



STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF DIGITAL FLASHCARDS IN BUILDING VOCABULARY SKILLS

Farah Nabilah Febry Maulani¹, Muhtarom², & Junaenik Latiefah³

^{1,2}UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia, ³SMP Negeri 25 Surabaya

¹farahnbl33@gmail.com, ²mmuhtarom@uinsby.ac.id, ³junaenik1980@gmail.com

Abstract:

Vocabulary is an important component that must be mastered to support English language skills such as reading, speaking, listening, and writing. Vocabulary mastery is knowledge that involves meaning therefore it is a key to success in understanding a meaning. This study asks the research question: what are students' attitudes towards using digital flashcard in vocabulary learning? The purpose of this study is to investigate the perspective of secondary students about the developing vocabulary skills using digital flashcards. Than the principle of flashcards in language learning is well known, digital flashcard applications has gained popularity recently. This research use qualitative study aims to explore how attitudes of students online vocabulary learning digital flashcards. The result of this study will contribute to the understanding of the pros, cons, and overall learner experience of students at the full stack coarse from vocabulary flashcard on their device.

Keywords: *Digital flashcards, , Students' Perspective, Vocabulary Learning*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is very important in everyday life and influential. Language is a tool used by humans to communicate both to collect data and to convey messages. Language also functions as a communication tool to reveal what is inside humans (Kholidah & Nadhifah, 2023). English is an international language used to communicate all over the world, so many people learn it from early childhood elementary school, high school, to college. English is also referred to as a second language because it is a language learnt for a specific purpose (Christijanto, 2021). In Indonesia, English is a learnt as a foreign language which has been learnt since the early 90s based on the awareness of the importance of learning English as early as possible to be able to compete in an increasingly developing and globalized world. In the 21st century learning English and mastering vocabulary is essential for academic success, cognitive development, and cultural understanding. However, students face difficulties in communicating and mastering vocabulary. According Temple (2010) as cited in (Adolfo & Villarin, 2023).

Learning vocabulary is an important part of learning English because the purpose of teaching vocabulary is to improve students' communication skills. Therefore, students should start learning vocabulary before they can master the four English skills. Richard (2012) states that vocabulary is an important component in learning a new language. Students should also learn the vocabulary of other languages (Arends, 2012). This means they must understand its form, meaning and application. Effective teaching methods are essential for successful vocabulary acquisition. Students must learn vocabulary before achieving the four English skills (Parahiba, 2022). The key to learning a language is vocabulary, vocabulary itself has a function to form a sentence that can express an idea, if someone has a large vocabulary then that person can express more ideas and thoughts (Romadhon et al., 2021). Vocabulary is the most important part of any language skill, according to experts. This is because effective discussion and



communication cannot take place without the use of words, which can communicate a variety of meanings (Carter et al., 2014). Vocabulary mastery relates to meaning, and includes word comprehension and the ability to match words with synonyms in other languages. Vocabulary knowledge can also mean knowing words in the second language so that students can not only use those words or relate them to their counterparts, but can also use all four of their primary language skills (Oxford & Crookall, 1990). Learning vocabulary is very important for every student learning a foreign language, because vocabulary links four language skills including reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Tuan, 2011). Many of the previous studies such as (Nation, 2001; Richards & Renandya, 2002; Schmitt, 2010) say that learners can apply these four skills appropriately by learning vocabulary and understanding how vocabulary relates to language skills. On the other hand, one of the biggest obstacles to learning a foreign language is expanding one's vocabulary. Due to the overwhelming burden and lack of motivation to learn, the majority of novices appear to encounter the same issue (Jung & Graf, 2008). Therefore, vocabulary can help a person in understanding a reading text and can help a person in conveying their ideas both in oral and written form easily. Students who have little vocabulary will difficulty in understanding a text and conveying their ideas into English both orally and in writing (Yulsardi & Ratmanida, 2021). A person who can use and know how to use vocabulary can be said to understand what he/she reads and communicate well in a foreign language. Previous research suggests that vocabulary can be learnt well in context (Beck & McKeown, 2007). Therefore a teacher needs a way to help students increase their vocabulary in English so that they can understand a reading and can convey their ideas using English. There are many ways that can help students increase their vocabulary. Teacher can provide English vocabulary teaching by using many media whether it is in the form of visual, auditory or kinesthetic. Vocabulary can be taught in a variety of ways including the linguistic communication approach (CLT), total physical reaction (TPR) and real object visualization using the direct technique. According Hatch and Brown (1995) and Cameron (2001) as cited in Adolfo and Villarin (2023) the National Reading panel recommends incidental and intentional vocabulary development that prioritizes language exposure and comprehension over time (Adolfo & Villarin, 2023).

