

**THE USE OF FLASHCARDS IN TEACHING VOCABULARY AT  
FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SDN SUKOSARI 02 DAGANGAN  
MADIUN**

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***Abstract:** The Use of Flashcards in Teaching Vocabulary at Fourth Grade Students of SDN Sukosari 02 Dagangan Madiun. In this reserach, the researcher formulates three problems. Those are “What are the procedures of flashcards and what are strengths and weaknesses of flashcards in teaching vocabulary for fourth grade students of SDN Sukosari 02 Dagangan Madiun?”. In this research, the researcher uses descriptive research. The sample of the research is the fourth grade students of SDN Sukosari 02 which consists of 26 students. To collect the data, the researcher uses observation and test. Then, to analyze the data the researcher uses reduction, display and conclusion. The results of the research in application of flashcards in teaching vocabulary for students of fourth grade are the students’ average score after the implementation of flashcards is 8.15 and the students’ average score before the implementation of flashcards is 7.40. So, it is analytically concluded that the implementation of flashcards in teaching vocabulary of fourth grade of SDN Sukosari 02 Dagangan is effective. The strengths of flashcards in teaching vocabulary are flashcards gives some contribution for the students’ competence and achievement, there is almost without weaknesses within the use of flashcards in teaching vocabulary for elementary school students.*

**Keywords :** Teaching Vocabulary, Flashcard

At elementary school, English is introduced at the fourth grade. Learning English in elementary school is not easy. In fact, children still have difficulties in using English vocabularies both spoken and written because English vocabulary has different analysis between spelling and pronunciation. Teaching English to children is different and it cannot be compared with those in high level. So, teacher should realize that teaching English to children is not easy. Halliwell (1992:3) states that “Children have ready imagination, they frequently learn indirectly rather than directly,

their instinct is for fun, playing, interacting and talking”.

To teach English vocabulary in elementary school, teacher needs some ways or manners. One of them is using media. The main function of media is student become enthusiasms and interesting toward the lesson. The success of learning a language depends on how many vocabularies they know and how well they use them. It means, if the students learn a new language, the student must know much about the vocabulary. It is the basic of communication, as every one cannot communicate easily without knowing the words they

want to use. Therefore vocabulary is an important skill in learning a foreign language.

One of media that the teacher uses is flashcards. Teaching vocabulary by using flashcards can make the students excited and understand on the English vocabulary. Instructional media such as flashcards also give a clear concept of information given. Flashcards can give variations in teaching learning process. It is used according to the theme of the lesson. For example, theme is about kinds of Indonesian animals. The teacher shows five cards contents of picture animals quickly, there are elephant, tiger, horse, rabbit, goat, etc and students respond it quickly by mentioning words based on the picture. In flashcard, the picture is full color. So that, by presenting media in class, especially flashcards, the students will be interested to learn English vocabularies. And also the students will have an experience directly toward what the teacher wants. Media can help the teacher to make the teaching learning process more pleasant. In this case, flashcards is effective to increase the student vocabularies.

Based on the background of the problem that explained above, the research discusses some problems of the study, there are:

1. What are the procedures of flashcards in teaching vocabulary for fourth grade students of SDN Sukosari 02 Dadangan Madiun?

2. What are strengths and weaknesses of flashcards in teaching vocabulary for fourth grade students of SDN Sukosari 02 Dagangan Madiun?

Flashcards is one of media in teaching learning process as well as other media such as charts, cartoons, maps, etc. According to Kasihani (2007:109) Flashcards is cards measure A4 papers amount to 30 to 50 cards. Every cards are contain of picture and name of it picture. Usually flash cards grouped appropriates with it varieties, for example group of picture fruits, vegetables, part of body, animals, transportation, etc. Halliwel (1992:41) states that flashcards are kinds of cards contain pictures, words, instructions that are arranged in various combinations. The pictorial form of flashcards is chosen with assumption that pictures give a clear concept of what a word or structure may mean.

