FLASCHCARDS IN LANGUAGE AREA OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Taranindya Zulhi Amalia
Jurusan Tarbiyah STAIN Kudus

Abstrak: *Flashcards menjadi hal yang sifatnya sederhana, mudah digenggam, dan fleksibel digunakan dalam momen apapun. Rata-rata orang menggunakan/memainkan kartu di tempat-tempat seperti di rumah, sekolah, kantor dalam waktu senggang termasuk di arena gamling. Saat ini, kartu tak hanya ditemukan dalam wujud nyata namun juga abstrak seperti yang digunakan dalam game komputer, seperti FreeCell, Hearts, Solitaire etc.*

Istilah 'Flash cards' yang telah booming dengan variasi jenisnya disebabkan oleh kecepatan pergerakannya, secepat kilat. Disekolah, baik didalam maupun diluar ruangan, para guru mempersiapkan flashcards sebagai media penunjang pembelajaran. Namun kini beberapa Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD) menerapkan flashcards untuk mengundang perhatian murid-murid dari toddlers hingga Taman Kanak-kanak (TK). Disini guru-guru tersebut menggunakannya pada area bahasa. Tujuannya adalah agar murid-murid PAUD dapat mempelajari kosakata bahasa yang sederhana dalam rangka meraih kompetensi komunikatif secara lisan

Kata Kunci: *area bahasa, flash cards, PAUD*

A. INTRODUCTION

The first idea of creating the flash cards come from pictures. Pictures are all around us everyday, in the street, at work, at home and even in our leisure time, so why not in the classroom as well? They are so familiar with us. They set the scene or context, inform us, interest us, and they are a key resource. To be even more specific, people try to make them more useful but chick. Then, pictures are made in small size. They could be found in the course books, in the newspapers or in the cartoon

strips of comic books and the enjoyment which we derive from them.

Unsatisfyingly, people are going back to think. Could we make them more simple and handy? So, whenever or wherever needed, we do not get in trouble to bring them here and there. They could be put into small plastic bags, hand-bags or even our hold. Then, cards made of carton, are found to overcome the hope. Cards are simple, easy to hold, and casual for anytime. Now, we could see people play cards at home, at school, in the office, in leisure time, even in a gamling-arena. The kind of cards are not only in real-objects but also in electronic in computer games.

The human unsatisfactions always reappear every time. In education world, especially in teaching learning processes, teachers need visual aids in order to make students easier memorizing words through realia. Answering this problem, they try to present kind of cards that seem familiar and enjoyable for children into their class. Different from ordinary cards, they present still in small size but consist of a picture in one card and each has an aim of a word or a meaning. Because of their suddenly and quicly movement when are played, people are called them flash cards. Since a couple years ago, flash cards have been presented in teaching-learning world, such as Early Children Education.

In Early Childhood Education, teachers also use flashcards to introduce new vocabularies to children. The flashcards do not only have pictures but are also presented colorful. Some big-sized colorful but handy cards look eye-catching and make them interested in.

B. THESIS STATEMENT

This article focuses on the application of flash cards in Early Childhood Education, especially kindergarten in their language area. Fakhruddin, (2010:81-120) states eight aspects of Early Childhood Education; Religion, Motor skill, Moral, Emotional, Independence, Language, Art, and cognitive aspects. The presence of language aspect in this level dealing with Education Rule Number 20 Year 2003, Chapter VII on Language of Communication Article 33 mentions that foreign language can be used as language of communication in specified educational units to support foreign language learners. This also takes place in Early Childhood Education.

During language teaching-learning, Early Childhood Education Teachers organise the flash cards as a starting point for students' oral communicative competence. But the process of learning through these, could be as a self-evident of the students in interacting each other and creating cooperative atmosphere. The students in these ages of 0-6 years old just start how to interact with others.

C. THEORIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Different from the existance of kindergarten before 2003, the year makes the kindergarten level being a part of Early Childhood Education. Nowadays, Ministry of Education and Culture declares Act Number 20 Year 2003 on Education System in order to arrange Early Childhood Education as the form of education. Beside Act No 20 Year 2003 Article 28, the Ministerial Decree Number 58 Year 2009 is discussed about Standards of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). The Ministery of Education and Culture states a national standard of: (1) child development; (2) qualification level of teacher and management; (3) content, learning process, and assessment; (4) infrastructure, facilities, management, and budgeting.

