EFFECT OF USING FLASHCARDS WITH ACTIVE RECALL METHOD ON 3rd GRADE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY AT MI MAMBAUL ULUM DAHU KEDIRI

SKRIPSI

Presented as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement the Sarjana Degree of Education of English Department Faculty of Teacher Training and Education University of Nusantara PGRI Kediri

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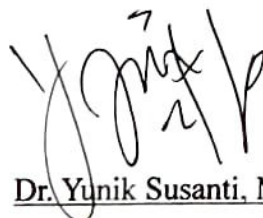
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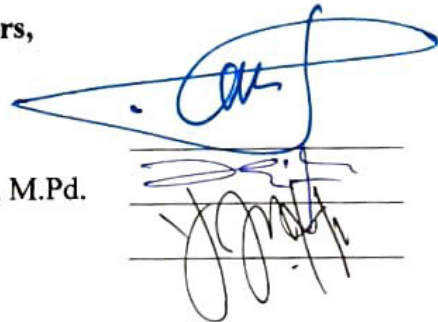NIDN. 0718017801

ii

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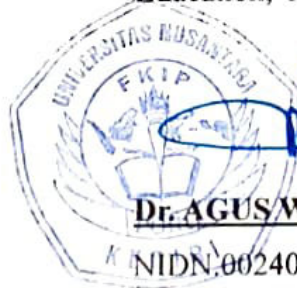
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Declare truthfully, that in this skripsi there is no work that has ever been submitted to obtain a graduate degree at university, and to the best of my knowledge there are no papers or opinion that has ever been published by anyone else, except those that are intentionally referred to this text and mentioned in the bibliography.

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iv

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

Motto:

"I hold on not because it's easy, but because I know my purpose — I may not always seem strong, but I know where to turn, and I refuse to break."

This thesis is wholeheartedly dedicated to:

My beloved parents, the greatest reason behind every step I take. Thank you for your endless prayers, unconditional love, and unwavering patience throughout my journey.

Myself, for holding on and not giving up, even when giving up felt easier.

Someone who waits for me in prayers and hope, thank you for being my silent strength across distance and time.

To the one I love,

Thank you for staying, even through the silence and the storms. Your quiet strength, patience, and faith in me have meant more than words can say. Though we often disagreed—even about this thesis—your presence has always given me the courage to keep going. You are, and always will be, part of every step I take toward a better future.

My friends, my advisor, and everyone who has been part of this journey, thank you for your support, encouragement, and presence.

And above all, to Allah SWT, who has always been my place to return to. Even when I stray, He never leaves.

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of flashcards combined with the active recall method in improving the English vocabulary mastery of elementary school students. The research was conducted using a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design, specifically the one-group pre-test and post-test design. A group of students was given a vocabulary pre-test, followed by several sessions using flashcards and active recall activities, and then assessed with a post-test.

The data were analyzed using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test to determine the significance of differences between pre-test and post-test scores. The results showed a notable improvement in students' vocabulary mastery after the intervention, particularly in pronunciation, recognition, and the ability to use words in context. While most students experienced progress, some showed little to no change, and a few had a slight decline, indicating varying levels of effectiveness. A t-test analysis is also considered as a comparative method to support the findings.

The study suggests that incorporating memory-based and interactive methods such as flashcards and active recall can enhance vocabulary learning more effectively than traditional approaches. These results highlight the importance of engaging techniques in primary English education.

Keywords: Vocabulary Mastery, Flashcards, Active Recall, Elementary Students, English Learning

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF TABLE

LIST OF PICTURE

LIST OF APPENDIX

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the problem, identification of the problem, limitation of the problem, problem formulation, purpose of the research, significance of the research, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Problem

The importance of teaching elementary school students English is becoming more widely acknowledged. This is because early exposure to the language can improve language proficiency and have positive social and economic effects later in life (Oktaviani & Fauzan, 2017). According to Magfirah et al. (2023), teaching English to elementary school pupils helps level the playing field in terms of educational quality and gets them ready for a world that is becoming more interconnected by the day. By employing suitable techniques to pique students' interest and curiosity, teachers can make English learning interesting and successful for younger students (Magfirah et al., 2023; Herman et al., 2023). Thus, when a youngster learns English, the teacher's function becomes crucial. Teachers must adapt to a changing curriculum, which adds to the difficulties of their job. The significance of teaching English beginning in elementary school has been highlighted by recent curriculum modifications in several areas (Karimah & Widya Al-Nur, 2023). Students' basic vocabulary abilities and understanding of the importance of English can be enhanced by socialization activities and interactive learning methodologies (Karimah & Al-Nur, 2023; Herman et al., 2023). All things considered, developing English proficiency early on is thought to be crucial for kids' future academic and professional success.

