefore Learning foreign languages has become a necessity that has been realized by various parties, both parents, schools and the government. At the elementary school level, children are at an important stage of language development, and it is important to give them a solid foundation in English vocabulary.

Vocabulary is the most basic thing in learning a language, It refers to the meaning and pronunciation of words in listening, speaking, reading and recall communication [1]. Therefore, it is very important to teach English to young learners i.e., children from the first year of formal schooling (five or six years old) to eleven or twelve years of age [2]. By starting learning as early as possible so that they have a great opportunity to master the language well. It can improve overall school performance, enhance problem-solving skills and open up possibilities to

communicate with more people and understand other cultures [3]. However, English teaching can fail if teachers are unable to create a fun learning situation that makes young learners hate the language. Therefore, teachers need to design fun and interesting teaching methods for learners so that they can enjoy and be excited to learn English. This project aims to overcome this problem by using flashcards as a visual and interactive tool to make vocabulary learning more interesting and effective.

Flashcard is one of the popular learning media recently, which consist of picture cards equipped with words [4]. The pictures on the flashcard collection include: animal series, fruits, clothes, colors, shapes of numbers, and so on. This card is played by showing it to the child and reading it quickly. The purpose of this method is to train the right brain to remember pictures and words, so that vocabulary can increase and increase.

At the end, this project is about introducing English vocabulary to young learners at the elementary level using flash cards. The main theme of this project is language learning and education for young children. The problem faced is the need for an effective and interesting method to teach English vocabulary to elementary school students.

2. Methods

In this study the necessary data were obtained using data collection techniques through pre-test and post-test questions that was used to test students' vocabulary additions. Tests are carried out by students individually which are given at the end of the material and flash cards was used as an instrument in this study. This activity will be outlined into 3 stages:

Table 1. Approach method and working procedure

No	Stages	Problems	Approach method
1.	Stage 1	Unknown techniques used by teachers to introduce/teach new vocabulary to students	Classroom observation, especially vocabulary recognition techniques used by teachers
2.	Stage 2	Unknown to what extent students know vocabulary	conducted a pre-test to measure knowledge of vocab
3.	Stage 3	students' lack of English vocabulary knowledge	Teaching (introducing and reinforcing) vocabulary using a variety of modified flash cards

3. Results and discussion

From the observations before the service activity was carried out, the service team concluded that the vocabulary knowledge of these students could be said to be low, even they did not know the vocabulary of colors and numbers after number ten. From these observations, the service team then designed forms of flashcards that suited the needs of these learners by referring to the basic competencies that must be achieved. This service activity is divided into three stages, namely (1) Observation stage, (2) Teaching stage using flashcards, and (3) Evaluation stage [5].

1. Observation

In this stage, classroom observations were conducted to obtain information about the common techniques used by teachers in introducing and teaching English vocabulary to students. The observation also covered the students' level of vocabulary acquisition and their views on vocabulary. One of the commonly used techniques is bilingual translation, where the teacher provides a list of new vocabulary with direct translation in Bahasa Indonesia and vice versa. However, this technique is often considered boring by students.

Based on these observations, the research team then designed flashcards that fit the needs, characteristics, and input of the students. The design of flashcards was carried out through the following stages:

- a. Identifying the basic competencies, indicators, and learning objectives that have been agreed upon.
- b. Determining the form of flashcards that can be used to introduce vocabulary in accordance with the competencies that students must master in each indicator.
- c. Arrange some flashcards according to the predetermined shape.
- d. Testing the flashcards before using them in class.

By using flashcards in teaching English vocabulary to students at the Elementary school level, it is hoped that this method can help students learn visually and interactively, improve comprehension and retention of vocabulary, create an interesting learning environment, and contribute to the development of effective teaching methods.

2. Teaching Stage Using Flash Cards

This is the main stage of this service activity, the teaching stage using flashcards consists of the following steps:

1. Identification of Learning Objectives

The first step in teaching with flashcards is to identify the learning objectives to be achieved. These can include teaching new vocabulary, improving understanding of existing vocabulary, or introducing new concepts in English, in this stage the researcher also conducted a pre-test with the results shown in the table below.

