

USING FLASHCARD AS A MEDIA IN TEACHING VOCABULARY TO YOUNG LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Oleh:

Anita Fatimatul Laeli, S.Pd

FKIP Univ. Muhammadiyah Jember, Jl. Karimata 49 Jember,

email: fatimalaeli@yahoo.co.id

Dusun Watu-Ulo RT/RW 1/38 Sumberejo Ambulu Jember

Abstrak: Bahasa adalah alat komunikasi untuk bersosialisasi dengan orang lain. Pada dasarnya, secara tidak langsung bahasa telah diajarkan oleh orang tua di lingkungan keluarga pada anak, tetapi secara formal bahasa juga diajarkan di sekolah sebagai salah satu mata pelajaran yang harus dikuasai, baik bahasa Indonesia, bahasa daerah, terlebih bahasa Inggris. Bahasa Inggris adalah muatan lokal yang harus dikuasai oleh pelajar di sekolah dasar, dimana pelajar di sekolah dasar adalah termasuk pelajar bahasa pemula. Masalah yang sering dihadapi dalam pelajaran bahasa Inggris oleh guru dan siswa adalah kurangnya penguasaan kosa-kata. Guru sebagai motivator dan fasilitator dalam kelas bahasa Inggris harus mampu menumbuhkan minat siswa dalam belajar terutama dalam penguasaan kosa-kata dengan menggunakan media yang menarik. Salah satu media yang sesuai dengan siswa sekolah dasar adalah flashcard. Dengan menggunakan flashcard guru dapat memperkenalkan kosa-kata melalui gambar yang terdapat dalam flashcard dan guru dapat membangun kelas yang menyenangkan sehingga siswa tidak merasa bosan.

Kata kunci: kosa-kata, flashcard, pelajar bahasa pemula

INTRODUCTION

English has been widely used in every country in the world either as foreign language or as a second language. Keep abreast of the time, English has become a communicative tool among people all over the world. For this reason, the Indonesian government tries to improve human resources by establishing the teaching of English as a local content.

Commonly, learning English is to master the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. So, learning English means learning the four skills. Meanwhile, in learning English as a

foreign language, the learners should first of all master the sound systems, the basic structures, and also number of vocabulary items of the target language. Someone can speak, write, exchange ideas and understanding what other say if he possesses a certain amount vocabulary. In this case we can say that vocabulary has important role in using a language. Tarigan (1984: 2) states that the quality of our language skills much depend on the quality and the quantity of vocabulary we possess. Furthermore, Tarigan (1984: 2) states that the more vocabulary he owns the bigger language competence he uses. In addition, Hocket (in Nunan, 1991:117) states that vocabulary hardly required formal attention in the classroom, because vocabulary is one of the most influential linguistic. Concerning with this, it can be said that vocabulary needs special attention in the English teaching learning.

Vocabulary is one of English teaching learning's materials in Elementary School where the students are considered as young language learners. Working with young language learners is not the same as adult learners. Children have their own world which is full of imaginations, playing, and having fun. Generally, children prefer to have a funny situation to formal classroom and they like to play with colors, games, pictures, etc. Therefore, a teacher is challenged to know the children world and what technique is suitable to teach them. Teacher must be creative in presenting the material to be interest and enjoyable.

Media plays a very important role because media increases the effectiveness of learning by helping the students to assimilate a meaningful idea and interesting manner. Media will help the students to understand the materials given by the teacher. Media also attracts the students in transfers of information. In brief, the materials will be easily understood if it is supported by the appropriate media.

Visual aids are regarded as an appropriate media for young learners. As Wright (1989: 2) states that we predict, deduce, and infer not only from what we hear but from what we see around us and from what we remember having seen. In line with this statement, Halliwell (1992: 5) sates that children sometimes seem to notice something out of the corner of their eye and to remember is better than what they were actually supposed to be learning".

This article focuses on exploring picture flashcard as media for teaching and learning.

THE YOUNG LEARNERS LANGUAGE LEARNING

There are some interpretation categories in defining young learners' language learning. Young language learners are not always indicating to children but also it includes teenagers who begin to learn a new language. In this study, the writer focuses on the Elementary students which are considered as young learners. They are about 5 up to 10 years old. As Sarah Philip (1993:5) describes that young learners are children from the first year of formal schooling (5 or 6 years old) to 11 or 12 years age. Young learners do not come to the language classroom with empty-handed. They bring with them an already well-established set of instincts, skills, and characteristics which will help them to learn another language. Halliwell (1992:3) states that the characteristics of young learners are:

1. Children are already very good in interpreting meaning without necessarily understanding the individual word;
2. Children already have great skills in using limited language creatively;
3. Children frequently learn indirectly rather than directly;
4. Children take great pleasure in finding and creating fun in which they do;
5. Children have a ready imagination;
6. Children take great delight in talking.

Consequently, the teacher should be able to create a desirable classroom atmosphere which is conducive and attractive enough to increase the students' vocabulary achievement and to use materials of instruction effectively. In line with the statement Brewster (1992; Ellis, 1991) states that learning to learn is fundamental in teaching young learner.

