

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FLASHCARD GAME ON VOCABULARY MASTERY

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ABSTRACT:

Learning vocabulary is difficult for some students. There are a number of factors causing the difficulty of learning vocabulary: first is from students' point of view who argued that a lot of various different vocabularies should be learned by the students in a short time in which they memorize them but often forget. Second is from teacher's point of view who said that teachers' technique (traditional memorization) and media (power point) in teaching vocabulary were almost never changed for a long time. Therefore this study is aimed at investigating the effectiveness of teaching vocabulary using flashcard game on vocabulary mastery.

Keywords: Teaching Vocabulary, Flashcard Game, Vocabulary Mastery.

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the most spoken language throughout the world. It is used as a means of communication among different countries. Indonesia as the non speaking English country learn English. A lot of people try to acquire English where English is taught as a foreign language. Indonesian people have many difficulties in the learning process especially in speaking. They must master a lot of

English vocabularies in order to speak English as well as possible.

Vocabulary is important for a person who learns a language. Hornby (2004:1447) stated that vocabulary is a total member of words in a language that is used by a person. It means that vocabulary plays an important role in using a language. We demand to know vocabulary when we want to express our idea. Without knowing vocabulary, we can not use the

language and will not understand on what other people mean.

For students, vocabulary is very important to be mastered as the basic factor of learning language. Unfortunately, learning vocabulary is not always easy for some students. In this case, there are two basic reasons of this research were begun because of two problems. The first problem was from the students in the researcher's school who mostly argued that mastering vocabulary is extremely needed to support their skills in English: listening, speaking, reading and writing. For them, mastering vocabulary was not always easy because there were a lot of vocabularies that the students should know well.

The second problem was from the researcher's officemates who are also English teachers often shared the students' problem dealing with the teachers' method, technique and media in teaching vocabulary. Mostly, the teachers taught English using power point media as the result of changing their old teaching media previously then students wrote the vocabulary in their writing book. Again, the English teachers still got the problems because it was no longer effective since it

was used for a long time while some other media were never used. When the teachers gave the time for students to read, understand even memorize or discuss the vocabulary with friends, they made noisy and did not pay any attention. When they did, then the result was not good because in fact, they got a lot of trouble in learning vocabulary. So, its important to find another media which provided the new teaching method and technique.

The researcher thought that sometimes it is better to use the moving media in teaching vocabulary to the students as the new media. Later on, the teacher took a media of picture series from the internet because there was a free hotspot area available at school. Again, the students get difficulty in creating some sentences because of limited vocabulary. Then the researcher was inspired by "Akeelah and the Bee" movie which tells about a girl who had a brain like a sponge and she learned thousand words through flashcard, that was, a card written a word then finally she won a vocabulary contest in USA.

From the movie, the researcher then thought that she was intended to apply teaching vocabulary using instructional

media, that is, flashcard. "Instructional media is a means of communication used to carry message with an instructional intent." (Heinich in Kasbolah, 2001:3). Furthermore, he said that there are three kinds of instructional media; they are visual media, audio media, and audio visual media. Visual media consists of blackboard, pictures, flashcards, flannel boards, etc. Audio media includes tape, language laboratory. In addition, some examples of audio visual media are film, television, and DVD player. Among these three groups of media, visual media is relatively cheap and easy to be developed.

Wright in Maulidyawati (2008:16) said, "flashcards are a piece of cardboard or thick paper on which a picture, a word, a phrase or a sentence is written that can be handled easily by the teacher." It is one of the learning sources used in teaching English. For the researcher, flashcard is so simple material that she only needs to prepare a piece of paper, the next is cut the paper then writes one English vocabulary and the Indonesian meaning in the back side. If they have more time, teachers make the paper becomes more colourful by painting some small pictures, colouring the words or so forth. So that teachers do not

always spend the whole time browsing the material from the internet. In addition, Wright in Kasbolah (2001:13) stated that flashcard as instructional media is easy to prepare and organize in the classroom. Furthermore, the researcher can develop many methods in teaching by using flashcard such as game. Moreover, teaching vocabulary using flashcards is useful to facilitate the students to acquire language skills in which they use the language actively (Heinich in Kasbolah, 2001:3). It means, the teacher can facilitate the students in learning vocabulary as a part of language skills through flashcard.

Vocabulary

Hornby (2004:1447) stated that vocabulary is a total member of words in a language that is used by a person. It means vocabulary is all the words that people use in a language. Word and language are set of symbols connected each other. Therefore, learning a language also means studying a word. Another theory stated that vocabulary is central to language and of critical importance to typical language learner. Without a sufficient vocabulary, one cannot communicate effectively or

express his ideas in both oral and written form (Fauziyati, 2005: 155).

From the statements above can be concludes that vocabulary is a list or a series of words used to express the idea. It means that vocabulary is very important vocabulary in every aspect as a basic component of language. Students who master number of vocabularies may have a great chance to improve their writing, reading, speaking and listening skill. That is why, mastering a lot of words is very important to help us learning language.

Memory in Vocabulary Learning

Wenden&Rubin (2001:43) stated "human memory is crucial to the concept of learning. The ability to understand spoken and written language, and to produce them depends on the ability to recognize and retrieve information stored in memory." From that statement, it is clear that human memory plays important role in learning a language especially on their ability to understand and respond language.

