

IMPROVING STUDENT'S VOCABULARY USING FLASHCARDS FOR FOURTH GRADERS OF SDN PENDRIKAN LOR 02 SEMARANG

First Author ¹Rahmad Oktovandi, Second Author ²Agnes Widyaningrum
e-mail: ¹rahmadoktovandi@mhs.unisbank.ac.id, ²agneswidyaningrum@edu.unisbank.ac.id
Affiliation ^{1,2} Universitas Stikubank Semarang, Indonesia

The researcher has chosen to conduct this research because it will allow him to draw some inferences regarding the level of vocabulary knowledge among students at Pendrikan Lor 02 Elementary School. This research seeks to improve the vocabulary mastery of fourth graders at Pendrikan Lor 02 Elementary School since there is a problem with their vocabulary mastery and their interest in using flashcards. In this context, the researcher used CAR to enhance vocabulary acquisition in the classroom. He combined the flashcard approach with Classroom Action Research (CAR) for a more organized investigation. The study's results for the pre-test average score is 71.40, and the development of the post-test is 95,60. The flashcard technique and CAR were effective in this trial, yielding positive outcomes. The researcher used the CAR method to understand the classroom situation and the combination of CAR and TEYL to make the research more concrete.

Keywords: Flashcard, Classroom Action Research, Vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

An essential component of the education system in Indonesia is teaching English to students as the initial language acquired by students from other countries. Students in Indonesia are required to study the English language from elementary school until university. Because of this, it is of the utmost importance that children start learning English in elementary school. The significance of English as a second language after the national language might indicate a country's level of development. It should come as no surprise at all. They expand one's vocabulary to improve one's language skills, particularly when learning a second language (L2) or a foreign language. (Nikoopour & Kazemi, 2014)

The escalating global need for professional communication in English has substantially augmented the accountability of English language instructors. The implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has encountered challenges and opposition within the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), as noted by Ellis (1996), Li (1998), and Liao (2000). Research has indicated a correlation between communicative competence and the utilization of language learning strategies. (Ahmad & Rao, 2013)

Young people born between 1980 and 2000 are often referred to as millennial generation members because of how well they comprehend the world in which they were raised. The name "Gen Z" has been given to this current generation. This subsequent generation of Indonesians will be the first to mature in the modern digital age as it has progressed. Young children of today are digital natives, whereas their teachers are digital immigrants. Given this information, it isn't easy to fathom how teachers can incorporate technological aspects into their lesson plans without feeling completely overwhelmed. Students may anticipate or even adore the use of technology in their English classes, but teachers may feel uncomfortable doing so in their classrooms. (Bakhsh, 2016)

TEYL (Teaching English to Young Learners) has entered Applied Linguistics in recent years. Nowadays, It's widely importance recognized across the globe. As soon as young learners are admitted to school, they can absorb language input both inside and outside the classroom. This innate capacity is truly remarkable. As individuals transition into adult learners, their natural ability to absorb information intuitively and unconsciously often diminishes. However, this is offset by the valuable experience they have gained over time. As we age, we gain invaluable wisdom and knowledge through experiences and observations. However, when it comes to acquiring, improving, and developing language skills, the optimal time is during our youth. (Mendy, 2017)

Recently, Applied Linguistics viewed the inclusion of TEYL (Teaching English to Young Learners). The global recognition of its importance is currently widely acknowledged. Children who are enrolled in schools possess an innate ability to assimilate language inputs accessible to them both within and beyond the confines of the classroom. As individuals transition into adulthood, their natural and automatic ability to absorb information typically diminishes, although accumulated experience

often offsets this decline. While maturity may bring about wisdom and knowledge through experience and observation, it is widely acknowledged that the optimal period for acquiring, improving, and developing language skills is during one's youth.(Degirmenci & Yavuz, 2015; Hussain, 2016)

The state of these conditions is having a significant impact on education in Indonesia, both in and out of the classroom. Students in the fourth grade have been found to benefit from using flashcards as a teaching and learning tool, and the results have been positive because using flashcards as a form of educational media is comparable to using other types of media, such as video games, music, animation, etc. (Bakhsh, 2016; Elly et al., 2021; Nikoopour & Kazemi, 2014; Pitriana & Jufri, 2013; Silfia et al., 2018)

