

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FLASHCARDS ON THE MOTIVATION TO INCREASE ENGLISH VOCABULARY AMONG THE FOURTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

¹**Helda Lisa**

¹SMK Negeri 6 Bengkulu

Corresponding email: heldarisa4@gmail.com

Abstract:

The primary objective of this study is to find out whether the illustrated flashcards have positive effect on the motivation to increase English vocabulary among elementary school fourth grade students. The problem of this study is why students of elementary school fourth-grade still find difficulties in understanding and comprehending the English material and especially that for vocabulary. The result of the analysis shows that there is a significance difference between the motivation to learn English vocabulary among the elementary school fourth-grade students before the implementation of flashcards and that after the implementation (76,6%), and there is a significant difference between English vocabulary mastery of elementary school fourth-grade students taught by using flashcards and that of those taught without using flashcards($t=7,74$).

Keywords: Educational Media, Illustrated Media, Flashcards, Motivation, Vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

Based on the status of English in Indonesia, learning English can be said as learning a foreign language. This condition leads to some general idea about learning English in Indonesia. One obvious thing is that generally people start learning it when they enter junior high school at the age of around thirteen. Only on the basis of the 1994 elementary school curriculum people in general can start learning it in elementary school. However, English in this level is considered only as a local content subject, which means that not all schools implement it in their instruction. And, because learning English in Indonesia happens in schools, automatically what the students learn always refers to the curriculum.

The English instruction in Elementary school is intended to endorse the mastery and development of the four basic abilities and skills, that is, reading, listening, pronouncing and writing as reflected in abilities and skills

concerning language use so that students are able to express simple expressions with emphasis on vocabulary mastery.

In order that vocabulary instruction will attain better outcomes, the teacher should choose an appropriate teaching method which is suitable with the subject matter in the teaching learning process. He needs to use various instructional media that will be able to help students increase their English vocabulary. As a new subject, English is still likely to be regarded strange by the elementary school students when they get the lesson for the first time, so that they will find difficulties in understanding and comprehending the material, especially for the vocabulary. It is one of the reasons that causes students' motivation to be low in learning English.

The assumption that elementary school students' characteristics in teaching learning activities is that they mostly use their sense of sight. It intensifies the reason for the teacher to use visual media. There are many kinds of visual media ranging from the simplest one to the most complicated ones whether they are illustrated or not. The illustrated flashcards is one of the simple illustrated visual media to facilitate students' method of learning. It is easy to be understood and comprehended by them and easy to be made as well as cheap.

Educational media as a teaching aid can be used to enhance the effectiveness of the teaching learning process to obtain the instructional objective. These media consist of various kinds of each kind has its own characteristics.. Therefore, the use of media is very much recommended in learning activities and the teacher should be deeply careful to choose the appropriate media.

Hamalik (1985) states that illustrated media are pictures which are not projected. Among the educational media, the illustrated media are the most common media to be used. Visual media in relation with the human beings' ability to memorize have the highest percentage. Based on the research done by Education Projection (in Rinanto, 1982) in the United States about the human being's ability to memorize through the five sense, the data on the ability are as follows:

- 1) Sense of taste : 2%
- 2) Sense of smell : 3%
- 3) Sense of touch : 5%
- 4) Sense of hearing : 30% and
- 5) Sense of sight : 60%

From the data stated above, it is clear that visual media, which include illustrated media, are more advantageous than any other media. They involve the sight. The students are assumed to be more effective to study English when they involve their sight. They can see and observe by themselves, especially in studying vocabulary.

Wright (1976) states that flashcards are cards printed with words and/or pictures which can be handled easily by the teacher. The flashcards which is intended in the research is a square cardboard sheet seven by ten centimeters in size. Each card contains a picture which the teacher himself can make or he can take from a magazine, newspaper, or book. At the bottom of each card, there is an English vocabulary item with its pronunciation and its translation into Indonesian. In the card, for example, there can be a picture of a table as well as the transcription of the pronunciation of the word "table" (teibl) and its translation "meja".

Stanford (in Effendi and Praja, 1985) states that motivation is an energizing condition of the organism toward the goal of certain class. Motivation derives from the latin word "movere". It means to move. A motive is what causes a person to act in a certain way (Yelon and Weinstein, 1977).