The other opinion, from Finocchairo (1974: 105) flashcards is cards with individual words (either printed or in manuscript) it can be prepared and field within the same categories and in the some order as the individual pictures. The media are used in order to help the teacher to explain the teaching materials. Flash cards indicate as picture. The picture of flash cards can be used to explain the meaning of vocabulary items. Kasihani K.E. Suyanto (2007:103) said that showing an interesting picture is one of the

easiest ways to elicit a language sample. By using picture, children more interest to learn and it can add vocabulary mastery. Moreover, by using flash cards it can help the students in mastery vocabulary.

Flashcards indicate as a picture, word, and instruction. Usually the form of flashcards is cards measure A4 papers amount to 30 to 50 cards. Every cards are contain of picture and name of it picture. Usually flash cards grouped appropriates with it varieties, for example group of picture fruits, vegetables, part of body, animals, transportation, etc. Flashcards used for all content of class. Because of the size of flashcards is big in order to students can match clearly. Usually, the teacher holds some flashcards and than move the different cards quickly to look the student. Changing of cards doing quickly, may be it make the reason why namely of flashcards (flash = sekilas, dengan cepat).

In teaching vocabulary pictures convey information. Pictures can serve as an instructional language. When foreign words cannot be understood, carefully selected pictures can tell the story. Everybody who sees a picture will be able to get something from it if the picture is clear. Concrete words were best described by pictures rather than by paraphrase or definition. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that flash cards is one of

the effective media in teaching and learning foreign language.

Vocabulary is a key in language learning. Language is a system of sounds, words, sentences, etc that used by human to communicate thoughts and feelings. In this case, words that are used in language are vocabulary. Vocabulary is a list of words that have the meaning, glossaries and some words used in language, those words has meaning and convey some messages. Vocabulary is also basic skill to communicate, people will not be able to communicate easily without knowing vocabulary.

Concerning the meaning of vocabulary, it is clear that vocabulary cannot be ignored in studying a foreign language. In learning another language, the most important thing is to master the vocabulary. Finoacchiaro (1974:8) states that the mastery of vocabulary cannot be ignored in the development of language aspect of communication namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It means that if people have a lot of vocabularies in their mind, the students will never find any difficulties in learning the languages and will be successful in developing language skills. Those are supported by Hammer (1991:153) who has pointed out that vocabulary is the vital organ of the encouragement of language development. In this case, vocabulary is the bridge for their skills to achieve a certain goal of

learning a language such as in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The teachers consider that the success of learning a language depends on how many vocabularies that the students can master and how well the students use it.

Doff (1990:19) states that there are two kinds of vocabulary, they are:

a. Active vocabulary

The active vocabulary is words which students need to understand and also use themselves. The teaching active vocabulary is by giving examples and some questions, so the students know how to use the words.

b. Passive vocabulary

The passive vocabulary is words that the students want to understand (e.g. when the reading text), but it does not need to use by themselves.

Learning vocabulary must be through a process, it is impossible to get a lot of vocabulary without study. The students learn vocabulary since they were children, so when they adult, they have a lot of vocabulary, Herry (1990:6) state that there are two methods in learning vocabulary, they are: They listen the words from: Parent, Older friends, Friends, Television and radio, Their environments, Place of playing, Shop or department store, They

improve the vocabulary from their experiences, such as: They says any goods, They eat, They feel, They smell, They drink.

From the statement above, it can be concluded that the children learn vocabulary based on their experience. For example, they go to the zoo, garden, market or other place. The more experience the children have, the greater vocabularies the children get.

## METHOD

To collect the data, the researcher uses observation and test.

### 1. Observation

Observation is an activity done directly. The process of observation can be done by seeing and hearing then noting objectively. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the definition of observation is one way to find information and data

Cheek list data is the instrument that is used by the researcher. By doing observation, the researcher will know the situation and condition directly on effectiveness of flashcards in teaching vocabulary for fourth grade students in elementary school.