The usefulness of teaching English to elementary school pupils cannot be discussed without reference to its legality. The legality of teaching English in Indonesian elementary schools originates from a 1993 ministerial decree, which permitted English as an optional local content subject (Kurniati et al., 2021). Although the 2013 curriculum reclassified English as an extracurricular activity,

schools still have the choice to offer it (Angraini Hardi & Marleni, 2020). The discussion about the ideal age for foreign language learning continues, with some advocating for early introduction due to children's ability to mimic sounds, while others prioritize learner maturity (Hardi & Marleni, 2020. Regardless of when learning begins, mastering English brings numerous benefits. Effective instruction for young learners should leverage brain plasticity and use engaging, interactive methods to foster creativity and improve memory (Hutabarat, 2020).

Young learners must meet certain learning objectives, such as language abilities and linguistic components, in addition to the legality of teaching English in elementary school settings. Elementary school students need to develop essential language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which serve as the core of language education at this level (Maritim, 2023). Listening and speaking are particularly important, as emphasized by Amelhay and Sakale (2024), who note that these skills are central to developing communicative competence in young learners. Additionally, vocabulary development, grounded in students' personal experiences, plays a crucial role in language learning during the elementary years (Hanifan, 2024). Expanding one's English vocabulary offers multiple benefits, such as enhancing language skills, improving reading comprehension, and boosting academic performance. Teachers play a vital role in fostering these abilities, facing the challenge of creating an engaging classroom environment, incorporating media that promotes language skills, and consistently integrating these elements into language instruction (Maritim, 2023; Hanifan, 2024). By prioritizing these foundational language skills, elementary schools equip students for both academic and social success in the future. For effective communication and academic success, elementary students need to develop various core language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Maritim, 2023).

Language growth in young learners encompasses pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic dimensions, shaped by biological influences, personal experiences, and cultural background (Lanovianti & Khosiyono, 2023). Oral language skills are fundamental for learning to read, with both the use of students' home language—the language they commonly use—and the influence of the school environment playing important roles (Palacios & Kibler, 2016). In this context, teachers should

cultivate settings that support and enhance children's natural language abilities, integrating language skills throughout all areas of learning (Maritim, 2023; Hanifan, 2024). Vocabulary development is crucial for building concepts, relying on students' life experiences and requiring focus in elementary education (Hanifan, 2024). Overall, a holistic approach to language instruction that considers influences from home and school is essential for fostering elementary students' language skills and supporting their academic success (Palacios & Kibler, 2016; Lanovianti & Khosiyono, 2023).

Elementary school students must master language skills and language components, which serve as the foundation for effective communication. Among these, vocabulary acquisition is critical, as a strong vocabulary allows young learners to better understand and express ideas, improving both their language skills and their understanding of language components. Vocabulary mastery is fundamental to elementary students' reading comprehension and academic achievement. Research shows that a strong vocabulary significantly enhances students' ability to understand texts (Fahrurrozi et al., 2020). In early grades, vocabulary acquisition is largely shaped by informal influences, including parental interactions and incidental sources such as television (Rodriguez et al., 2024; Turn0search2). As students progress through elementary school, an interdependent relationship emerges between vocabulary development and reading comprehension (Chen et al., 2022). Early vocabulary skills support word decoding and comprehension, while improved decoding skills, in turn, promote vocabulary growth (Chen et al., 2022). These findings highlight the need for focused vocabulary instruction and effective strategies to support vocabulary development in elementary education (Rodriguez et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2022).

Recent research highlights the importance of vocabulary mastery in elementary school English education. Various approaches have shown promise in improving students' vocabulary skills. The PFAR-based flipped classroom method enhanced vocabulary mastery through active learning, utilizing videos, pictures, and games (Adin Fauzi et al., 2022). Similarly, the fly swatter game significantly increased students' vocabulary scores in an Indonesian elementary school (Suhendra, 2023). Multimedia-based learning also proved effective, with 90% of

students demonstrating improved vocabulary skills after two learning cycles (Wahid et al., 2022). Additionally, a positive correlation was found between students' interest in reading and their English vocabulary mastery (Herlina, 2016). These studies emphasize the importance of engaging, interactive methods in vocabulary instruction, moving beyond traditional textbook-based approaches. By incorporating games, use media like flashcards, and fostering reading interest, educators can create more effective and enjoyable vocabulary learning experiences for elementary school students. Using media can help primary school pupils learn vocabulary more effectively and enjoyably.