Furthermore, Hasan (2012:17-18) expresses the education unit of early childhood into:

1. *Taman Kanak-kanak (TK)* [Kindergarten]
2. *Raudhatul Athfal (RA)* [Islamic Kindergarten]
3. *Bustanul Athfal (BA)*
4. *Kelompok Bermain (KB)* [Play Group]
5. *Taman Penitipan Anak (TPA)* [Child Care]
6. *Early Elementary School* (Grade 1, 2, 3)
7. *Bina Keluarga Balita*
8. *Pos Pelayanan Terpadu (Posyandu)*
9. Family
10. Environment

According to those, Indonesians are familiar with the terms kindergarten/Raudlatul Athfal, play group, and child care as formal and/ informal Early Childhood Education. Hasan (2012:16-17) explains about 113

the main goals of Early Childhood Education in Indonesia as follows:

1. Establish the quality of Indonesian children who grow and develop in accordance with the level of development, so they have optimal readiness in entering primary education and life in adulthood.

2. Help to prepare children reaching academic learning readiness at school.

UU Number 20 Year 2003 published by Ministry of education and states in Chapter I Article 1 Verse 14 that Early Childhood Education and Development (*PAUD*) is a development effort aimed at children from birth to the age of six years which is done through the provision of educational stimulus to help the growth and development of children physically and mentally in order to have the readiness to enter further education. Hasan (2012:17) categorizes that some countries present early childhood education in the ages of 0-8. The scopes are:

1. Infant (0-1 year old)

2. Toddler (2-3 years old)

3. Preschool/kindergarten children (3-6 years old)

4. Early primary school (6-8 years old)

The concept of teaching-learning of Early Childhood Education is similar in everywhere. Working with children everyday though are not a babysitter, we, as teachers should know them, our students well.There is wise words say that "Unknown means Uncare". This characteristics of the young language learner mentioned by Scott and Yteberg (1993:2) help us leaving careless.The characteristics of them are:

1. They know that the world is governed by rules. They may not always understand the rules, but they know that they are there to be obeyed, and the rules help to nurture a feeling of security.

2. They understand situations more quickly than they understanding the language used

3. They use language skills long before they are aware of them

4. Their own understanding comes through hands and eyes and ears.

5. They are very logical – what you say first happens first

6. They have a very short attention and concentration span

7. ....

In addition, Scott and Yteberg also clasify more specific the characteristic of children into ages. The population of them refer to first graders of elementary school. Mostly they are in the ages of 5-7 years old.The aged categories are classified into the terms as follows:

1. They can talk about what they are doing
2. They can tell about what they have done or heard
3. They can plan activities
4. They can argue for something and tell you why they think what they think
5. They can use logical reasoning
6. They can use their vivid imaginations
7. They can use a wide range of intonation patterns in their mother tongue
8. They can understand direct human interaction

<div style="text-align:right">Scott and Yteberg (1993:1-2)</div>

Now, after skipping those characteristics, it reminds us to know chldren as adventurers. They love to learn new stuff much, They like to try something challenging. This could have proposed amount of teachers' bright ideas of keeping their attention. Basically, teachers should let them exploring their needs in learning those such things. They compete with other peers sometimes. But it is also the teachers' responsibilities to handle them by rules.

Then, teachers are keen on creating methods of teaching. They do not miss every kind of textbooks. Maybe they are good in teaching but not for the students in learning. Because of the students are subject centered of the class, we should concentrate on learning processes in the classroom. The learning processes that usually have just one and a half hours or less, need a kind of methods for each. One of them is through applying flash cards. As Hughes (2002:134) me that activities based around speaking need to be managed and fostered through careful planning and direction by the teacher, and through a choice of suitable tasks to stimulate speech.

D. WHY USE FLASH CARDS?

Making stimuli is one of the skill in the development of Early Childhood Education program. Dealing with the focus of the study on English learning process, Ministery of Education and Culture (2009) classifiess six principles that have to be implemented throughout the process of learning as follows: (1) take into account the child developmental needs and interests; (2) integrate aspects of health, nutrition, education, care, and protection; (3) playful learning; (4) step by step approach, continuity, and habituation; (5) active, creative, interactive, effective, and fun learning; and (6) child centered.