One of the most critical steps that can be taken toward improving Indonesia's educational system is to begin offering classes in English at the elementary school level. In the wake of the epidemic, this inspired him to conduct research in primary education, specifically at the Pendrikan Lor 02 Elementary School in Semarang, Indonesia as the autonomous curriculum was recently implemented at this institution, and they now offer English classes. The researcher decided to challenge himself by participating in investigating vocabulary acquisition in elementary school.

METHODOLOGY

Methodology refers to the rigorous and structured examination of the techniques utilized in a particular area of research. The "comprises" refers to a complete set of elements or components. In an academic context, it pertains to the theoretical examination of the body of techniques and principles linked to a particular field of study. Commonly, it incorporates notions such as paradigms, theoretical frameworks, stages, and quantitative or qualitative methodologies.(Patel & Patel, 2019)

Flashcards are effective for students who intend to commit new information to memory. Research suggests that breaking up knowledge into smaller chunks, approximately the size of note cards, may facilitate learning and retention compared to memorizing all the information simultaneously. This approach enables the retention of data for a longer duration. Using cards is highly effective in language acquisition and

retaining discrete information, such as dates and facts. Nevertheless, more resources may be needed for intricate and sophisticated subject matters. This approach exhibits a high level of efficacy in assessing one's knowledge as it necessitates the frequent review of the cards. (Students Guide, 2022)

An action research project in a classroom is conducted in the form of a cycle and is structured into four distinct steps, as described in the introduction. According to Khasinah (2013), the first step in conducting research is to plan an action. After then, an action based on the plan is carried out in the classroom, and that action is then evaluated. The reflection is carried out to analyze the data received during the move.

The following diagram displays a model of an action research cycle:

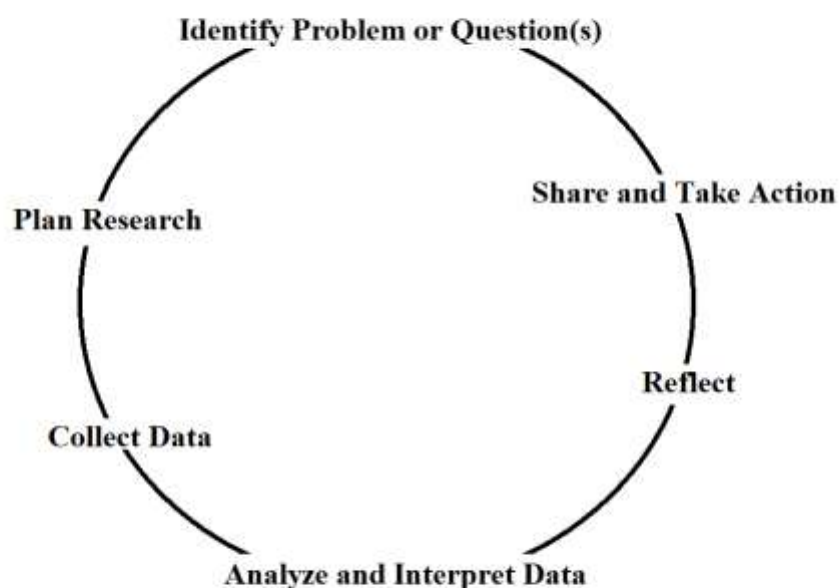


Figure 1: Classroom Action Research Model

Most models present action research as a cycle, starting with a question and ending with more questions. The image above is intended to capture the cyclic nature of classroom action research. Strickland (1987: 760) as written in Khasinah, (2013) discusses the following sequence: 1) identify an issue, interest, or problem; 2) seek knowledge; 3) plan an action; 4) implement the action; 5) observe the action; 6)

reflect on your observations; 7) revise the plan. In line, Strickland, Borg, Gall, and Gall (1993: 392-394) explain that action research has seven steps.