In teaching learning process, motivation gives a big influence on reaching the instructional objectives. Motivation gives a big influence on reaching the instructional objectives. There are some efforts to arouse motivation by giving a gift, praise, test, etc. Giving various motivations will give optimum results in the learning process. One of the alternatives to improve students' motivation to learn is by presenting media in the teaching learning process.

Hornby (1983) says that vocabulary is the total number of words which (with rules for combining them) make up a language. Vocabulary mastery is not a spontaneous process. It is a gradual process to aim the stable vocabulary mastery. According to Piagets' theory, a child at the age of 7-11 is always interested to recognize and know new words, he tends to repeat them again and again so that he will memorize them. The elementary school fourth-grade students are included in the pre-adolescent phase, during which he will be interested to know and to learn new words, like English vocabulary, for example.

The hypothesis of this study are proposed in the form of null and research hypothesis. The hypothesis are as follows:

H_0 = there is no significant difference between vocabulary mastery of the students thought through flashcards and that of the students thought without flashcards.

H_i = there is a significant difference between vocabulary mastery of the students taught through flashcards and that of the students thought without pictures.

The hypothesis were tested through the table of the critical values of t (see Hatch nad Farhady, 1982). Since the number of the sample was 40 and the significance level was 5%, the t critical value was 2,021. It means that if the t obtained was less than 2,021 as its critical value, the null hypothesis

would be accepted and the alternative hypothesis would be rejected. Conversely, if the obtained t was the same as or higher than 2,021, the null hypothesis would be rejected consequently the alternative hypothesis would be accepted.

METHODS

The writer used an experimental method in this investigation. According to Richard, Platt, and Weber (1985:100), experimental method means an approach to an educational research in which an idea or a hypothesis is tested or verified by setting up a situation in which the relationship between subjects or variables can be determined. The term experimental method, according to Nazir (1985) is an observation under an artificial condition in which the condition is made and controlled by a researcher.

Experimental method was implemented in the form of the actual teaching to the sample. In applying the method, the writer divided the test into two, pre-test and post-test.

Population

A population is a number of people with the same characteristics from which the data are collected. The population to which the results of this research are generalized consists of 30 fourth-grade students of SDN 71 Palembang of the 2001/2002 academic year. In this research, there is no sample, all students became the research subjects. Thus the research is called population research. Arikunto (1986) states that if the researcher intends to see all the elements in the research area, this kind of research is called population research.

Instruments

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, there are two techniques used in this study, namely, the test and observation. The vocabulary mastery test is developed based on the Local Content Curriculum for Basic Education for the English subject in the form of multiple choice. There are 40 items to be tried out in SDN 71 Palembang. The observation sheet, in the form of a questionnaire, shows the aspects that indicate motivation among the students. The aspects used are the interests, attention, diligence, activities, enthusiast, and material mastery. The questionnaire used to collect the data on the students' English learning motivation consists of questions and statements based on the indicators on the orientations or goals of learning English, the factors in learning English, the efforts made by the students in learning English, and the result to be attained by the students in learning English. Each item consists of 4 alternatives for each questions or statements.

On the other hand, the scale used in this instrument is likerts' scale. The scale value of a=4, b=3, c=2, d=1. The questions or statements in the instruments are answered by giving a check mark (V) on the chosen alternative. Before it was tried out, 34 questions or statements were developed. These consisted of three questions or statements of the orientation or goals in learning English, ten questions or statements of students' efforts in learning English and seven questions or statements of the results to be achieved by the students in learning English.

Data Analysis Procedures

The techniques for Analyzing Data

The data obtained were analyzed through three steps, they are:

- 1) Percentage analysis was applied to know the individual score of the students both in the pre-test.
- 2) The conversion was used to interpret the students' score obtained both in the post test
- 3) Matched t-test

Validity

The validity that is used in this instrument is the content validity. Suharto (1988) defines content validity as how far an instrument represents or grasps the area that will be measured.

