

Using Flashcards to Increase Grammar Mastery of MTs Students in Kutai Kartanegara

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ABSTRACT

This study reports the difference of using flashcards and textbooks in teaching grammar for junior school students. The study aimed at examining the hypothesis that read: “flashcards do not improve grammar mastery.” This study used an experimental of post-test only design, implementing an experimental group that received flashcards for the treatments of learning grammar, and the controlled group that received textbooks for learning grammar. The hypothesis testing at $p=0.05$ and $n = 48$ indicated that H_0 was rejected and the result was significant ($t\text{-value} = 3.377$ and $t\text{-table} = 1.68$). This means flashcards significantly improved grammar mastery. In other words, flashcards as media of teaching grammar is superior than using textbook.

Key-words: difference, experimental group, controlled group, flashcards

A. INTRODUCTION

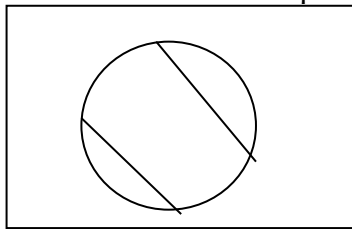
In teaching-learning process, method or strategy of teaching is important sub-component. Teaching method takes a part in determining successful level of the teaching. If we require an effective and efficient teaching-learning process, we must be able to choose appropriate teaching method. There are various technique methods in teaching English; role play, TPR, communicative, etc. Each method will give different result. According to Anthony (1976:8) teaching technique is a particular trick, strategy, or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective. Techniques depend on the composition of the class, particular problem can be taught equally successfully by the use of different technique.

At the early stage of learning English, there are many purposes of giving these practices (pattern practice of grammar) that make the students acquire the new habits in their learning and make them master the basis pattern of English. To achieve a good result, the teacher must use the method in his teaching. Because the method is very important for teacher and students in their teaching-learning

process. According to *Buku Petunjuk Guru Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP* (1988:6), there are two kinds of method used in teaching grammar, deductive and inductive methods. In the deductive method students are given a pattern of certain grammar with some examples, before they are given drill or test in application the pattern of grammar. In the inductive method the students are given a number of example and drills in using a certain pattern of grammar.

To make the teaching more meaningful, flashcards are suggested to use. Flashcards are separated pictures of about 20 x 23 cm, in size. Each picture conveys one message about the subject, people, color, action, or anything possible that can be represented in a simple picture. The message of each picture will give a good explanation when the students are given vocabulary drills. According to Andrew (1983:73) flashcards are words printed with cards or pictures which can be easily handled by teacher in classroom. The examples of flashcards are as follows:

1. Flash cards can be used to explain about 'noun'.



Ball

2. Flash cards can be used to explain about 'verb'.



Dance

3. Flash cards can be used to explain about 'weather'.



Hot

Flashcards have size varying according to the picture or text shown. Basically the teachers make them to handle and show to the students. Text, line, tone, and color of flashcards can be printed or drawn by teacher. A simple and bold use of these elements will carry most clearly over in distance and make most impact. Both sides of flashcards are also easy to make. As a medium, flashcard gives considerable teacher's control. The teacher can prepare exactly that he/she wants and can also show the material separately or with other visuals when he/she chooses. Besides, flashcards are easy to handle and show to the students. There are no technical problems. The cards must be strong enough and not be bent and torn. Their size and shape are excellent for speedy and stimulating work. The total absences of technical problems mean that they can be used easily for short periods of time. Holden (1983:110) states that by picture, flash cards mean collection of cards with pictures on them, pictures of everyday object rare object, people doing different jobs, illustrating different verbs, and so on. The pictures should be both large enough to be seen by the class and small enough to be hold in the hand and manipulated like playing cards."

In term of teaching English, flashcards as visual aid can be effectively used to help and to teach pronunciation, grammar patterns as well as vocabulary items. In teaching grammar, action pictures can be used to drill certain basis pattern of English. Such drill system is assumed to be better than the verbal statements with the secondary experience as expressed in the picture. As for the teaching vocabulary items, flash cards can be used to provide 'secondary experiences' where direct experience is not available, for example, a picture of a ball will be perceived better by the students than an explanation about toy and to create of richness in meaning, satisfaction and even pleasure in the students who have eyes to mind to understand.

So far, teaching grammar in the classroom context is controversy, arguing that teaching grammar is not required in English class. In other side, students learning English at schools are lack of knowledge on the language rules and they need explicit learning process in the classroom. Initiative to using media, therefore, is an offer to solve the problem. In this respect, flashcards are considered simple and easy to use in the school environment especially at the schools where facilities are limited and technology is restricted.