The first step in CAR is to identify problems with the flashcard method and how flashcards aid students in mastering vocabulary. Then, he prepared questions for the students before the commencement of the reading class. Because a couple of problems develop. The first question is about how does the teacher apply flashcards in teaching English vocabulary? And the second question is how does flashcard media improve student vocabulary?

Second is planning. He collected relevant theories to support the analysis for his study.

Third is data collection by doing observation, interview, and test.

a. Observation

Observation is watching behavior, events, or physical traits in their natural environment. Observations might be overt or hidden. Covert observation lets people act naturally. Due to ethical concerns, overt observations are usually necessary. Indirect observations are also possible. Direct observation is watching interactions, processes, or behaviors as they happen, such watching a teacher teach a lesson from a published curriculum. Indirect observations include analyzing plate waste in a school cafeteria to see if a new cuisine is liked. This research obtained information about the number of students in grade 4B. There were 28 students, with 14 girls and 14 boys. After that, the teachers who teach in the target schools have no English background. So there are some mispronunciations, and that certainly has an impact on learning.

b. Interview

Interview methods in research are different approaches you can use to conduct effective research interviews. Many researchers interview subjects as part of their research process. Conducting interviews can allow you to gain insight into the behaviors, attitudes, and opinions of individuals. (QuestionPro, 2018)

Usually, interviews are most useful for research that is qualitative, which means it focuses more on concepts and experiences than on

numerical values. If you want to include interviews in your research, you can choose from several interview methods to use an approach that is well-suited to your specific research. (Team, 2023)

From the interview, the teacher said that using flashcard method makes children even more enthusiastic; with this media, it can increase children's enthusiasm for learning and improve learning outcomes. After conducting research using the flashcard method, children experience an increase in grades because they have been taught techniques and strategies for using media flashcards.

- c. A test is an observation or experiment that identifies one or more qualities of a particular sample, product, process, or service. Tests can be either qualitative or quantitative. Testing determines what observations are expected to be made and then compares those comparisons to what is observed in the testing. ("Glossary: S-Z," 2018)

Two categories of tests are being administered: the pre-test and the flashcard-based post-test. The former is conducted before the presentation of the material at the outset of the meeting. To assess the proficiency of children in acquiring English vocabulary.

The second assessment, specifically the post-test, was administered after delivering the vocabulary material through flashcards. More precisely, it was conducted during the final week following the material. This is the result of the repeated utilization of flashcards.

Fourth is data analysis. Twenty-five (25) fourth graders become participants in the pre-test and twenty-six (26) in the post-test in this study. In data analysis, he received the pre - test and post - test results to analyze. The data that has been collected can be put into graphs or tables of scores. This research collects data by asking the class teacher in the class, then after the data is collected such as course, textbook, syllabus, attendance list, class schedule, and class organizational structure. This is done to be able to present data in tabular form and to be able to determine what research can be used.

Fifth is reflection. In this reflection phase, the students of Pendrikan lor 02 Elementary School prefer using flashcards to non - flashcards texts because it is easier for them to understand the content of vocabulary or what the texts is. After applying flashcards to 4B students, the teacher also realized that using flashcards influenced learning methods because they were more attractive and exciting than previous or traditional learning methods.

Sixth is share and act. After engaging in self-reflection and identifying the positive aspects of the experience, the teacher expects that the students will put what they've learned into practice and discuss it with their peers. Teacher reflection is a helpful exercise for improving teachers' teaching methods. In this research teaches daily activities using flashcards but still refers to the textbooks provided by the school so that the material still follows the guidelines applied at school and does not stray far from the material in the books. This research provides examples of the available flashcards and then explains and pronounces the activities mentioned. Bathing is an activity done to clean the body, usually done in the morning, then say "take a bath" correctly.

DISCUSSION

From the first of January through the seventh of March, he researched fourth graders of the Pendrikan Lor 02 Elementary School. The flashcard method was employed to gather the subject matter used in this research. The material focused on daily activities. In this section, the researcher also does a test split into two parts: the first part is called the pre-test, and the second is called the post-test. The pre-test uses non flashcards, and the post-test uses flashcards.