Reliability

Reliability is a measure of degree to which a test gives consistent result. A test is said to be reliable if it gives the same result when it is given on different occasions or when it is used by different people (Richards, et al 1985). The reliability of the test materials was evaluated through internal consistency reliability.

FINDINGS

There are four findings in this investigation, (1) the students' scores obtained through the pre-test, (2) the students' scores obtained through the post-test, (3) the result of matched t-test, (4) the result of questionnaire.

The average score that the students obtained in the pre-test was 67. The highest score was 90 that could be obtained by 2 students. And the lowest score was 50 that was obtained by 2 students.

In the post-test the average score that the students got 78. This average score was much higher than that they obtained in the pre-test (67). Meanwhile, the highest score in the post-test was 10 that was obtained by 5 students. While the lowest score was 55 that was obtained only by 1 student. Again, the number of students who got the highest score exceeded those

who obtained the highest score they got in the pre-test. Based on the data analysis, it was found that the t obtained was 7,74. This t obtained was higher than 2,021 as its critical value.

For the motivation test, the score of item A(selalu)= 1078, item B(sering)=384, item C(kadang-kadang)=412, and item D(tidak pernah)=134. So the total score of the four items was 2008, and the percentage was 7,69%.

Table 1. The students' scores in the pre-test

Number	Correct Answer	Percentage (%)	Predicate
1	16	80	Good
2	12	60	Fair
3	10	50	Fair
4	10	50	Fair
5	16	80	Good
6	12	60	Fair
7	13	65	Good
8	11	55	Fair
9	12	60	Fair
10	18	90	Very good
11	12	60	Fair
12	15	75	Good
13	13	65	Fair
14	13	65	Fair
15	11	55	Fair
16	16	80	Good
17	15	75	Good
18	16	80	Good
19	11	55	Fair
20	13	65	Fair
21	12	60	Fair
22	18	90	Very good
23	13	65	Fair
24	15	75	Good
25	13	65	Fair
26	14	70	Good
27	13	65	Fair
28	13	65	Fair
29	14	70	Good
30	12	60	Fair
Total		: 2010	
Average		: 2010/30 =	Fair
		67	

Table 2. The students' scores obtained in the post-test

Number	Correct Answer	Percentage (%)	Predicate
1	16	80	Good
2	15	75	Good
3	15	75	Good
4	13	65	Good
5	20	100	Very good
6	14	70	Good
7	16	80	Good
8	13	65	Good
9	15	75	Good
10	20	100	Very good
11	14	70	Good
12	15	75	Good
13	14	70	Good
14	20	100	Very good
15	11	55	Fair
16	15	75	Good
17	16	80	Good
18	20	100	Very good
19	12	60	Fair
20	15	75	Good
21	15	75	Good
22	20	100	Very good
23	16	80	Good
24	15	75	Good
25	13	65	Good
26	16	80	Good
27	16	80	Good
28	16	80	Good
29	16	80	Good
30	16	80	Good
Total		: 2340	
Average		: 2340/30 = 78	Good

Table 3. The Result of the Matched T-Test

Number	Pre-test	Post-test	D	D2
1	80	80	0	0
2	60	75	15	225
3	50	75	25	625
4	50	65	15	225
5	80	100	20	400
6	60	70	10	100
7	65	80	15	225
8	55	65	20	400

Number	Pre-test	Post-test	D	D2
9	60	75	15	225
10	90	100	10	100
11	60	70	10	100
12	75	75	0	0
13	65	70	5	25
14	65	100	35	225
15	55	55	0	0
16	80	75	5	25
17	75	80	5	25
18	80	100	20	400
19	55	60	5	25
20	65	75	10	100
21	60	75	15	225
22	90	100	10	100
23	65	80	15	225
24	75	75	0	0
25	65	65	0	0
26	70	80	10	100
27	65	80	15	225
28	65	80	15	225
29	70	80	10	100
30	60	80	20	400
$D = 350$		$D2 = 3717$		

$$SD = \frac{SD}{\sqrt{n-1}}, = \frac{D - (1/n)(D)}{\sqrt{n-1}}$$

$$SD = \frac{3717 - (1/30)(350)}{\sqrt{30-1}}, = SD = \frac{3717 - (1/30)(350)}{\sqrt{30-1}}, =$$

