Use of Picture Card Games to Improve Children's English Language Skills in Kindergarten

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the use of picture cards in making learning media for early childhood. Card games often involve an element of repetition, be it in the form of game rules or in the practice of matching cards. This repetition helps to strengthen the child's memory of the vocabulary learnt. Meanwhile, the lecture method tends to be boring in introducing children to vocabulary in English. Picture cards provide a visual stimulus that helps children associate pictures with specific English words, making it easier to recognise and understand new vocabulary. The method used is a qualitative research approach. The subjects to be studied are teachers who have used English picture cards totaling 5 teachers at Aisyiyah Lutang Majene Kindergarten. Data collection techniques in this study were observation, documentation, and interviews using previously validated instruments. The results showed that by using picture card media. The ideas that teachers find when using picture card media, are adjusted to the teacher's ability to support English language learning activities in the classroom.

Keywords: *Children's , English Language, Picture Card Games*

INTRODUCTION

English plays a very important role because it is an international language, although the mother tongue is much more important to introduce first to children (Sari, Utama, Suhono, & Yawisah, 2019). The introduction of English from an early age is necessary considering the important role of English in this era of globalization, as long as it is done in fun ways of playing (Nur Tanfidiyah & Ferdian Utama, 2019). However, the English language skills of Indonesian people are still very low. English learning is an effort to overcome these problems and should be started early with fun methods. English needs to be applied but only in the addition of vocabulary to early childhood (Suhono, Pratiwi, Ariyanto, & Lala, 2022). The research contribution of this study is an increase in comprehension and use of new language, as well as improvement in pronunciation. The game combines picture card games with English learning methods so that it can help teachers and educators design more effective and fun learning sessions (Ciolan, 2013). Future research needs to explore more in the development of learning materials that are not only language but also culturally relevant to children's social environment such as involving English learning through folklore, songs, or diverse cultural activities (Suwono, 2022).

Early childhood is still in the process of language acquisition. Delivering lessons using a fun way, then the child will help easy to absorb it. Language Learning for Early Childhood (PAUD) (Arifah Hanafiah, 2022). Language learning is directed so that children are able to use and express their thoughts using words. In other words, early childhood language learning is more directed so that children can process words comprehensively (Ansorida, 2022). express these words in body language (speech and actions) that can be understood by others. Language learning is one of the basic skill development areas prepared by teachers to improve children's abilities and creativity according to their developmental stage (Utama, 2017). Language development aims for children to be able to express thoughts through simple language appropriately, be able to communicate effectively and arouse interest in being able to speak good and correct Indonesian. From an early age, the use of media in learning English for children in kindergarten becomes very relevant (Suhono et al., 2022).

Suryani's research (2017) used a Quantitative approach in the form of a Quasi Experimental, it was concluded that the ABC Circuit game had an effect on the introduction of English vocabulary at Nurul Halim Padang Islamic Kindergarten. Similarly, the results of research by Okfia, et al (2021) reveal that constructivist theory using flascard media can introduce English vocabulary admirably, can help train spelling and enrich vocabulary in both Arabic and English, can improve memory, fun, make children more focused and make children easy to absorb learning. The introduction of English to children is not enough if done verbally but the introduction of English learning will be more fun if done with gestures, expressions and even pictures so that it will make it easier for children to understand the meaning of the learning delivered.

In a study it was stated that one of the learning methods used by kindergarten teachers in English at kindergarten in Sukolilo City Surabaya is to use the method of motion and song (Andini, Bustomi and Zulidyana: 2017). Through the singing method, it is expected to be able to attract children's interest in doing English learning activities happily and without burden. By making children like the learning methods used, it is hoped that the learning process will run well so that children do not feel bored, bored and difficult to master vocabulary. When children are already interested in learning by using the singing method, it will be easy for children to follow each stage of learning, so children will find it easy to master and memorize English vocabulary (Miranti, et al., 2015).

In line with the research above, Uzer (2019) also uses direct teaching methods believed to be still relevant and appropriate to be applied in teaching English for early childhood. Namely, the method of teaching directly (without translation) and conceptually (without grammatical rules and explanations). In the implementation of children's English Learning Through Motion and Song Method in Group B at Smile Kids Kindergarten Gandus Palembang Academic Year 2018/2019 at the technical level, teachers must increase active oral interaction, spontaneous use of language, without translation between the first and second languages, and little or no analysis of grammatical rules.