Vocabulary mastery is crucial for elementary school students' achievement, particularly in the early grades (Mintowati et al., 2020;). A study analyzing vocabulary development across grades 1-3 found that the highest number of vocabularies was in grade 3, theme 7, with 2,383 words (Mintowati et al., 2020). Vocabulary mastery refers to the ability to understand, acquire, and effectively employ vocabulary in a language. Vocabulary mastery for third-grade elementary school pupils include mastering basic words used in everyday life, the environment, and academic disciplines. This skill also requires students to use these words in basic sentences, both orally and in writing, which helps them understand easy reading texts, answer questions, and communicate their opinions. The purpose of vocabulary mastery at this level is to help students improve their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, as well as their comprehension of teachings in a variety of disciplines. Vocabulary games, reading storybooks, tests on new terms, and simple talks can all help third-graders improve their vocabulary. Students who grasp their vocabulary can improve their future language skills.

Improving vocabulary mastery in elementary school is crucial to support students' reading, writing, and speaking skills. Various strategies can be implemented, such as using visual and interactive media like flashcards, word games, or crossword puzzles (Hamzanwadi, 2020). Vocabulary can also be taught through stories, songs, and poems that are relevant to everyday life (Rachmawati, 2017). Repetitive practice using the spaced repetition method helps students retain vocabulary better, while creative activities like drawing or writing stories increase their engagement (Hamzanwadi, 2020). Collaboration between teachers and parents

is also essential so that children can consistently learn vocabulary at home and school (Widiyarto, Rusdianto,Paryono, 2021). With a varied approach, vocabulary learning will become more engaging and effective.

Using instructional media in elementary English education is essential for supporting effective learning. A range of media—such as books, images, videos, and real-life objects—can be utilized to engage students' thoughts, focus, and emotions, enhancing their learning experience (Resti & Rachmijati, 2020). The selected media should align with and improve specific student skills: for instance, videos can support speaking and listening, images can build vocabulary, and textbooks can strengthen reading and writing abilities (Resti & Rachmijati, 2020). However, challenges like limited resources and varying levels of student engagement may limit effective media use (Aisyah & Haryudin, 2020). Nevertheless, carefully chosen instructional media can offer concrete experiences, act as facilitators in student learning, and sustain interest in the material (Wulandari et al., 2023).

According to Wahyuni (2020) flashcards are a form of educational media in the form of cards that contain images and words whose size can be adjusted to the students at hand and to get them can make your own or use ready-made ones. cards are a combination of text and images that relate to the subject matter lesson material, made proportionally, and the size can be adjusted to the space and the number of students (Maryanto 2018).

One effective learning strategy that improves academic achievement and information retention is active recall. Active recall techniques including concept mapping, practice exams, and flashcards have been linked in studies to improved test scores and GPAs in higher education (Xu et al., 2024). Active recall can be utilized to detect student misconceptions early in the learning process, especially in programming courses, in addition to enhancing learning outcomes (Hauswirth & Adamoli, 2017). To increase document classification and retrieval efficiency in the context of information retrieval, active learning strategies that incorporate active recall principles might be used. Recall in active learning systems can be improved by restricting sampling to document subsets that are rich in pertinent instances (Anchors-based subpool selection; Lesci & Vlachos, 2024). Additionally, compared

to reviewing the entire document, employing individual sentences for relevant feedback in active learning can produce accuracy and efficiency that are equivalent, thereby cutting down on the time and effort needed to attain high recall in information retrieval tasks (Zhang et al., 2018).

Flashcards and the active recall method have a close relationship as both focus on active learning, where students actively recall information that has been learned. Flashcards are designed to challenge students to recall information from memory without direct assistance, for example by displaying a word, picture or question on one side of the card, while the answer is on the other side (Retain, 2025). This process is in line with the principle of active recall, which strengthens the brain's neural pathways through active recall practice (Pathak, 2025). In addition, flashcards provide instant feedback, allowing students to know whether their answers are correct or incorrect, so they can immediately correct mistakes and improve understanding. Flashcards also support the use of the spaced repetition method, where cards with difficult material are repeated more frequently, while cards that have already been mastered appear less frequently (Smolen et al., 2016). Thus, the integration of flashcards and active recall helps to improve focus, strengthen information retention, and create an effective and interactive learning process.