### 2. Test

According to Arikunto (2002:108), "Test is used to measure skill or ability of the

observed object". Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that test is practices of questions to use students motivation and to know students ability.

In this research, the researcher uses test as a technique in collecting the data. The purpose of the test is to take the data from the fourth grade students of SDN Sukosari 02 Dagangan Madiun, in order to know the effectiveness of flashcards in teaching vocabulary for fourth grade students.

To analyze the data, the researcher uses:

1. Reducing data  
The researcher chooses the data needed to be researched. Not all the data are used, it uses only the important data.
2. Displaying data  
The researcher shows the data or displays the data.
3. Conclusion  
After reducing and displaying the data, the researcher makes a conclusion or verification.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The Procedures of Using Flashcards in Teaching Vocabulary for Fourth Grade Students of SDN Sukosari 02 Dagangan Madiun

The process of teaching vocabulary by using flashcards can be described as follows:

#### a. Pre Activities

The teacher opens the meeting by giving a greeting to the students. After that, the teacher explains the theme of lesson and technique using flashcards before the teacher begins her activities. The teacher shows all of flashcards about fruit. The teacher guides the students to understand the kinds of fruit and helps them recognize the kinds of fruit which they did not know before, as the dialogue below:

Teacher : Good morning students.

Students : Good morning, Mom.

Teacher : How are you today?

Students : I'm fine thanks you. And you?

Teacher : I'm fine too thanks you. Today we will study about kinds of fruit. Do you like fruit?

Students : Yes.

Teacher : What is your favorite fruit?

Students : Manggis, apel, strawberry, anggur (They said in Indonesia because they did not know in English).

Teacher : (The teacher smiled and said)  
In English please.

Students : (Silent, they show the blank face).

Teacher : Ok, attention please. I will show you by using the picture. (Baiklah, perhatikan. Ibu akan menunjukkan gambar.

After the teacher asks some questions as an introduction, the teacher asks the students to sit on their own seats. It is done because there are some students who moved from their own seat.

#### b. Whilst Activity

In the next step, the teacher has two sets of cards. One set is for the students and the other is for the teacher. One set of cards contain eight pictures. So when the teacher distributes the cards to every student, the teacher still had the same cards. The eight cards used are pictures of mango, strawberry, mangosteen, avocado, grapes, star fruit, melon, and banana (see appendix 1) one of the aims of this practice is to help the students to interpret the picture. In other words pictures convey a meaning. The students will know the meanings of the new

vocabulary from what their teacher says. After they know the meanings of the pictures, they match the pictures. But to make it clear and easy, before they practice, the teacher gives the instruction and example how to play the flashcards. It is presented in the dialogue below:

Teacher : Ok, now we will discuss about fruit. I have eight pictures flashcards, and I will distribute it for you.

Students : Yes, Mom.

Teacher : One student one card, please.

Students : (Silent)

Teacher : Satu orang satu kartu dan yang lainnya silahkan mengikuti instruksi.

Students : Yes, Mom.

Teacher : (Before the teacher started the activity, she showed all of the pictures and said what the pictures are about). Ok. For example, say "I like star fruit, do you?". So, the students who have the same picture please say, yes I do. But what is the

meaning of star fruit?  
Students : (Silent).  
Teacher : (A few minutes later, the teacher gave the answer).  
What is it?  
Students : Belimbing.  
Teacher : Good. Do you understand?  
Students : Yes, Mom.  
Teacher : Ok now, let's start together. I like mangosteen, do you?  
Students : Yes, Mom.  
Teacher : Very good Sella, what is the meaning of "mangosteen" in Bahasa Indonesia?  
Students : Manggis.  
Teacher : Good, ok next question.

**c. Post Activity**

After finishing the lesson, the teacher gives worksheet to know the students' ability in mastering vocabulary after using flashcards.

**2. Strengths and weaknesses of Flashcards in Teaching Vocabulary for Fourth Grade Students of SDN Sukosari 02 Dagangan Madiun**

**a. Strengths**

**For the Teacher:**

1) Teaching English by using flashcards is more interesting, because

flashcards can create joyful learning in the classroom. By using flashcards the teaching learning process will be more variations, especially to add vocabulary for the prior learning of the students in elementary school.