Most learners complain that they have words but these words will only retain in their memory for a short period of time. Moreover, students easily forget they

words they have learned. Research evidence proved that words are originally stored in therefore, at least in the initial stages, teacher or student should avoid as much as possible confusion arising from the simultaneous presentation or analysis of highly similar form (Nation in Mujiono, 2008:11).

To sum up, human brain memory plays an important role in learning vocabulary. There are also some factors influencing the students" memorization such as second language or foreign language and the work of short and long term memory. To memorize vocabulary well, then students need to shoot an appropriate strategy so that the memory can work well.

Vocabulary Learning Technique

The main purpose of learning vocabulary is to help learners acquire a useful vocabulary as much as possible. Therefore, in every school activity, teachers should introduce new vocabulary then providing an appropriate technique to understand the meaning. There are many techniques can be used in learning vocabulary.

One of learning vocabulary techniques is aiding memory which is famous with the term "mnemoic", it is a kind of memory trick used to memorize and retrieve all kinds of language vocabulary. It works by utilizing some well-known principles of psychology: a retrieval plan is developed during encoding, and mental imagery, both visual and verbal". It helps the individual learns faster and recall better because they aid the integration of new material into existing cognitive units and provide retrieval cues (Wenden&Rubin, 2001:43).

Another theory said that words are slippery things, in order to retain a word, students have to fix the meaning of the word in their minds. There are two points can be done to learn vocabulary suggested by Hadfield: fix the meaning of the word and use the word to communicate with others. In other word, showing the meaning can be used to learn vocabulary. In this case, the researcher concerns on teaching vocabulary using flashcard game by mentioning the meaning and the synonym of the word (Hadfield, 2007:1).

From those statements, it can be said that there are many ways can be used in learning vocabulary such as showing the

meaning through the definition, synonym and flashcard in practice.

Learning Vocabulary Using Traditional Memorization

Memorizing is designed to fix the meaning of the word. In order to remember a new word, the students need to tie it to something that will help them recall it. When they need to recall it, practical tips to memorize vocabulary can be applied (Hadfield: 2007:1).

Another theory stated that frequent recitation improves retention: repeat many times. Periodic practice of new vocabulary will keep the words stored in the long term memory. In addition, practice new words out aloud. If it is possible, write down antonyms and synonyms in the vocabulary list (Weil, 2011:222).

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that repeating a word many times is one of the ways to memorize the vocabulary well as the effort to save the vocabulary to the brain memory. In addition, there are also a lot of other techniques can be done to practice learning vocabulary such as pronouncing the word aloud, writing the words in terms of definition and synonym.

Learning Vocabulary Using Instructional Media

Heinich in Kasbolah (2001:3) said "Instructional media is a means of communication used to carry message with instructional intent". Furthermore, he mentions some considerations in selecting instructional media to teach: it should be easy to be prepared, organized, and it should interest the students. In addition, that there are three kinds of instructional media: visual media, audio media, and audio visual media. Visual media is any teaching aids or devise by means of which the process may be encouraged or carried through the sense of sight. For example: card, picture, map, photo real thing and etc. Audio media is a kind of media which can only be heard. Usually, it is used to teach listening comprehension skill. Audio media aids are any teaching aids or devices that contribute the message or instruction through sense of hearing such as tape recorder, radio, language laboratory and, etc.

From all the explanation above, it can be concluded that instructional media has three types: visual media, audio media, and audio visual media. English teachers

are recommended to use instructional media because of easy to be prepared.

Learning Vocabulary Using Flashcard Games

According to Arsyad (2002:119) flashcard is as a small card consists of picture, text, or symbols that can help the students to memorize the materials related to the picture. It means flashcard is sets of cards with picture or only cards with words which can be handled easily by the teacher. The size of flashcards can be in large size, medium size and small size. Large size can be used if it is needed to be seen by all of the students in the classroom, medium size can be used for group work and small size can be used for pairs or individual work. In addition, he said that the size of flashcard is 8 x 1 cm or it can be made bigger depends on the needs. From those arguments, it can be said that the size of the flashcard is various depends on the need of the language teaching in the classroom. There are several ways in making flashcard. Flashcard can be made by the teachers them selves by cutting from the magazines, computerizing, browsing or many others.

It can be concluded that making flashcard is simple. We just need to prepare for a paper written in a word and cut it right after. However, the blank card can be inexpesinvely purchased and written down of the material on the card. There are also various types can be used by the researcher to form the flashcards.

Hadfield (2007:2) said that a games is an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun. There are two kinds of games: competitive games in which the players or teams race to be the first to reach the goal and cooperative games in which players or teams work together towards a common goal. In addition, Hadfield said that in vocabulary games, the focus is on remembering the word. Vocabulary games can be in the terms of memorising, personalising, and communicating. Those three stages are self-contained, so that the teacher is free to select or discard any game based on the students" need in which different students have different in nature and make use of different technique.

Furthemore, he stated that some games can be played are: sorting, ordering or arranging, information gap games, guessing, searching, labelling, exchanging,

role-play, board and card games, and matching games. Matching game is aimed to transfer information. It involves matching corresponding pairs of cards or pictures, and may be played as a whole class activities, where everyone must circulate until they find a partner with a corresponding card or a picture.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that teaching vocabulary using flashcard can be done in various different ways such as games, drilling, matching, guessing and many more. In the research, flashcard is used in the form of a game. It means that the researcher teaches the students with flashcards as the media and used in various different games for each meeting in the form of matching cards, from English to Indonesia or vice versa. The game refers to students active participation through communicative approach.

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