According to prior research by (Satriawan, 2019), the usage of flashcards was beneficial in enhancing vocabulary knowledge among junior high school pupils. Although previous studies have examined the general effect of using flashcards on students' vocabulary acquisition, limited research has specifically explored the impact of combining flashcards with the active recall method on vocabulary mastery, particularly among third-grade students. This gap suggests a need for further investigation into how integrating active recall strategies with flashcard use may enhance vocabulary retention and mastery more effectively than flashcards alone, providing insights into more effective vocabulary learning techniques for young learners.

B. Identification of the Problem

In this research, the researcher identifies the problem of third-grade elementary school pupils struggling with vocabulary mastery, particularly in understanding and effectively using basic words related to everyday life, their immediate environment, and academic disciplines. Despite traditional teaching methods being employed, many students face challenges in retaining and recalling vocabulary. This may result from passive learning techniques, which are less effective in engaging young learners and fostering long-term retention. The integration of flashcards as a teaching medium and the active recall method presents a potential solution. Flashcards, featuring images, object names, and meanings, combined with active recall practices, encourage students to actively retrieve information, thereby strengthening their memory and improving their ability to apply vocabulary in meaningful contexts. This study aims to explore the effectiveness of these combined strategies in enhancing vocabulary mastery for the topic "Things Around Us" among third-grade pupils.

C. Limitation of the Problem

The researcher focuses on investigating the effect of using flashcards on the vocabulary mastery of third-grade students at MI MAMBAUL ULUM DAHU Kediri, specifically within the context of the learning topic "Things Around Us." This topic includes familiar objects and concepts encountered in the students' daily lives, such as household items, school supplies, natural elements, and items found in their local environment or community. Vocabulary mastery includes not just learning word meanings, but also correctly pronouncing, spelling, and using the words in short sentences. The problem's limitation ensures that the study focuses solely on determining the effectiveness of flashcards with active recall. Specifically, the research will examine how these methods impact students' ability to spell and understand the meaning of words. for vocabulary mastery, with no consideration given to other teaching methods, learning topics, or broader language skills beyond vocabulary.

D. Problem Formulation

1. How is the 3rd grade students' vocabulary mastery of MI MAMBAUL ULUM DAHU Kediri before they are taught using flashcards with active recall method?

2. How is the 3rd grade students' vocabulary mastery of MI MAMBAUL ULUM DAHU Kediri after they are being taught by using flashcards with active recall method?

3. How is the effect of the implementation of flashcards with active recall method on 3rd grade students' vocabulary mastery?

E. Purpose of the Research

1. To know the 3rd grade students' vocabulary mastery of MI MAMBAUL ULUM DAHU kediri before they are being taught flashcards with active recall method

2. To know the the 3rd grade students' vocabulary mastery of MI MAMBAUL ULUM DAHU Kediri after they are being taught by using flashcards with active recall method

3. To know how far the effect of implementation of flashcards with active recall method on 3rd students' vocabulary mastery

F. Significance of the Research

For teacher

This research is expected to serve as a reference for teachers in selecting appropriate learning strategies, particularly those that can enhance vocabulary mastery through engaging and interactive methods.

For student

The findings of this research may provide useful insights for students in overcoming vocabulary learning challenges, especially when guided by suitable instructional techniques under the teacher's supervision.

For the school

This research hopefully can help improve the quality of English teaching in the school

For other researchers

I hope that this research can be a reference for everyone to find out Effect of Using Flashcards With Active Recall Method on 3rd Grade Students' Vocabulary Mastery at MI MAMBAUL ULUM DAHU Kediri

G. Definition of Key Terms

1. Flashcards

Flashcards are an efficient tool for expanding vocabulary and developing information literacy. They may be tangible cards containing words or questions on one side and answers on the other (Nakata, 2019). There are numerous advantages to using flashcards. According to research, flashcards improve language abilities, story composition, memory, problem solving, and vocabulary enrichment (Harisanty 2020). Flashcards is a card media that containing words, picture, and answer that can improve language abilities.

2. Vocabulary Mastery

Vocabulary is a collection of words that a person knows, and it is an important part of language since it appears in all language abilities, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Wardani, 2015). Vocabulary mastering is vital for language proficiency, particularly in academic settings. Vocabulary mastery is defined as the ability to use words in a language (Ria & Perdawati, 2021). Vocabulary mastery is a person's ability to overcome obstacles to learning a language and may be improved through learning strategies, study, and media exposure.

3. Active Recall Method

As a study method, active recall entails actively and unpromptedly recovering facts from your memory. Active recall techniques including concept mapping, practice exams. Active recall can be utilized to detect student misconceptions early in the learning process, especially in programming courses, in addition to enhancing learning outcomes (Hauswirth & Adamoli, 2017).

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