Table 2. Pre-test result

C	G	C	Thirteen	Zero	Fifteen	Yellow	Purple	Three (Light green, Dark green, Brown)	Three (Light Blue, Dark Blue, Green)	Five	Gray	Two (Black and White)
A	F	1	√	x	√	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
B	F	2	√	√	x	x	√	x	x	x	x	x
C	M	2	√	√	x	√	x	x	x	x	x	x
D	M	2	x	x	x	√	x	x	x	√	x	x
E	M	2	√	√	x	√	√	x	x	x	x	√
F	F	3	√	√	√	√	√	x	x	√	√	x
G	F	3	√	√	√	√	√	x	x	√	√	x
H	F	3	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	√	x
I	M	3	√	√	√	√	√	x	x	√	√	x
J	M	3	√	√	√	√	√	x	x	√	√	x

The table above is a dataset with variables filled with binary values (√ for true and x for false) for each row of data representing an individual. The variables in the dataset are:

1. Code: a unique code that identifies each individual in the dataset.
2. Gender: the gender of the individual, with M for male and F for female.
3. Class: the individual's class 1, 2, or 3.
4. Thirteen: a variable to indicate whether the individual knows the number 13 in English.
5. Zero: a variable to indicate whether the individual knows the number 0 in English.
6. Fifteen: a variable to indicate whether the individual knows the number 15 in English.

7. Yellow: a variable to indicate whether the individual knows the color yellow in English.
8. Purple: a variable to indicate whether individuals know the color purple in English.
9. Three (Light green, Dark green, Brown): a variable to indicate whether individuals know three colors (light green, dark green, and brown) in English.
10. Three (Light Blue, Dark Blue, Green): variable to indicate individuals know three colors (light blue, dark blue, and green) in English.
11. Five: a variable to indicate whether the individual can count the total number of kittens from the picture in English.
12. Gray: a variable to indicate whether individuals know the color gray in English.
13. Two (Black and White): a variable to indicate whether the individual can know two colors (black and white) in English.

As a result of the overall data, several conclusions can be drawn:

1. 8 out of 10 individuals indicated ✓ in the variable Thirteen.
2. 7 out of 10 individuals indicated ✓ in the variable Zero.
3. 5 out of 10 individuals indicated ✓ in the variable Fifteen.
4. 7 out of 10 individuals indicated ✓ in the variable yellow.
5. 6 out of 10 individuals indicated ✓ in the variable Purple.
6. 0 out of 10 individuals indicated ✓ in the variable Three (Light green, Dark green, Brown).
7. 0 out of 10 individuals indicated ✓ in the variable Three (Light Blue, Dark Blue, Green) variable).
8. 6 out of 10 individuals indicated ✓ in the variable Five.
9. 5 out of 10 individuals indicated ✓ in the variable Gray.
10. 1 out of 10 individuals indicated ✓ in the variable Two (Black and White).

The conclusion after the individual pretest can only answer 45% of the overall variable.

2. Determining the Flashcard Form

Once the learning objectives are set, the next step is to determine the form of flashcards that will be used. Flashcards can be small cards with pictures on one side and words or phrases on the other. The number and type of flashcards can be adjusted to the level of difficulty and needs of the students.

3. Making Flashcards

Once the shape of the flashcards has been determined, the next step is to create flashcards that meet the learning objectives. Choose pictures that are interesting and relevant to the vocabulary or concept to be taught. Make sure the words or phrases on the flashcards are clear and easy for students to understand.

4. Flashcard Introduction

At this stage, the teacher introduces the flashcards to the students. Flashcards can be introduced one by one by explaining the pictures and words on the flashcards. The teacher can also use question and answer techniques to involve students in the flashcard introduction process.

5. Practice Using Flashcards

After students are introduced to flashcards, the next step is to practice using flashcards. This exercise can be done in various ways, for example by inviting students to pronounce the words or phrases contained in the flashcards, connecting the flashcards with the corresponding images, or playing games that involve the use of flashcards.