According to Munir (2016), media can aid in vocabulary instruction and acquisition. One thing that might be quite useful in the process of learning English is media. Media can make it easier for teachers to deliver material to students (Munir, 2016). Because it serves as a learning resource that can help teachers increase students' knowledge, learning media is a crucial component of the educational process. By using learning media that is interesting and easy to understand, students can be more interested in learning more. Management of learning aids is needed in an educational institution and can also help in teaching and learning activities (Nurrita, 2018). Sadiman (2014) says that learning media is everything that is used to channel message and can attract attention, feeling and emotions (Sadiman, 2014). And students minds so that they can provide encouragement for the learning process. Meanwhile according to Hamer



(2016) said that learning media can be useful to motivates students in learning English vocabulary (Hamer et al., 2016). Broadly speaking, the benefits of learning media are to achieve learning objectives and make it possible for teachers to explain learning materials in an appropriate way. Improves the quality of learning by organizing and helping students communicate engaging knowledge. Students' enthusiasm and interest in learning can be raised, enabling them to think critically and assess the teacher's instructional materials. This is carried out in an enjoyable setting that facilitates student participation in the session (Nurrita, 2018). According to Gerlach and Ely (2012), choosing the right learning media can help teachers in implementing a learning objective. Effective learning requires good preparation, and preparation is also needed for the media that will be used during the learning process. However, the reality in the field shows that teachers choose one of the media for their classroom activities based on the following considerations: Firstly they are familiar with the medium (e.g. whiteboard or transparency projector). Secondly, they believe that the media can describe the lesson better than they can (e.g. flip chart). Thirdly they can attract students' attention and interest (e.g. game-based learning media or flashcard-like learning media) (Sapriyah, 2019).

In building and improving vocabulary according to Hunt and Beglar (2002). There are three ways to learn vocabulary: incidental vocabulary learning, explicit instruction, and the development of independent techniques. Incidental vocabulary learning is when a person performs language activities without focusing on new vocabulary (Nation, 2001). Explicit strategy as direct vocabulary learning is teaching learners to concentrate on direct vocabulary learning through activities that involve the use of dictionaries, vocabulary lists, vocabulary explanations and other tools (Nation, 1990). Independent strategy development is a method that can help students be taught to make educated guesses and comprehend vocabulary from context. Additionally, they receive training on hoe to signal meaning using the dictionary and other context-specific resources such affixes, roots images, diagrams, stc. According Tuan (2011) as cited in Taghizadeh et al. (2017) teachers can use learning media such as flashcards. Flashcards are a tool used by researchers to improve students' language skills. According to previous research by Sholikhah (2013), flashcards were used to make students relax, enjoy and engage in language lessons. In addition Twenge and Campbell (2008) idea that teachers often use pictures or visuals from books, newspapers and magazines was also validated. Flashcards, which are modified images, can be used to teach children. Many researchers have found that using flashcards for language learning is very beneficial (Parahiba, 2022). Flashcards are one type of learning media that can be used to increase students' English vocabulary. Flashcard media is a card that contains a picture of writing that can be used in a game so that it can allow students to pay attention in understanding the material being taught (Wati & Oka, 2021). According to Arsyad (1997) flashcards are small cards containing images, text and symbols that can help remember or guide students to the material being taught (Badu & Uloli, 2023). Flashcards can also create using today's technology such as smartphones, laptops, computers, and increasingly sophisticated and varied internet sites. This can be said to be digital flashcards. Since