In this 4.0 era, language is very important to be introduced to early childhood because the progress of the times provides space for communication with everyone even with different backgrounds, because of this, English is used as a connecting rope so that global communication runs well. The media that is often used in the

introduction of English in this kindergarten is through the media pictures pasted on the board, then the teacher mentions and the child repeats.

Muryanti, E. (2023), states that the mystery box becomes active learning so that children will be more enthusiastic in participating in learning and can improve children's memory. This is in accordance with Vygotsky's theory of play which explains that through play children can develop English vocabulary. The step of this mystery box game is that the child is asked to take the object contained in the mystery box, then the child is asked to mention the object obtained using Indonesian then followed by English with the help of the teacher. Then continued with the child imitating the word structure according to the object obtained by the child using the available letter cards.

The results of Huda, et al (2018) showed an increase in the introduction of English vocabulary in children through picture card games, where the average increase was 22.12%. Similarly, The results of Warda's research, et al (2023), namely the use of flashcard media can make it easier for early childhood to master the naming of objects around them in English. Moreover, flashcards in the form of images and colours provide interest and enthusiasm in early childhood to get to know English vocabulary. the introduction of English is done as early as possible, especially for early childhood because in this phase of development it will be easier for them to absorb and learn new vocabulary.

Djuriyah, et al (2019) stated that to improve simple English skills that are not yet optimal, another media is needed that can make it easier for students to increase their mastery of English, one of which is by using flip sheet cards. The use of flip sheet cards is expected to stimulate the interest of learners to enjoy reading, because the interesting pictures on the cards can be assembled into simple questions using English that make learners provoked to answer questions by playing guessing. In improving simple language skills, the following developmental milestones and indicators are used: a. The developmental milestone used is how to answer correctly when asked. b. The indicators used are carrying out more complex commands according to the rules presented, repeating more complex sentences, and understanding the rules in a game.Based on the results of interviews at Aisyiyah Lutang Kindergarten, it shows that the teacher teaches English as much as possible, namely only through songs that are not programmed, for example the twinkle song (little star) and recognizing the alphabet. Given that teachers also do not have a background as an English teacher. So that teachers are sometimes stiff when teaching English to students. This research is to help teachers, especially those who do not have a background in English education in order to improve the quality of English used in the classroom.

In addition, Aisyiyah Lutang Majene Kindergarten also does not include English language material in the curriculum, so the introduction of English is less applied in learning. As for the obstacles of the institution in introducing English to children is because there is no guide used by the teacher. This is what underlies me conducting research with the title "The use of picture card games in improving children's English language skills in kindergarten."

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the use of picture card games in improving children's English language skills in kindergarten. In order to collect data for this study, observation, interviews, and

documentation were used. Observation: Involves direct observation of the teacher's activities when using picture cards. Documentation was conducted by collecting data from recordings, notes, or materials used by teachers during teaching. Interviews by investigating teachers' views on the use of picture cards in English language learning. Development of pre-validated observation, documentation and interview instruments to ensure data accuracy and reliability. This study uses the data analysis model according to Miles and Huberman (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, 2018). Presentation of data carried out in this study by displaying the results of data obtained by researchers regarding the ability of teachers to create learning media using picture cards. Drawing conclusions is the final step in a series of qualitative data analysis of the Miles and Huberman model. Researchers can verify data by drawing conclusions. Usually, this conclusion is a description of an object. The results of this research data analysis will be used to assess the teacher's ability to use picture cards.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this game, children will learn to recognize animal names in English through interesting picture cards. Each picture card will display a picture of an animal along with its name in English. The aim of this game is to teach children to recognize the names of animals in English in an interactive and fun way. Children will be able to identify different types of animals in English. They will recognize the names of animals such as lion, elephant, monkey, etc. In addition, children will practice their memory skills by matching the same animal picture cards. This will help improve children's memory and concentration. The same goes for speaking skills. The children will be encouraged to pronounce the names of the animals in English. This will help them in developing their speaking skills and pronunciation in English.

This picture card game is designed by considering the characteristics of kindergarten-age children and effective teaching methods. Cameron (2001) suggests language learning strategies for children, including the use of pictures. The use of picture cards in the game can help children to associate words with pictures, enrich vocabulary, and improve speaking ability.