Dealing with the six principles, Gordon & Browne (1986) in Moeslichatoen, (1999:13) divides two types activities indoor and outdoor:

Indoor
a) Developing creativity through small blocks
b) Playing tools on desks
c) Developing science
d) Playing drama
e) Developing language
f) Developing Maths
g) Developing musics

Outdoor
a) Using tools
b) Climbing
c) Using sand/clay/water
d) Using playing tools moving around
e) doing [playing] by using big blocks
f) developing science
g) developing musics

These classifications are related to the use of media in teaching and learning in the classroom, such as language area. And flash cards belong to media that can be applied to any education level, such as in the language area of Early Childhood Education. These media are kinds

of simple handy cards in the same size that could be move in a rush. Hornby (1995:445) states that flash card is a card with a ord or words and sometimes a picture on it. Flash cards are held up for pupils as a visual aid to learning. As well as enjoying flash cards they also form a key resource for accessing the different learning styles that each student has. Using flash cards really appeal to visual learners who may suffer in a speaking classroom. They also offer an opportunity for movement and a multi-dimensional perspective which will reach our students' kinetic energy. Gairns and Redman's (1986) in Uberman (1998:24) view that the presentation of new vocabulary is classified according to verbal and visual techniques. Among visual techniques are flashcards, photographs, and pictures, wall charts, blackboard drawings, word pictures, incongruous visuals, realia, mime, and gesture. Students can label pictures or objects or perform an action. Then, Allen and Valette (1972:116) in Uberman (1998:24) also suggest that visual presentation often aid the use of categories-organizing words into sets, subclasses, and subcategories.

Here are some types of flashcard that are applied by Early Childhood Education:

1. First are flashcards from http://themesforfun.com which are suitable for preschool students in the levels of toddlers, playgroups, or kindergartens. The flashcards help preschool teachers dealing with the themes that they have in their school curriculum.
2. Second choice are flashcards from http://customizedplayingcards. com which contain two sides. In one card, there is one picture in one side and the word/vocabulary plus the pronunciation (how to pronounce the word)
3. The third, http://amazon.co.uk which is famous as a website that sells good hings offers a box of flashcards for children use.
4. As a website which offers an application, http://pinterest.com helps us installing and using it for reading practice not only how to pronounce words but also how to spell them.
5. htttp//:stemcellforautism.com gives experience to autism in expressing their feelings through immitating the flashcards in order to motivatethem well.

Free Printable English Flashcard of How I grow - Day and Night Theme Flashcard 25. Suitable for preschool and kindergarten children of all ages.

(http://themesforfun.com)

Language Education Flash CardsTeaching your children or students new words is easy with custom flashcards. For younger children simply put a word on one side and a picture your child will recognize on the other. For older children put the word on one side and the definition on the other.
(http://customizedplayingcards.com)

324 flash cards with vibrant images to stimulate visual learning. 6 subjects, with 54 flash cards each with answers on the back of each card. Convenient and sturdy storage box with labeled dividers for quick and easy access
(http://amazon.co.uk)

This application helps to improve reading skills of children. Use this app as flashcard in "Guide" mode. Look at the photo shown and select the correct English word. You can also use it it "Type" mode to check spellings.
(http://pinterest.com)

Strategy 1: While you are with the child as and when the need to express the emotion arises, ask the child to pick up or point out to the card that corresponds to the feeling that the child is experiencing. Also, to motivate this positive behaviour keep rewarding the child.
Strategy 2: expose each expression card to the child and ask him to imitate the expression which is exposed on the card.
(http//:stemcellforautism.com)

Good manners flashcards (use extra time with flashcards. Make them name ways to be kind , show love to family, be a helper, etc.
(http://pinterest/com)

> The technical specs from the You Are So Awesome site say they're made from,"a heavy-weight synthetic paper, same thickness of a standards credit card, more flexible. Non-toxic, BPA-free, FDA-approved plastic, safe for food contact. Ink and coatings are nontoxic."
> (http://mybitofearth.net)

6. Once again, http://pinterest/com has another type of flashcards called good manners flashcards. It is a flashcard which physically has animal characters and asks children to act in good manners through the short message available in every card.

7. Next is http://mybitofearth.netwhich has a type of flashcards that are claimed made of the best safe materials. Besides, its ring that holds all of the flashcards makes it handy to be brought whereever children and parents go together.

Occasionally, as we know that the prosperity of flash cards runs faster. Beginning from flash cards of words, pictures, bright colorful pictures story, and so on. Though some people give comments that these are a conventional menthod, many teachers instil flash cards. These tools are addressed to communicative approach in general and additionally in Total Physical Response (TPR). Similarly, Harmer (2001:4).notes that critics of TPR may only be a appropriate for beginner learners and question how TPR ties in with any real word needs.