flash cards can be created through digital apps, they are practical, engaging, and memorable nowadays. Digital Flash Card Media adopts card game activities in a digital form that is visualized in a different and interesting way, and can be used anywhere and anytime (Fitriyani & Nulanda, 2017). Digital flashcards are flashcards that use a system of spaced repetition, data analysis, and multimedia to organize repeated access to cards to improve memory retention. Both the online form and the app contain links to the digital flashcards. Students can therefore download the app to their smartphones or use the website to locate them online. Digital flashcards can be made by users and distributed to students or utilized as the primary teaching resource in the classroom. (Colbran et al., 2017). This digital flashcard learning media obtains card games in digital form that are visualized in an interesting way (Alwi & Aulia, 2023). So that through digital flashcards the learning process can be carried out more interestingly and modernly.

Perception is a form of sentence commonly used to express one's opinion or point of view. Perception can also be interpreted as an assessment of an object based on experience. According to (Liando et al., 2018) perception is the impression of a person towards an object. It can be concluded that perception is an observation activity carried out by a person and then that person can provide the results of his observations (Qothrunnada, 2020). Perception itself can be divided into 2, namely positive perception and negative perception, positive perception is when someone assesses an object with a positive view and in accordance with expectations about a particular object, and this positive perception is caused by someone's satisfaction with the object that is the basis. Meanwhile, negative perception is when someone has a negative opinion of an object, this perception is caused by a person's dissatisfaction with the object he observes (Qothrunnada, 2020).

The problems that occur today are based on observations made of SMPN 25 Surabaya students in class VII B. That students find it difficult to understand English sentences because they have a fairly small vocabulary which makes students not understand the English sentences in their package books, and also sometimes they do not understand the meaning of the teacher's words delivered using English. Based on these problems, the researcher will help students in improving and increasing their vocabulary by using digital flashcards, which by using this media will attract students' interest in learning, because digital flashcards are equipped with attractive and colorful images, and also several other features such as being able to turn over the digital flashcard to find out the meaning of the image.

This study investigates students' perspectives on the use of digital flashcards as learning media in improving or increasing vocabulary in grade 7 students at SMPN 25 Surabaya. This study answers the research question of how are students' attitudes towards the use of digital flashcards in vocabulary learning? The purpose of this study is to find out students' attitudes and perspectives towards the use of digital flashcards in improving vocabulary in English.



2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews. This study's objective is to look at the perspective of SMPN 25 Surabaya students about the presence of developing vocabulary skills using digital flashcards. The semi-structured interview approach was chosen because it allows researchers to find out about students' perspectives on the use of digital flashcards in improving vocabulary.

The subjects of this research are students from SMPN 25 Surabaya who coincide in class 7 B. with a total of 32 students consisting of 16 male students and 16 female students, and later who become sources for semi-structured interviews, researchers only take 7 students for interviews, where the sources are selected based on certain criteria such as having used digital flashcards as a learning process correctly, and also who are active in class when learning is carried out.

The data collection technique used was semi-structured interviews. This interview was conducted to several students who were selected to be used as resource persons to find out their perspectives on the reasons for the experience and use of digital flashcards in increasing English vocabulary, the students selected as resource persons are students who meet criteria such as having used digital flashcards correctly and student activeness during the process of learning activities.

A semi-structured interview is a type of in-depth interview that is conducted more freely than a structured interview. The purpose of this interview is to solve problems more openly by asking the interviewee to express their opinions (Sugiyono, 2016).

Analysis of data obtained from semi-structured interviews is analyzed using the transcribing method and then will be categorized according to the questions and then will produce a narrative of the results of the analysis of semi-structured interviews.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to find out students' perspectives on digital flashcards as a learning media for vocabulary enrichment in English language learning. The findings in this sub-chapter are taken from the students' answers during the interview process. Each chapter will present students' reasons for using digital flashcards to increase vocabulary in English language learning.

