

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the foundation and general overview of the study undertaken. It consists of the background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, the significance of the study, clarification of related terms and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

Vocabulary is an essential component in second/foreign language learning (Mehring, 2005). In an EFL classroom, according to Carpenter & Olson (2011), vocabulary is needed for expressing meaning and conveying thoughts through both receptive and productive skills. Furthermore, Cameron (2001) believes that vocabulary is central to the learning of a foreign language at primary level to enrich their language. Thus, there should be a strategy to help students learn vocabulary.

A number of studies have been conducted in vocabulary teaching. According to Baleghizadeh and Ashoori's study (2011) in one junior high school in Iran, young learners cannot make an appropriate vocabulary learning strategy for their learning process.

Many strategies can be done by a teacher to teach vocabulary effectively, such as word list and flashcards. Some researchers discovered that teaching with flashcards help learners to acquire words more effectively than word list

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(Komachali and Khodareza, 2012; Schmitt and Schmitt, 1995). It is in line with Thornbury (2002) and Logsdon (2013) who state that flashcards help teachers to demonstrate a simple sequence of activities to the learners in the classroom. Moreover, Komachali and Khodareza (2012) argue that flashcards have been used for teaching a variety of purposes during the history of language teaching.

On the other hand, Baleghizadeh and Ashoori (2011) argue that word list is a method largely used in teaching vocabulary to learners. Word list is still used as a good strategy because it is very economical for students to learn vocabulary in a short time (Thornbury, 2002). However, Komachali and Khodareza (2012) argue that learners paid less attention in learning words through word list because of its monotonous. Moreover, Baleghizadeh and Ashoori (2011) who studied the impact of two instructional strategies on EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge: flashcards and word lists revealed that there was no significant difference in the efficacy of either of the two strategies.

Another study concerning the use of flashcards, Romjue, McLaughlin & Derby (2011) studied the effect of reading race track and flashcards for teaching sight words. Based on their study, reading racetracks and flashcards were effective in increasing sight word reading. Moreover, Komachali and Khodareza (2012) also investigated the effect of using vocabulary flashcard on Iranian pre-university students' vocabulary knowledge. The result showed that the students outperformed in their vocabulary knowledge. Flashcards could lead the students to a higher level of vocabulary improvement.

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All of those previous studies are in the area of teaching vocabulary using flashcards and word list (Baleghizadeh and Ashoori, 2011; Komachali and Khodareza, 2012; Romjue, McLaughlin & Derby, 2011). However, studies on teaching vocabulary using flashcards and wordlist for young learners are still rare. Therefore, this study empirically analyzes the teaching vocabulary using flashcards and word list for young learners.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background mentioned above, the research attempts to investigate the answers of the following research questions.

1. To what extent can flashcards as a strategy help students' vocabulary mastery?
2. To what extent can word list as a strategy help students' vocabulary mastery?
3. How do the students respond toward both strategies in learning vocabulary?

1.3 Aims of the Study

Based on the problems above, this study aims to examine:

1. To extent to which flashcards as a strategy can help students' vocabulary mastery
2. To extent to which word list as a strategy can help students' vocabulary mastery
3. Students' responses toward both strategies in learning vocabulary

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1.4 Scope of the Study

The study limits its investigation into three concerns: flashcards as a strategy can help students' vocabulary mastery; word list as a strategy can help fifth grade students' vocabulary mastery and their responses toward both strategies in learning vocabulary.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The outcomes of this study are expected to be significant theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically,

The findings of the study can enrich the literature on teaching vocabulary and the use of flashcards and word list. The finding of the study is also expected to give beneficial reference for further study concerning about the use of flashcards and word list in teaching English vocabulary to young learners.

2. Practically,

The result of the study is also expected to provide the English teachers some benefits in teaching English vocabulary to young learners by using flashcards and word list. Furthermore, it is also hoped that this study can motivate the students to learn English so that they are more interested in learning and helping their vocabulary knowledge. Finally, the result of the study is hoped to facilitate the students and the teachers with an effective learning-teaching language process.

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1.6 Clarification of Related Terms

Some terms need to be clarified in order to avoid misunderstanding and they are as follows:

1. **Flashcards** are a cardboard consisting of a word, a sentence, or a simple picture on it (Komachali and Khodareza, 2012).
2. **Word list** is a sheet of paper where learners write the second language (L2) along with their first language (L1) definition to one side of each word (Baleghizadeh and Ashoori, 2011).
3. **Teaching vocabulary** means teaching a list of words that teacher prepares for their learners to memorize and learn by heart (Fusaro, 2009).
4. **Young learners** are a group of students of five to twelve years old who learn English inside or outside classroom (Pinter, 2006).

1.7 Organization of Paper

The present research paper is organized into five chapters as follows:

1. Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter discusses information on background which elaborates basic thought of why this research is administered; research questions; aims of the study; scope of the study; significance of the study; clarification of related terms; and organization of paper.

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2. Chapter II: Theoretical Foundation

This chapter provides the elaboration of the theoretical foundation in the research. It consists of the definition of vocabulary, the importance of vocabulary in learning foreign language, the characteristics of young learners, teaching vocabulary to young learners, definitions and benefits of flashcards, flashcards as strategy to teach vocabulary, and the teaching procedure using flashcards, definitions and benefits of word list, word list as strategy to teach vocabulary, and the teaching procedure using word list. This chapter also presents the discussions of previous studies related to the topic of this study.

3. Chapter III: Research Method

This chapter elaborates the methodology of research conducted to answer the two research questions previously stated in chapter one. It covers research design, research hypothesis, population and samples, data collection techniques which include research instrument and research procedures, and data analysis.

4. Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion

This chapter provides the results of the research and discussions of the research findings.

5. Chapter V: Conclusion and Suggestions

This chapter presents the conclusions of the research based on the research questions, aims of the research, and hypothesis which have

been described in chapter III. In addition, suggestions are also recommended in this chapter for the future studies.



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