E. HOW TO SELECT APPROPRIATE FLASHCARDS

Dealing with the use of flashcards in teaching-learning process whether at school or at home, there are some criteria of selecting flashcards for children or students:

1. Requirements

Some flashcards are presented to be applied to any level of users. They are usually completed with pictures. Eye catching effect makes colorful flashcards are preferable than black and white ones.

Yet, there are so many available flashcards are made based on particular levels of learners. Starting from baby flashcards to adults

flashcars is produced according to their different needs.

Furthermore, there are some types of flashcards that have been explained before which are able to help the learners. Some mention themes in order to make them easier in identify the situations or curriculums. While some are completed with initial alphabets, spellings, pronunciations/phonics, beside pictures.

2. Materials

Materials possibly becomes the second thing need to be alternative beside requirements in selecting flashcards. When teachers or parents wish to use the flashcards in durable time, they are better to choose ones which are made of carton or catridge paper.

Moreover, according to http://pinterest.com , a heavy-weight synthetic paper, same thickness of a standards credit card can be the criteria of more flexible flashcards. Still Non-toxic, BPA-free, FDA-approved plastic, safe for food contact belong to the best materials, so do nontoxic ink and coatings. These criteria indicate good ones.

3. Prices

When the criteria of requirements and materials are important to be understood, prices should also be considered. As the third thing that to be paid attention, the prices grow to be the last but not least criteria of selecting flashcards.

In trend setting, teachers or parents who buy the flashcards thinking about how much the cost of a package of flashcards that make their students or children smarter. However, the more expensive the prices do not always mean the better quality will be. Generally the rate is because of import materials that are used to make them. Those made in domestic production will be an alternative in getting cheaper but more qualified ones.

F.   WHERE TO FIND FLASH CARDS

Budden (2006:1) points out the ways to find flash cards:

-   Buy them - Some course books provide a supplementary pack of flash cards or they can be bought in sets.
-   Make them yourself - If you don't have access to professionally produced flashcards, don't worry, it's really easy to make your own

even if you're not very artistic. You can use pictures from magazines, draw simple pictures or copy from the internet or clip art. The most important thing is to make sure they are all of the same size, on card (different colours for different sets) so you can't see through them. If possible you can laminate the sets as you make them and they will last for years. The advantage of making your own, apart from the fact that they're cheap and yours to keep, is that you can make sets for your specific needs. You may like to make a set to use in conjunction with a story book or graded reader, or even to accompany project work.

- Students make them - I have recently begun to incorporate the production of flash cards into the classroom. After introducing a new lexical set, using realia or the course book, ask students to produce the flash cards for you. Give each one an item to draw. They can be mounted on card to make the set. [this is not done by Early Childhood Education students]

According to the guidance above, teachers and students, or parents and children are easily learning while interacting each other by using flashcards that they buy or make. Book stores or toy stores now sell them in interesting eye-cathcing appearance. Even they are available in many online stores. However some of them prefer produce theirown flashcards manually by combining pictures and their handwriting or printed words dealing with the themes they need.

Besides, teachers could alternate by asking students to make one card only for each. The students do it at home by cutting from newspapers/magazines. But, the teachers should have mentioned the length and width of the card in order to complete them all the same home. By using this way, both of the teachers and students will be more satisfied and are able to hang them up as handicraft as well.

G. WHAT TEACHERS DO WITH FLASH CARDS

As well as the crusial of introducing English as foreign language to young ages, teacher in applying speaking ability to young well-known and loved trying something, there are many ways we can apply flash

cards to encourage our students to develop their spoken communication skills. Some of them are:

1. 4 Corners

    Put four (or any amount of flash cards) at corners or even at the edges of room. Make sure there is enough space between them to avoid confusion who is standing where. All students stand in the middle of the room. Briefly give instructions to them to go to the words the teacher say. During the activity, the teacher plays one song, and stand near the tape recorder. When the teacher stops the music, they have to run and choose a card and would like to say what other cards they do not stand next to.

2. Miming

    Show a card to each students come forward. He/ she mime it once. While other could ask him/her five questions only to be sure they finally guess it.

3. Pairs

    Teacher needs 2 sets of similar flash cards to be placed in front. The students are divided into two line at the back row Go through the vocabulary of the cards before starting. The first two go to search the words ordered by the teacher. Do not allow them mix up the cards. Then they bring the card they have got to the teacher and let them making a simple sentence by using that word.