Fourth graders at Pendrikan Lor 02 Elementary School got low scores following the pre-test without using flashcards, then improved during the post-test using the flashcard method, so he got results showing that the average score of class 4B increased from 71,40 to 95,60 with using the flashcard method, which can be seen in table 1.1. The results of the analysis of simple calculation data before and after using flashcards can be seen in **Table 1.1**

Table 1.1 Tests' scores

| NO | Name | M/F | PRE-TEST | POST-TEST | Gain Score |
|--------------|------------|-----|----------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | STUDENT 1 | M | 76 | 100 | 24 |
| 2 | STUDENT 2 | F | ABSENT | 90 | 80 |
| 3 | STUDENT 3 | F | 73 | 100 | 27 |
| 4 | STUDENT 4 | M | 33 | 95 | 62 |
| 5 | STUDENT 5 | M | 83 | 100 | 17 |
| 6 | STUDENT 6 | M | 73 | 95 | 22 |
| 7 | STUDENT 7 | M | 80 | 95 | 15 |
| 8 | STUDENT 8 | F | ABSENT | 90 | 90 |
| 9 | STUDENT 9 | F | 86 | 100 | 14 |
| 10 | STUDENT 10 | F | 83 | 95 | 12 |
| 11 | STUDENT 11 | M | 70 | 90 | 20 |
| 12 | STUDENT 12 | F | 73 | 100 | 12 |
| 13 | STUDENT 13 | F | 70 | 90 | 20 |
| 14 | STUDENT 14 | F | 76 | 90 | 14 |
| 15 | STUDENT 15 | M | 83 | 100 | 17 |
| 16 | STUDENT 16 | M | 60 | ABSENT | 60 |
| 17 | STUDENT 17 | M | 53 | 90 | 37 |
| 18 | STUDENT 18 | M | 86 | 100 | 14 |
| 19 | STUDENT 19 | F | 73 | 95 | 22 |
| 20 | STUDENT 20 | M | 83 | 95 | 13 |
| 21 | STUDENT 21 | M | 73 | 95 | 22 |
| 22 | STUDENT 22 | F | 66 | 95 | 29 |
| 23 | STUDENT 23 | F | 80 | 100 | 20 |
| 24 | STUDENT 24 | F | 63 | 95 | 22 |
| 25 | STUDENT 25 | F | 46 | 95 | 44 |
| 26 | STUDENT 26 | M | ABSENT | 100 | 100 |
| 27 | STUDENT 27 | M | 60 | 95 | 30 |
| 28 | STUDENT 28 | F | 83 | ABSENT | 83 |
| | | | | | |
| Average | | | 71,40 | 95,6 | |
| Gain Score % | | | | | 23% |

On the pre-test, students scored an average of 71.40, corresponding to the Minimum Learning Mastery Criteria (13 students); this indicates that students still have some difficulties with mastering vocabulary; on the post-test, students scored an average of 95,60 (23 students); this shows that students have significantly improved their vocabulary mastery. Because a score of 75 is required to fulfill the school's Minimum

Criteria for Mastery Learning. And the gain score is 23% of This means the flashcard method works correctly on the fourth graders at Pendrikan Lor 02 Elementary School.

The study's findings, as presented in the table above, indicate that initially, 12 students still needed to meet the Minimum Learning Mastery Criteria. However, it was observed that none of the students failed to meet the Minimum Learning Mastery Criteria. The use of flashcards as a learning tool has been monitored to significantly influence students' academic performance at Pendrikan Lor 02 Elementary School.

Based on the pre-test and post-test distributed to 4B graders at Pendrikan Lor 02 Elementary School, they had difficulty converting Indonesian sentences into English. Especially in the underlined sentences. The material presented was about clocks, and the questions that required the most effort to answer were about hours, but without using flashcards, the material presented was pre-test material. For example: "*Hari ini upacara dimulai pada pagi hari pukul tujuh lebih lima belas menit.*" The highlighted and italicized questions were easier to answer with flashcards, which are known to improve students' understanding of the material.