1. Interactive and Fun: The game is designed to be interactive and fun for children. By using attractive picture cards, children will be more interested and enthusiastic in learning English.
2. Visual Learning: Picture cards are used to associate pictures of animals with their English names. This helps children to recognize and remember animal names more easily through visualization.
3. Repetition: This game involves repeating the names of animals in English. This repetition helps children to remember and reinforce the English vocabulary they have learned.
4. Collaboration and Communication: This game can be played in small groups or individually. In small groups, children can collaborate and communicate with each other in English to match the picture cards. By using this picture card game, it is hoped that children can improve their English skills in a fun and effective way. This game can be used as one of the tools in teaching English in kindergarten.

The first step in designing a picture card game is to identify the learning objectives to be achieved. For example, the objectives could be recognizing the names of animals in English, increasing English vocabulary, and practicing speaking skills in

English. Each picture card has a different picture of an animal and a label with the name of the animal in English that is clear and easy for children to read.

The purpose of the research of Adimayanti, et al (2020) to improve the cognitive abilities of children of IT Cahaya Ummat Kindergarten. The method used is with English games play therapy. The results obtained are the child's ability to think cognitively through guessing pictures, guessing letters, guessing colours, guessing words, mentioning the name of the day, mentioning numbers, mentioning the name of the fruit, mentioning limbs, so that children are able to collect a lot of new vocabulary in English card games. The teacher determines the rules of the game that are simple and easily understood by the children. For example, the rules of the game can be matching the same animal picture cards or collecting as many animal picture cards as possible within a certain time. Teacher involvement in using interesting strategies, such as picture card games, can motivate children to learn English more effectively. The teacher gives support and praise to the children when they successfully match the picture cards correctly or say the animal names in English correctly. After the game is over, evaluate the children's English skills. Observe and record the progress each child has made. Use the results of this evaluation to improve future picture card games, such as enriching the content with more complex animal pictures or adding a higher level of difficulty.

To reinforce learning, the teacher repeats this game periodically with variations in the rules or different content. For example, add picture cards with more complicated English animal names or add a memory game by flipping over the picture cards and matching pairs of the same animal. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with five teachers who have used English picture cards in learning at Aisyiyah Lutang Majene Kindergarten. Data were analysed using thematic analysis techniques.

Table 1. Data Analysis

Research Findings	Results
Increased Student Engagement	The majority of teachers reported increased student engagement in learning. Picture cards help students to be more engaged in learning activities and increase their interest in English.
Improved English Comprehension	Teachers reported that the use of picture cards helps students in understanding vocabulary and phrases in English. The use of pictures helps students to understand the meaning of new words visually.
Improving Teacher Creativity	Teachers find that using picture cards gives them the freedom to be more creative in designing learning activities.

	They can use the cards for different types of games and exercises.
Limited Preparation Time	Some teachers stated that the preparation of learning materials using picture cards takes more time compared to conventional learning methods. They have to select and arrange the appropriate cards.

Using this methodology, picture card games can be an effective tool to improve children's English language skills in kindergarten. Always remember to keep the atmosphere of the game fun and interactive so that children are more enthusiastic in learning. Picture cards provide a visual stimulus that can help children associate words with pictures, enrich vocabulary and improve speaking skills. Picture card games can effectively improve children's English language skills in kindergarten. The variety of teachers' ideas, adaptation to individual abilities, and effectiveness in increasing children's engagement are key factors that support the success of picture card games.

This research provides several significant contributions to the development of children's English language skills in kindergarten. Firstly, by using picture card games, this study offers a fun and engaging approach for children to learn English. This approach not only enhances children's learning motivation but also makes the learning process more interactive and enjoyable. Secondly, the research focuses on the holistic development of language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Through picture card games, children can naturally engage in various activities that reinforce these skills. Thirdly, the findings of this research can provide practical guidance for teachers and parents in designing effective English language learning programs for young children. By understanding the strategies and benefits of using picture card games, they can integrate this approach into the curriculum or home learning activities. Thus, this research has the potential not only to improve children's English language skills but also to provide a useful framework for educational practitioners in supporting their language learning process.

CONCLUSION

In the picture card game to improve children's English skills in kindergarten, it can be concluded that this game is an effective and fun method in teaching children to recognize animal names in English, increase English vocabulary, and practice English speaking skills. Through this game, children can learn more interactively and strengthen their memory through visualization of images. The game also allows children to collaborate and communicate in English with their friends, which can boost their confidence and social skills. Teachers have a crucial role in customizing the use of picture cards according to the needs and abilities of their class. Tailoring the use of picture cards to the teacher's ability is a key aspect in the success of this method. More experienced teachers can integrate picture cards more effectively, while newer teachers have room for growth and development of their skills.

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