2) Flashcards for the teacher can help to focus the students' attention because flashcards measure A4 papers. So the students can match the cards clearly. The teacher can use the pictures to catch students' attention by providing direct experiences to enrich their visual element. Relating to teaching English vocabulary, these pictures can play as effective stimulation as to elicit the key responses by using specific structures.

3) Flashcards can be used based on the theme of lesson. For example animals, fruits, vegetables, occupation, parts of body, etc. So teaching English by using flashcards can explain the material more clearly and easily.

4) By using flashcards, teacher can give variations in teaching

learning process, because teaching by flashcards can include game. It can minimize boredom as a result of monotonous way of teaching.

**For students:**

- 1) Flashcards can make the students exciting and understand the English vocabulary. The pictorial cards can keep their mental and emotion engagement in learning. They can feel relax and fun because they enjoy learning.
- 2) Flashcards can motivate students to be active in teaching learning process, because the students make learning by playing. So by using flashcards the teaching learning process will be more varieties, especially to add vocabulary for the prior learning of the students in elementary school.
- 3) By showing the flashcards, the students could remember the words better because they know the real things of the words which are new for them, so by using flashcards, the students can easily memorize something.
- 4) By using flashcards the students are more interested in teaching learning process than classical one. So by using flashcards the teacher can help the students to remember the words in the pictures, to add new vocabulary, to increase vocabulary mastery, etc.
- 5) Picture in flashcards is colorful, which can help the students avoid boredom and could catch the

students' attention. Flashcards can be used as effective stimulus in increasing students' vocabulary having powerful effect in teaching learning process.

**b. Weaknesses**

Based on the fact above, flashcards give some contribution for the students' competence and achievement. So, it is almost without weaknesses in using flashcards in teaching vocabulary for elementary school. It can be seen on the average of student's score after the implementation of flashcards in teaching vocabulary is higher than the average of student's score before the implementation of flashcards in teaching vocabulary. So, it can be concluded that flashcard is effective to be used in teaching vocabulary for elementary school.

But to teach the vocabulary by using flashcards, the teacher needs more money to buy the flashcards and some preparations. Because the flashcards used must be clear and big that can be seen by all of students in class. To attract students' attention, the pictures of flashcards are colorful. So if the teacher only gives the copy of the picture, the students will get bored quickly. Besides that the teacher must be serious in selecting the picture of flashcards



because flashcards are of some kinds. Kinds of flashcards are about fruits, animals, families, parts of body, and others. So the pictures of flashcards are used based on the theme of the lesson.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the result of the research, the researcher gives some conclusions as follows:

In application of flashcards in teaching vocabulary for fourth grade students of SDN Sukosari 02 Kec. Dagangan Kab. Madiun Term 2007/2008, the teacher uses some steps. They are making lesson plan, having discussion and making interpretation. The teacher prepares the lesson plan before teaching learning process starts. In the classroom, the teacher teaches the students based on the lesson plan. The teacher presents the lesson by using flashcards. The teacher checks the students' pronunciation asks them to use simple sentences related to the flashcards and gives worksheet at the end of each meeting.

Moreover, involving games in the application of flashcards makes the students feel relax and create an interesting atmosphere. As a result, the students can memorize the presented vocabulary easily by focusing their attention in the lesson. The implementation of the flashcards gives valuable contribution towards students' vocabulary mastery. Most of the students are interested it when they are learning English by using flashcards. They state that flashcards can motivate them because the pictures are interesting and the language in use is easy to understand. From the result of the test, it can be seen that the students' average score after the implementation of flashcards is 8.15 and the students' average score before the implementation of flashcards is 7.40. So, it is known that the implementation of flashcards in teaching vocabulary of fourth grade students of SDN Sukosari 02 Dagangan Madiun Term 2007/2008 is effective.

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