$$SD = \frac{3717 - (0.03)(122500)}{\sqrt{29}}, = SD = \frac{3717 - 3675}{5,39}, = SD = \frac{42}{5,39}, SD = 7,79$$

$$SD = \frac{SD}{\sqrt{n}}, = SD = \frac{7,79}{\sqrt{30}}, = SD = \frac{7,79}{5,48}, SD = 1,42$$

$$t = \frac{X1 - X2}{SD} = \frac{78 - 67}{1,42} = 7,74$$

Based on the two results of the pre-test and the post-test in this study, the value of t-calculation with the percentage score in the pre-test 67 and in the post-test 78. It means that H_0 was accepted or there is a significant difference between the students score in the pre-test and those in the post-test of English vocabulary mastery.

Table 4. The Result of Questionnaire

Number of Students	Selalu (A) 4	Sering (B) 3	Kadang (C) 2	Tidak Pernah (D) 1	SCORE A + B + C + D
1	32	24	8	10	74
2	32	27	6	10	75
3	40	30	4	8	82
4	36	21	14	8	79
5	32	15	20	7	74
6	36	18	10	10	74
7	36	30	16	3	8581
8	28	30	20	3	58
9	8	21	16	13	78
10	36	24	10	8	78
11	32	24	16	6	94
12	36	24	16	18	60
13	20	15	10	15	70
14	20	21	14	11	56
15	16	6	20	14	77
16	32	27	10	8	57
17	28	9	9	11	79
18	32	22	2	4	57
19	28	36	6	7	36
20	6	6	8	18	72
21	32	12	20	8	63
22	20	15	16	12	89
23	32	45	10	2	65
24	36	9	4	16	51
25	20	3	8	20	88
26	40	24	4	10	91
27	40	42	6	3	77
28	40	21	6	10	77
29	24	33	14	6	69
30	28	21	10	10	72
31	36	18	6	2	62
32	20	12	18	12	66
33	28	12	4	12	66
34	32	3	6	15	56
Total	1078	384	412	134	2008=76,6%

Based on the criteria of testing the hypothesis, alternative hypothesis (H_1) was tested through the t-table (see Hatch and Farhady, 1982). Since the number of samples of this research was 30 students, so to accept the alternative hypothesis with 5% significant, the t-value of the matched t-test calculation should exceed 2,021. Based on the result of the data analysis the

value of t-calculation was 7,74, it was higher than 2,021 as its critical value. It means that the use of teaching English vocabulary by using flashcard enable the students to get better scores.

While the result of questionnaire scores above showed that students have high motivation in studying English (76,6%) give positive responses and the factors that can influence the students motivation were intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

DISCUSSION

Based on the criteria of testing the hypothesis, alternative hypothesis (H_i) was tested through the t- table (see Hatch and Farhady, 1982). Since the number of samples of this research was 30 students, so to accept the alternative hypothesis with 5% significant, the t- value of the matched t-test calculation should exceed 2,021. Based on the result of the data analysis the value of t-calculation was 7,74, it was higher than 2,021 as its critical value. It means that the use of teaching English vocabulary by using flashcard enable the students to get better scores.

While the result of questionnaire scores above showed that students have high motivation in studying English (76,6%) give positive responses and the factors that can influence the students motivation were intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the previous discussion, general conclusions were drawn. First, there is a significant difference between the motivation to learn English vocabulary among the elementary school fourth-grade students before the implementation of flashcards and that after the implementation of flashcards. Therefore, the flashcards can be given to the students following the presentation of the words taught.

Second, there is a significant difference between the English vocabulary mastery of elementary school fourth-grade students before and after being taught by using flashcards. The flashcards were proved to gain a better result when they were used as follow-up exercises in teaching vocabulary to elementary school fourth grade students. The students given flashcards were able to master a greater number of words than the students that not given.

Using illustrated media (flashcards), it is not only improving students' motivation in learning English but also make the students active in learning. By using this technique, there will be many adventages that will be got by the students in developing their English. And also for the English teacher, in applying flashcards as an illustrated media, he can create the

situation and give the students opportunities to get involved in the classroom activities.

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