6. Evaluation

After practicing using flashcards, the last step is to evaluate students' understanding. The teacher can give questions or tasks to students that involve the use of flashcards. In teaching with flashcards, it is important to create an interesting and fun learning environment for students. This can be done by choosing interesting pictures, using variations in the use of flashcards, and holding games or competitions involving the use of flashcards. Thus, students will be more motivated and enthusiastic in learning English vocabulary.



Picture 1. Flashcard example

This teaching method using flashcards has several advantages. Firstly, flashcards provide a visual and interactive learning experience for students, thus improving comprehension and better recall of vocabulary. Second, the use of flashcards can increase students' motivation and enthusiasm in learning English. Third, flashcards can be used flexibly in a variety of learning situations, both in the classroom and outside the classroom. In this study, we recommend the use of flashcards as an effective method of learning English, in this stage the researcher conducts a post test with the results in the table at below :

Table 3. Post-test result

C o d e s e r	G r o u p	C o u n t	Thirteen	Zero	Fifteen	Yellow	Purple	Three (Light green, Dark green, Brown)	Three (Light Blue, Dark Blue, Green)	Five	Gray	Two (Black and White)
A	F	1	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
B	F	2	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
C	M	2	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
D	M	2	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√
E	M	2	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
F	F	3	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
G	F	3	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
H	F	3	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√
I	M	3	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
J	M	3	X	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√	√

As a result of the overall data, several conclusions can be drawn:

1. 9 out of 10 individuals indicated √ in the variable Thirteen.
2. 10 out of 10 individuals indicated √ in the variable Zero.
3. 10 out of 10 individuals indicated √ in the variable Fifteen.
4. 10 out of 10 individuals indicated √ in the variable yellow.
5. 10 out of 10 individuals indicated √ in the variable Purple.
6. 9 out of 10 individuals indicated √ in the variable Three (Light green, Dark green, Brown).
7. 8 out of 10 individuals indicated √ in the variable Three (Light Blue, Dark Blue, Green) variable).

8. 10 out of 10 individuals indicated √ in the variable Five.
9. 10 out of 10 individuals indicated √ in the variable Gray.
10. 10 out of 10 individuals indicated √ in the variable Two (Black and White).

It can be seen that there is progress after the teaching process using flashcards by looking at the results of the pretest which initially only 45% of the variables were answered after the posttest there were 97% of the variables answered, it can be proven that learning using flashcards increases the effectiveness of the learning process as seen from the posttest results showing almost all (97%) variables can be recalled by individuals.

3. Evaluation

It seems that the evaluation stage of using flashcards for teaching has yielded positive results. Here are some of the observations:

1. Students are able to recognize, remember and recall vocabulary.
2. During the initial observation stage (before teaching using flash cards was implemented), it was seen that students were very dependent on the dictionary. Whenever they found new words, they would use the dictionary to look up the meaning. However, with the use of flash cards, the dependence on the dictionary has been reduced, and it is expected that in the future, teachers can use this technique as a reference to develop learning activities.



Picture 2. Picture of BPI Fajar Kasih Siulan student

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this project aims to introduce English vocabulary to young learners in an effective and engaging way through the use of flashcards. Traditional teaching methods may often fail to capture the attention and interest of young learners, resulting in limited retention and understanding of new vocabulary. Through this project, the use of flashcards provides a visual and interactive learning experience for students, thus improving comprehension and recall of vocabulary while also increasing their motivation and enthusiasm in learning English.

The evaluation stage shows positive results such as an improved classroom environment, increased ability to recognize, remember and recall vocabulary, and lower reliance on dictionaries. This project has significant implications for parents,

schools, teachers, educational authorities, and young learners themselves, as it enables them to gain a solid foundation in English vocabulary, leading to future academic and professional success. Future development in this area can explore the use of technology and gamification to further enhance the effectiveness and engagement of English language learning for young learners.

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