FLASHCARD AS MEDIA IN ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING

There are many kinds of media in teaching and learning. Teacher can use media in transferring certain information or

materials in teaching. Media will help the teacher to convey or presents the materials in class easily. In addition, it will be easier for students to understand the materials comprehensively. Therefore, the teaching and learning process will run more effectively. The media that will be used in this research is flashcard. Flashcard is one kind of visual aids that can be applied in the classroom to the teaching and learning process effectively.

Some experts have different definition about flashcard. According to Arsyad (2006:119) flashcard is a small card that illustrates of picture, text, or symbols that can help students to memorize the materials related to the picture. While, Hornby (2002: 509) defines flashcard is a card with a word or picture on it that the teacher uses during the lesson.

From those definition above it can be concluded that flashcard is visual aids in teaching and learning process with pictures, words, sentences, number, etc.



THE ADVANTAGES OF USING FLASHCARD

Flashcard is containing one colorful picture of an object or thing. It is suitable for the children as young learners. Since, most of young children tend to be visual learners. Wright (1986: 2) argues some advantages in using flashcard are:

1. Picture (flashcard) can contribute the students' interest and motivation.

2. Flashcard makes the students be able to memorize and to learn new information easily.
3. Flashcard the students can see the example of the object directly from the picture.
4. Flashcard can build the students' interest and make them have intention to remember.

In addition Fleming (2008) states that flashcard are the best tools for memorizing information.

Using flashcard not only give some advantages for the students in learning, but also for the teacher in teaching. By using flashcard, the teacher can use various techniques in teaching. Such as games, matching, guessing, etc. Consequently, teacher can create an enjoyable classroom atmosphere in teaching that can make the students will not feel bored in learning.

TEACHING AND TESTING VOCABULARY THROUGH FLASHCARD.

Teaching vocabulary is not only teaching about the meaning of the word, but also including the spelling, pronunciation, and the usage. In teaching vocabulary, flashcard is useful to help the students learn the new words without necessarily giving long explanation about it, because the students can see the example of the object directly. Flashcard can help the students to memorize the new vocabulary easily. However, the teacher should be creative in using flashcard in vocabulary teaching. The creative teacher can make the teaching vocabulary become more impressive and interesting. And it can build the students' motivation up in learning vocabulary.

There are some techniques in teaching vocabulary that can be applied by using Flashcard. Here are some activities that are offered by Gibaud (2000); they are matching the word with flashcard, question and answer, the combination of visual and verbal instruction, guessing the name of the word, snap, and whispering. In addition Budden (2007) offer some activities in using flashcard, they are memories activities, drilling activities, identification activities and TPR activities.

From those kinds of activities, the researcher only uses some of them. They are whispering, guessing the name of the word,

matching, and TPR activities. Those activities will be discussed in detail below:

- a. **Whispering.** In this activity students stand in a line, give a card to the last student in the line, students starting from this last one must whisper the word up the line to the first person, and the first person has to say the word loudly.
- b. **Guessing.** There are some requirements that can be applied in this activities, they are:
 1. The students guest the name of the word based on the picture flashcard that shows little by little by the teacher.
 2. The students hold up the picture when hear the right word.
- c. **Matching.** In this activity the students work in pair and match the word and the picture. Then, one of the students writes the name of the word on the board and the other students put the right picture on the board.
- d. **TPR activities.** In this activity the students Point or race to the flashcard based on the word that the teacher says. Students also can give the instructions to classmates in order.

Testing vocabulary such as nouns and adjectives, the matching techniques can be used. In each items, the students are providing with a sentence and some flashcards that have been chosen. Some examples are presented below:

A. Testing Nouns, For Example:

Instruction:

- match the sentences below with the suitable flashcards :

1. This is a cat



2. This a chair





3. This is a bag

B. Testing Adjectives, For Example:

Instruction:

- choose the suitable pictures (A or B) based on the sentences below:

1. His clothe is red

a.



b.



2. Mr. Anton is happy

a.



b.



CONCLUSION

Flashcard that is focused in this study is picture flashcard. Picture can capture the students' interest and attention in learning. As Wright (1989: 17) pictures have some strength, such as motivating the students and making them pay attention in teaching and learning process. By having picture flashcard as the media in teaching and learning process, the students will have high motivation to take apart in English class. When the students have high motivation in learning, they will have good achievement in learning. As lightbown and Spada (2004: 51) states that high levels of motivation are correlated with the success in language learning.

Furthermore, by applying this aid in vocabulary teaching all the factors promoting vocabulary mastery could be fulfilled without inducing boredom. The verbal capacity factor was surely fulfilled, since the flashcard was in the form of picture. The other affecting factor to be fulfilled was ability to concentrate. The material given by using flashcard positively captured the students' interest. Consequently, they had longer time to pay attention on the material. However, the purpose could also fulfill since the presentation using flashcard motivated students' desire to learn vocabulary.

In addition, the teacher must never put aside the principles of applying the aid. Those principles are:

1. Flashcard must be visible for the whole class, and the materials used must be clearly recognizable.
2. Simple pictures are better than complex ones. Careful use of color can enhance presentations.

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