3.1 Students' attitude towards digital flashcards

According to Glanz et al. (2008) a person's belief in the traits involved in the behavior they are performing can influence their attitude. Therefore, people must have strong positive beliefs for them to have a positive attitude towards the behavior. Attitude is defined by Al-Mamun, Rahman, and Hossaim (2012) as cited in Afdian and Wahyuni (2020) as a psychological concept that shapes and defines certain behaviors. This theory is in accordance with the characteristics of students. Each student has a different attitude. All students have their own psychological constructs, and different psychological constructs will lead to different behaviors even in the same circumstances and context. Harrel (2005) as cited in Prastiwi and Suharso (2018) supports this idea by defining attitude as a consistent tendency to react to something or something in society in a certain way, either positively or negatively. While everyone has a unique perspective towards learning, not everyone has the same perspective. Attitudes help a person tackle problems,



overcome difficulties, and achieve their learning goals. Attitudes can also be a hindrance, slowing down or even preventing someone from learning.

In this study, the findings are the students' perspectives on the use of digital flashcards to increase vocabulary in English. This digital flashcard learning media is used to increase vocabulary in English. The attitude of students in the use of digital flashcards during the learning process shows a view or perspective on the use of digital flashcards. They look enthusiastic and very interesting students when working on it.

Students showed a positive perspective towards the use of digital flashcards in learning vocabulary expansion. They feel that digital flashcards can help them in understanding a new vocabulary in the learning material, because digital flashcards are equipped with interesting images and also captions that explain about the image, this can create its own interest in student learning. Students also revealed that the use of digital flashcards is more effective to use anywhere compared to using textbooks as learning media.

“Using flashcards can make it easier for me to enrich my vocabulary. Because digital flashcards are equipped with interesting pictures and the meaning of the picture, it can make it easier for me to remember the vocabulary.”

3.2 Experience of using digital flashcards

By using digital flashcards, students have their own experience in using learning media using the latest technology. With digital flashcards, students can use the available features such as interesting sound, good visualization and interactive. This can provide its own experience for students in the process of learning vocabulary in English.

“From the use of digital flashcards I got a new experience towards the use of digital flashcards to enrich vocabulary in English learning, with the digital flashcards can attract students to learn vocabulary in English.”

3.3 Challenges and limitations

In using digital flashcards, some students experienced difficulties. The difficulties experienced by students include poor internet connection, smartphones that do not support. But this can be resolved by using the help of a smooth internet, students can use digital flashcards again, and also with the help of smartphone peers where they work alternately, finally the student can use digital flashcards again.

“The challenges and limitations that I experienced and some other students included a bad internet connection, and also there were some students whose smartphones were not adequate which made the students unable to work on it, but all of that has been resolved by working alternately with my peers and also with the help of smartphones from the teacher so that the students can work on it.”



According to the above mentioned investigation, the results of the opinions of the students regarding the usage of digital flashcards to enhance junior high school students' vocabulary are positive. In this instance, students reported that using digital flashcards to improve their vocabulary in English was highly beneficial. Students feel enthusiastic and happy during the use of digital flashcards as learning media to enrich vocabulary. During the learning process, students showed a positive attitude towards the use of digital flashcards. Students also said that the use of digital flashcards can help them to acquire new vocabulary and remember it because it is equipped with attractive images that can make it easier for students to remember the vocabulary they acquire. This digital flashcards learning media can also be used for all ages of learners, because using digital flashcards can be an interest for students to learn where digital flashcards have various features and interesting images.

4. CONCLUSION

The researcher draws the conclusion that the use of digital flashcards can help students in developing or increasing vocabulary in English. In the interview results that have been collected, the students of SMPN 25 Surabaya gave a positive response to the use of digital flashcards as their learning media that can help them increase and develop their vocabulary. In addition, students also give the opinion that digital flashcards can make the learning process more interesting because digital flashcards have several features that can attract students' interest in increasing vocabulary in English.