However, teaching English in general involves four skills, they are: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which are considered as an integrated system because they are interrelated each other. Therefore, the students do not just concern in speaking, they also want to be able to read and to write English as well as to speak it. Even in audio-lingual programs which stress on listening and speaking, the students also need to know how to read and to write English (Yunhadi, 2016:1).

Some previous studies have been done by some researchers; they are Ratna et al. (2013), Alanazi (2017), Taufik & Akhyar (2018), Kusumawardhan (2019), and Musyaffa (2020). Those are the researchers who conducted the research on using flashcard in the teaching of writing.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used an experimental design, examining the differences mastery between two sets of data. The experimental group received grammar exercises by using flashcards and the controlled group received grammar exercises using textbooks. A number of 50 samples were used in this study, promising 25 students for the experimental group and other 25 students for the controlled group. A set of 40 items of grammar test was used to collect data. Prior to the data collection, the instrument was calibrated its item quality through three-time try-out to select item difficulty, validity, and reliability estimate. Data are collected from a test on grammar by using flashcards, and data analysis are based on the calculation of t-test for independent group. According to Koenker (1981:91) each individual in the experimental group is compared to a comparable individual in the control group. At the end of the experiment, both groups are tested and the mean scores is compared by t-test formula for independent sample. To obtain the degree of difference, the hypothesis testing was done at 5% level of significance ($p = 0.05\%$) and the value on the degrees of freedom (df) at $Na + Nb - 2 = 25 + 25 - 2 = 48$. The formula of t-test for independent group quoted from Koenker (1981:36) work as follows:

$$t = \frac{Ma - Mb}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{\sum Xa + \sum Xb}{Na + Nb - 2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{Na} + \frac{1}{Nb}\right)}}$$

t : the significant ratio is used to determine the probability of the obtained difference being large and charge by using of table t for various degrees of freedom.

Ma : the mean score of the first year students using flashcards

Mb : the mean score of the first year students without using flashcards

Xa : the deviation score of the students who get teaching English using flashcards

Xb : the deviation score of the students who do not get teaching English using flashcards.

Na : the number of the first year students who get teaching English using flashcards.

Nb : the number of the first year students who do not get teaching English using flashcards.

C. FINDING OF THE STUDY

Finding of the study is presented to answer the research problem of this study that reads: "Does using flashcards increase the grammar mastery of the first year students of MTs Negeri Tenggara, Kutai Kartanegara in academic year 2019/2020?"

The analysis is aimed to see the results of experimental group and the controlled group on the grammar mastery by using flashcards. The experimental group received grammar teaching techniques by using flashcards, and the control group did not teach grammar by

using flashcards. The scores of the experimental group are tabulated as X_a , and scores of the control group are tabulated as X_b .

The experimental group as shown on table 1 received total score 1825 and the control group received score 1475. With 25 samples on each group, the experimental group received the mean score 73 and the control group received the mean score 59. It is clear that the mean score of the experimental group is higher than the mean score of the control group with the different score is 14. In addition, the experimental group received total deviation squared (x_a^2) = 3287.5 and the control group received total deviation squared (x_b^2) = 7025. To prove whether the difference is significant or not, the researcher proceeded the scores using t test and to test the hypothesis.

The working hypothesis (H_a) of the study reads as: "Using flashcards increases the grammar mastery of the first year students of MTs Negeri Tenggara, Kutai Kartanegara in academic year 2019/2020." To test the hypothesis, the working hypothesis is formulated first into the null hypothesis (H_o). The formulated H_a into H_o is needed because the researcher should be in neutral opinion. This means that before testing the hypothesis, the researcher has to put his neutral position and does not show any prediction on the result of the testing. Therefore, the hypothesis is stated in the negative form. The H_o of this study then reads as: "Using flashcards does not increase the grammar mastery of the first year students of MTs Negeri Tenggara, Kutai Kartanegara in academic year 2019/2020."

By doing t test calculation, the researcher found t value = 3.377. Then, this result was compared to t table with degrees of freedom (df) = $N_1 + N_2 - 2$ and $p = 0.05$ or $\alpha = 5\%$. To do this, the researcher used t table on $df = 25 + 25 - 2 = 48$ and $p = 0.05$. Based on the criteria, the researcher found the t table value on $df = 48$ and $p = 0.05$ is 1.68. The result of t table is compared to the t value.

The comparison between t table and t value at $df = 48$ and $p = 0.05$ used in this study, indicates that t-value (3.377) is higher (>) than t table (1.68). This means that H_o is rejected and H_a is received.