CONCLUSION

The researcher found that the students there had more pleasure in using learning media than the usual learning media. Here he used flashcard as one of learning media which makes students at SDN Pendrikan Lor 02 Semarang Elementary School feel pleasure in learning English, and this can also be seen from the increase in grades. The first scores were previously below the minimum criteria mastery and after learning using flash cards they gain their scores.

Another thing, he found that the Pendrikan Lor Semarang Elementary School had several drawbacks. The first was that the teachers who teach English lesson are non-English graduate teachers, because of this the learning was not optimal enough to convey, moreover the researcher also found teachers made lots of mistakes especially in pronouncing certain words like *Friday* becomes *free day*.

As a researcher related to Pendrikan Lor 02 Elementary School, he recommends that the institution consider recruiting teachers better suited to the school's needs. This is particularly important given that even minor mispronunciations can significantly

affect elementary students, whose cognitive development is still highly malleable. Additionally, the school should invest in engaging learning materials, such as flashcards or other multimedia resources, as research has demonstrated that such tools can enhance the quality of learning outcomes.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, S., & Rao, C. (2013). Applying communicative approach in teaching english as a foreign language: A case study of Pakistan. *Porta Linguarum: Revista Internacional de Didáctica de Las Lenguas Extranjeras*, 20, 187-203. https://www.academia.edu/4025925/Applying_Communicative_Approach_in_Teaching_English_as_a_Foreign_Language_a_Case_Study_of_Pakistan
- Bakhsh, S. A. (2016). Using Games as a Tool in Teaching Vocabulary to Young Learners. *English Language Teaching*, 9(7), 120. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n7p120>
- Degirmenci, N., & Yavuz, F. (2015). Teaching English to Very Young Learners. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 197(February), 19-22. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.042>
- Elly, P., Soamole, D., Sartia, S., Kelley, A., & ... (2021). ... Car (Classroom Action Research) Media Picture Dalam Meningkatkan Aktivitas Kegiatan Belajar Siswa Sd Pada Desa Tenga-Tenga. *Indonesian Journal ...*, 1(3), 145-154. <http://ijecsed.esc-id.org/index.php/home/article/view/31>
- "Glossary: S-Z." (2018). *Understanding Science. University of California Museum of Paleontology. Berkeley University Of California.* <https://undsci.berkeley.edu/glossary/test/>
- Hussain, M. S. (2016). Starting Compulsory English Early in Pakistan: A Study of Newly Emerged Scenario in the Light of TEYL Principles. *Studies in English Language Teaching*, 4(1), 123. <https://doi.org/10.22158/selt.v4n1p123>
- Khasinah, S. (2013). Classroom Action Research. *Jurnal Pionir, Volume 1, Nomor 1, 1(2)*, 33-61.
- Mendy, J. (2017). *Key HRM Challenges and Benefits. October*, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-2820-3.ch001>
- Nikoopour, J., & Kazemi, A. (2014). Vocabulary Learning through Digitized & Non-digitized Flashcards Delivery. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 98, 1366-1373. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.03.554>
- Patel, M., & Patel, N. (2019). Exploring Research Methodology. *International Journal of*

Research and Review, 6(3), 48-55.

Pitriana, D., & Jufri. (2013). The Use of Cartoon Movie as a Media in Teaching Vocabulary to Young Learners. *Journal of English Language Tea*, 1(2), 106-113.

QuestionPro. (2018). *Types of Interviews in Research and Methods*. QuestionPro. <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/types-of-interviews/>

Silfia, L., Indah Rusli, T., & Nasrullah, R. (2018). Teaching vocabulary to young learners by using animation video. *Journal Of Communication Studies*, 3(1), 2. <https://ppjp.ulm.ac.id/journal/index.php/MC/article/download/4783/4172>

Students Guide. (2022). *The Flashcards Learning Method*. Students Guide. <https://students.guide/the-flashcard-learning-method/>

Team, I. E. (2023). *7 Interview Methods in Research (Plus Interviewing Tips)*. Indeed. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/interview-methods-in-research>