Although there are technical problems faced by students in using digital flashcards, such as intermittent internet connection restrictions, and sometimes there are some student devices that cannot open their digital flashcards. However, students consider these problems to be disruptive in the learning process. Students can help their friends with each other.

In addition, students stated that digital flashcards can encourage a sense of achievement because digital flashcards give a special impression to students in using them. This can be believed by researchers that the use of digital flashcards can help students develop and expand vocabulary in English.

5. REFERENCES

- Prastiwi, A. I., & Suharso. (2018). The Role of Students' Attitude Towards EFL Learning Processes in Their Achievements. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 7(4).
- Arends, R. (2012). *Learning to teach (9th ed)*. McGraw-Hill.
- Arsyad, A. (1997). *Media Pengajaran*. Rajawali Pers.
- Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M. G. (2007). Increasing Young Low-Income Children's Oral Vocabulary Repertoires through Rich and Focused Instruction. *The Elementary School Journal*, 107(3), 251–271. <https://doi.org/10.1086/511706>
- Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., & Neville, A. J. (2014). The Use of Triangulation in Qualitative Research. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 41(5), 545–547. <https://doi.org/10.1188/14.ONF.545-547>



- Christijanto, I. P. (2021). Pengaruh Penerapan Metode Cluster Theme Flashcard Terhadap Peningkatan Vocabulary Bahasa Inggris. *PAKAR Pendidikan*, 19(1), 44–72. <https://doi.org/10.24036/pakar.v19i1.215>
- Colbran, S., Gilding, A., Colbran, S., Oyson, M. J., & Saeed, N. (2017). The Impact of Student-Generated Digital Flashcards on Student Learning of Constitutional Law. *The Law Teacher*, 51(1), 69–97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03069400.2015.1082239>
- Munir. (2016). *Perencanaan Sistem Pengajaran Bahasa Arab*. In *Perencanaan Sistem Pengajaran Bahasa Arab Teori dan Praktik* (p. 286). Kencana.
- Fitriyani, E., & Nulanda, P. Z. (2017). Efektivitas Media Flash Cards dalam Meningkatkan Kosakata Bahasa Inggris. *Psymphatic : Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi*, 4(2), 167–182. <https://doi.org/10.15575/psy.v4i2.1744>
- Hamer, S. L., Edge, A. C., Swinbank, A. M., Wilman, R. J., Combes, F., Salomé, P., Fabian, A. C., Crawford, C. S., Russell, H. R., Hlavacek-Larrondo, J., McNamara, B. R., & Bremer, M. N. (2016). Optical Emission Line Nebulae in Galaxy Cluster Cores 1: The Morphological, Kinematic and Spectral Properties of the Sample. *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society*, 460(2), 1758–1789. <https://doi.org/10.1093/mnras/stw1054>
- Badu, H., & Uloli, H. (2023). Flashcard Sebagai Media Pembelajaran Yang Menarik Untuk Meningkatkan Kosa Kata Bahasa Inggris Siswa SDN 2 Kabila Bone Kabupaten Bone Bolango. *Jurnal Pengabdian Teknik Industri*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.37905/jpti.v2i2>
- Hunt, A., & Beglar, D. (2002). Current Research and Practice in Teaching Vocabulary. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in Language Teaching* (1st ed., pp. 258–266). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667190.036>
- Adolfo, J. A., & Villarin, S. J. B. (2023). *Influence of Word Games to Students' Vocabulary Achievement (Version 1)*. Unpublished. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.31389.90085/1>
- Jung, J., & Graf, S. (2008). An Approach for Personalized Web-Based Vocabulary Learning through Word Association Games. *International Symposium on Applications and the Internet*, 325–328. <https://doi.org/10.1109/SAINT.2008.63>
- Karen Glanz, Barbara K. Rimer, & Viswanath, K. (2008). *Health Behavior and Health Education: Theory, Research, and Practice (4. ed)*. Wiley.
- Kholidah, D. R., & Nadhifah, A. (2023). Meningkatkan Minat Belajar Bahasa Inggris di Mi Ta'limul. *Jurnal ibriez*, 8(2).
- Liando, N. V., Sahetapy, R. J., & Maru, M. G. (2018). English Major Students' Perceptions Towards Watching English Movies in Listening and Speaking Skills Development. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.14738/assrj.56.4627>
- Sholikhah., M. (2013). Improving Students' Vocabulary by Using Flash Cards at the Fifth Grade Students of SDN Singajaya II. *Syekh Nurjati State Institute for Islamic Studies Cirebon*. https://repository.syekhnurjati.ac.id/1838/1/MAR%27ATUS%20SHOLIKHA%20H_59430546_%20pengesahan%20tidak%20ada-min.pdf