4. Bingo(some references have used the name of the game)

    Choose four places,First a 'starting' place where students could stand. Second a 'deciding place' for the teacher to stand. Then the rests are first and second posts. After being ready, suffle the flash cards. Show them one and let them raise their hand. Choose the fastest. He/she come to 'deciding place' and shout ' bingo'. If he/ she says the right answer, they will go to the first post. When there is another who comes to him/her in the first, he/she should run to the second post. The student in the second can be back to starting place when the other one comesto his/her place.

5. Kim's game (some references have used the name of the game)

    Sit in a small circle with students. Face up a set of flash cards on the floor. Ask them to look at them and remember them. After

seconds, tell them to close their eyes. Hide two cards. Now, let them open their eyes and ask them 'what are missing'.

Be sure teachers always through the vocabulary of the cards before starting. If they have been familiar with the games. Let them in choosing their favourite one. It will be more fun when they also use their own flash cards to be played. But those are not more enjoyable as they love to watch the teachers playing with them, as partners. Prepare a little punishment to them for anticipating anyone who be a troublemaker, such as singing in front or drawing at the board. Give rewards to them sometimes when they do good manner.

H.   ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF USING FLASH CARDS IN THE COMMUNICATIVE CLASSROOM

The presence of flash cards around the students in communicative class works well all this time in order to make them speak. Even when there is someone keep silent, they could ensure the teachers that they will encourage him/her to do best. Hughes (2002:134) notes that while the communicative classroom gives abundant opportunity for the student to interact, it is fruitful to raise awareness of the fundamental of spoken discourse to give students a better understanding of how very different speaking is from the stringing together of grammatically correct (incorrect) sentences.

Then, when the teachers instil to intereract to their students, there are some benefits and challenges happen in applying flash cards inside the classroom. The benefits are through realia, students could learn better, particularly in colorful eye catching things. It also stimulate their creativity in making theirown cards and memorizing some simpleEnglish words. The students also have tolerable feeling to others. Yet, there are also some challenges in do it. First, the flash cards are missed.or left behind. Sometimes someone, takes and hide it in everywhere. It also takes time in preparing. But then, by practicing again, these could be overcome well.

I.   CONCLUSION

As someone says, "a picture speaks a thousand words". It proves that through something colored interesting things stimulates one to be creative. So that flash cards that are made for those help students creating ideas in organizing words. And what more could we want from a resource in our communicative classrooms?

Again, there are bad and good effect of making flash cards as tools in teaching-learning process. Always be good in learning. There is no meaning we could be good in teaching but students are not good in learning process.

Hopefully, this will be helpful for both teachers and students feeling less stressed in the classroom. Though it sounds no perfect at least could create more dynamic classes. Just try it!

REFERENCES

Act Number 20 Year 2003 on Education System.

A. U. Fakhruddin. 2012. Sukses menjadi Guru TK-PAUD Tips, Strategi, dan Panduan-panduan Pengembangan Praktisnya. Jogjakarta: Bening.

Budden, Joanna. 2004. Using Flash Cards with Young Learners. http://www. teachingenglish.org.uk/talk/contact.shtml.

Harmer, J. 2001. The Practice of English Language Teaching (3rd Edition). Harlow: Longman.

Hasan, Maimunah. 2012. Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Jogyakarta: DIVA Press.

http://abcfrog.net [25 March 2014]

http://amazon.co.uk [25 March 2014]

http://customizedplayingcards.com [25 March 2014]

http://englishforkidz-step-by-step.blogspot.com [25 March 2014]

http://homeschoolcreations.net [25 March 2014]

http://mybitofearth.net [25 March 2014]

 http://pinterest.com [25 March 2014]

http://shutterstock.com[25 March 2014]

http://stemcellforautism.com [25 March 2014]

http://themesforfun.com [25 March 2014]

Hornby, A. S. 1995. Advanced Learner's Oxford Dictionary. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

http://www.eHughes, Rebecca. 2002. Teaching and Researching Speaking. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministerial Decree Number 58 Year 2009 Standards of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

R. Moeslichatoen. 1999. Metode Pengajaran di Taman kanak-Kanak, Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.

Scott and Yteberg. 1993. Teaching English to Children. New York: Longman.

Uberman, A. 1998. The Use of Games for Vocabulary, Presentation, and Revision. English Teaching. Forum: 36 (01): 24.