Table 1. Data Analysis of Grammar Mastery of the Students

No	X_a	X_b	x_a	x_b	x_a^2	x_b^2
1	92.5	45	-19.50	14.00	380.25	196.00
2	65	47.5	8.00	11.50	64.00	132.25
3	72.5	72.5	0.50	-13.50	0.25	182.25
4	75	82.5	-2.00	-23.50	4.00	552.25
5	62.5	75	10.50	-16.00	110.25	256.00
6	55	25	18.00	34.00	324.00	1156.00
7	62.5	65	10.50	-6.00	110.25	36.00
8	80	60	-7.00	-1.00	49.00	1.00
9	67.5	70	5.50	-11.00	30.25	121.00
10	77.5	20	-4.50	39.00	20.25	1521.00

$$t = \frac{14}{4.1458}$$

$$t = 3.377$$

From the result of data analysis under study, the answer to the research problem could be stated as: "Using flashcards significantly increases the grammar mastery of the first year students of MTs Negeri Tenggara, Kutai Kartanegara in academic year 2019/2020." This means students who were taught by using flashcards in learning grammar, get better mastery on grammar than the students who were not taught by using flashcards in learning grammar. In other words, flashcards as a technique for teaching grammar under study is superior from the students who do not receive using flashcards.

D. DISCUSSION

This study evidently revealed that the result is significant and H_0 was rejected since t-value (3.377) is greater than t- table (1.68). This means that using flashcards significantly improves grammar mastery. The analysis of descriptive statistics supports the result of hypothesis testing. The mean score of experimental group who received flashcards in learning grammar is 73 and the scores of the controlled group who used textbooks for the treatments is 59. This means that the difference between experimental group and controlled group has been achieved in descriptive statistical data.

The study confirms that the students under study received average scores above passing grade 6.0. This means that normally MTs students are good in learning English and their achievement are equal. However, using different technique of teaching, the mastery of grammar can be increased. One of the techniques that has been proved is using flashcards. This means that flashcards increase the grammar mastery of the first-year students of MTs Negeri Tenggara, Kutai Kartanegara in academic year 2019/2020. In other words, teaching grammar using flashcards is better than teaching grammar without using flashcards.

Essentially, flashcards are teaching media useful for medium of instruction in the classroom. Like other media, for instance, VCD, tape recorder, pictures, language laboratory, flashcards evidently relevant in teaching English. Various studies on the effectiveness of media for teaching purposes show the superiority. In essence, teaching English using media usually produces better results than teaching English without using media.

The fact that using media provides students with longer retention in memory and complete comprehension is obvious. In addition, the teaching process is also more efficient and interesting so that students are encouraged to joint with the class. However, not every teacher is competent to operate media for their teaching

facilities. To some extent, media makes the teacher difficult to plan their teaching and problems exist when the teacher is conducting classroom interaction. This is the weaknesses of the media especially if teachers are not familiar with.

In this context, based on the teaching aspects, the study shows that teaching grammar by using flashcards can increase the grammar mastery. The problem is that whether teacher uses flashcards or not. However, flashcards are very important in teaching English grammar.

The result of this research shows similar results to some previous studies have been done by some researchers. In general, using flashcard is really useful in teaching writing, particularly teaching writing for young learners (Kusumawardhan, 2019), teaching procedure text (Ratna et al., 2013), teaching persuasive text (Taufik & Akhyar, 2018), and teaching descriptive text (Musyaffa, 2020). However, not only in teaching writing, but flashcard also can be used in teaching reading (Alanazi, 2017).

E. CONCLUSION

From the result of t test calculation, this study revealed t-value = 3.377 and t-table = 1.68 (p=0.05; df = 48. This means that Ho is rejected and the result is significant. The result implies that the Ho that reads: "Using flashcards does not increase the grammar mastery of the first year students of MTs Negeri Tenggara, Kutai Kartanegara in academic year 2019/2020" is rejected and the answer of the research problem is: "Using flashcards significantly increases the grammar mastery of the first year students of MTS Negeri I Tenggara, Kutai Kartanegara in academic year 2019/2020." This means teaching grammar using flashcards significantly increases the grammar mastery. In addition, the result of the study can be interpreted that the students who were taught by using flashcards in learning grammar get better mastery on grammar than the students who were not taught by using flashcards in learning grammar. This means that flashcards as a technique for teaching grammar under study is superior from the students who do not receive flashcards teaching.

Based on the conclusion above, the researcher gives suggestions to the teachers and the students; 1) If the teachers use flashcards, they must be clear in the illustration. If the teacher cannot draw the picture in the flashcards, he can ask someone to draw the picture in the flashcards so that the flashcards look clear in the illustration and interestingly. The teacher must be able to illustrate clearly and demonstrate the flashcards as good as possible. 2) Teacher should be more creative and innovative to create and demonstrate the various flashcards in progress. 3) For the students, this method needs full attention and good concentration in the process of teaching and learning.

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