- Nation, I. S. P. (1990). *Teaching and learning vocabulary*. Newbury House Publishers.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language (1st ed.)*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524759>
- Alwi, N. A., & Aulia, D. (2023). Digital Flash Card Media for Early Reading Learning in Elementary Schools. *Jurnal Ilmiah Sekolah Dasar*, 7(1), 8–17. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jisd.v7i1.56995>
- Nurrita, T. (2018). Pengembangan Media Pembelajaran untuk Meningkatkan Hasil Belajar Siswa. Misykat: *Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Al-Quran, Hadist, Syari'ah dan Tarbiyah*, 3(1), 171. <https://doi.org/10.33511/misykat.v3n1.171>
- Oxford, R., & Crookall, D. (1990). Vocabulary Learning: A Critical Analysis of Techniques. *TESL Canada Journal*, 7(2), 09. <https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v7i2.566>
- Parahiba, Y. (2022). Digital Flashcards as Media to Engage Students' Vocabularies: A CAR Conducted to Young Learners at Windeerlust Course. *Foremost Journal*, 3(2), 79–88. <https://doi.org/10.33592/foremost.v3i2.2692>
- Sugiyono. (2016). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan*. Alfabeta.
- Qothrunnada, T. (2020). Students' Perception of Using Flashcard in Learning English Vocabulary: A Case Study at an Islamic Boarding School. *English Didactic*, 2(1).
- Yulsardi, R. P., & Ratmanida. (2021). The Effect of Digital Flashcard on Students' Vocabulary Mastery: An Experimental Research at SMPN 12 Padang. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 10(3), 305-314. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v9i3.109297>
- Romadhon, L. R., Mutiarani, & Hadi, M. S. (2021). The Use of Flashcard Media in Improving Students' Ability in Learning Vocabulary at English Class VII An-Nurmaniah Junior High School. *Getsempena English Education Journal*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.46244/geej.v8i2.1498>
- Sadiman, A. S. (2014). *Media Pendidikan: Pengertian, Pengembangan, dan Pemanfaatannya (Cetakan ke-17)*. PT RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Sapriyah. (2019). Media Pembelajaran dalam Proses Belajar Mengajar. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan FKIP*, 2(1), 470-477. <https://jurnal.untirta.ac.id/index.php/psnp/article/viewFile/5798/4151>
- Afdian, S., & Wahyuni, D. (2020). Indonesian Senior High School Students' Attitude Towards Literature in English. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 9(1).
- Taghizadeh, M., V, S., & Ravan, M. (2017). Digital Games, Songs and Flashcards and their Effects on Vocabulary Knowledge of Iranian Preschoolers. *Translation Studies*, 5(4).
- Tuan, L. T. (2011). Matching and Stretching Learners' Learning Styles. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(2), 285–294. <https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.2.2.285-294>
- Twenge, J. M., & Campbell, S. M. (2008). Generational Differences in Psychological Traits and Their Impact on the Workplace. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 23(8), 862–877. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940810904367>
- Wati, I. K., & Oka, I. G. (2021). Penggunaan Flash Card dalam Meningkatkan Penguasaan Kosakata Bahasa Inggris Peserta Didik. *Indonesian Gender and Society Journal*, 1(2), 41–49. <https://doi.org/10.23887/igsj.v1i2.39081>