

Application Of Picture Card Media (Flashcard) To Improve Children's Ability To Recognize New Vocabulary In Permata Kindergarten

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Abstract

This study aimed to improve children's ability to recognize new vocabulary in Group B of TK Permata during the 2025/2026 academic year. The main issue motivating this research is the children's low mastery of new vocabulary, which impacts their communication skills. The study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) based on the Kemmis & Mc. Taggart model, conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection stages. The subjects were 15 children in Group B at TK Permata. Data were collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and performance tests. The collected data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. The results showed that the application of picture card media (flashcards) significantly improved the children's ability to recognize new vocabulary. In the pre-cycle stage, classical completeness only reached 13.33% (2 children achieved mastery). After implementing the flashcard media in cycle I, the completeness percentage increased to 66.67% (10 children achieved mastery). Since this result had not reached the success indicator of 80%, cycle II was carried out with several improvements. In cycle II, classical completeness increased significantly to 86.67% (13 children achieved mastery). As the results in cycle II met the target, the research was concluded. This study concludes that the use of flashcards makes children more active and enthusiastic, and helps them easily understand and remember the newly learned vocabulary

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is essentially a process aimed at helping individuals develop themselves, enabling them to face life's changes and challenges with an open attitude and creative approach, without losing their identity. Education plays a crucial role in the life and progress of humanity. As a dynamic force in the lives of every individual, education influences physical development, psychological aspects, and social and moral abilities (Hakim, 2021). In this context, education is not merely the transfer of knowledge, but rather a conscious and planned effort to create an active and enjoyable learning environment.

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) plays a crucial role for children, as this phase marks their golden age. During this period, children develop rapidly and only once in a lifetime (Nurasyah & Atikah, 2023). If this period is not properly stimulated, it will impact the child's future life. Therefore, stimulation must be provided optimally (Sugiyono, 2024). The primary goal of PAUD is to facilitate the holistic and balanced growth and development of children, including their readiness for primary education. Children have concrete and concrete thought patterns, acquired from

experiences or tangible objects in their environment. Therefore, parents and educators must ensure that the child's learning environment supports broad exploration.

Language is a fundamental aspect of human life. Without language, humans would be unable to communicate with others and convey their ideas and emotions. Language development is one aspect that must be developed in kindergarten (TK). One of the main components of children's speaking and oral language skills is vocabulary mastery (Siahaan et al., 2024). Vocabulary mastery is crucial as a foundation or primary asset in children's language development. Speaking is also an important medium in children's social lives, because through spoken words, children can express their feelings, needs, and desires.

Based on Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development, children aged 5-6 years are in the pre-operational stage (Putri et al., 2023). At this stage, children begin to think using symbols, images, and simple language, but their thinking remains concrete. Therefore, they greatly need visual media in the learning process. In line with this view, Lev Vygotsky also explained that children's language development occurs through social interactions with their surroundings. Children acquire new vocabulary through imitation, listening, and communication (Zahara et al., 2024).

However, based on initial observations conducted by researchers in class B of Permata Kindergarten, Batu Keruk Hamlet, problems related to children's language development were identified. Class B children still could not recognize new vocabulary and were not yet accustomed to using it in everyday conversation. The initial observation focused on children's ability to respond to questions, pronounce and recognize target vocabulary, and use newly introduced words during classroom interaction. The findings showed that most children were hesitant to respond, had limited speaking fluency, and needed teacher prompting. To present the initial condition systematically, the pre-cycle assessment of 15 children was distributed into four development categories: 11 children (73.33%) were in BB, 2 children (13.33%) were in MB, 2 children (13.33%) were in BSH, and none were in BSB. Thus, only 2 children (13.33%) had achieved the individual mastery criterion.

Initial assessment indicator	BB	MB	BSH/BSB	Interpretation
Vocabulary recognition and response	11 children (73.33%)	2 children (13.33%)	2 BSH children (13.33%); 0 BSB	Most children had difficulty recognizing and responding with target vocabulary.
Use of new vocabulary in interaction	Limited	Beginning but inconsistent	Expected performance in limited cases	Children were not yet accustomed to using new vocabulary in classroom communication.
Classical mastery	13 children not yet complete	—	2 children complete	13.33% classical completion; below the 80% success criterion.
Total participants	15 children			8 boys and 7 girls

The main cause of this problem is learning activities that don't directly involve children and the minimal use of innovative and interactive learning media. Learning tends to be teacher-centered and monotonous, easily causing children to lose focus and become bored (Oktaviani & Ramadan,

2023). To address this issue, introducing new vocabulary needs to be done using engaging media, so children are enthusiastic about learning and easily remember new words.

One solution considered highly effective for improving children's vocabulary mastery is the use of flashcards. Flashcards are small visual aids containing images, text, or symbols that serve to remind or direct students to something related to the image (Andini et al., 2022). According to B.F. Skinner's behaviorist theory, a good learning process involves repeated stimulus and response. The images and text on flashcards act as powerful visual stimuli to stimulate children's memory (Musfiroh, 2021).

The advantages of flashcards lie in their practicality, attractive colors and images, and flexibility of use. Flashcards combine visual stimuli that children enjoy with interactive play, so they don't get bored quickly (Susiana & Riyana, 2022). Relevant research conducted by Afandi et al. (2022) and Hakim (2021) shows that consistent use of flashcards can significantly improve children's early reading skills and vocabulary recognition. Furthermore, research by Tifani (2022) also confirms that playing with word cards can drastically improve the linguistic abilities of Group A children.

Based on the description above, the researcher is highly motivated to conduct in-depth classroom action research with the title "Application of Picture Card Media (Flashcard) to Improve Children's Ability to Recognize New Vocabulary in Permata Kindergarten". This research is expected to not only solve the problem of low vocabulary in Permata Kindergarten, but also become a practical reference for other PAUD teachers in designing innovative, effective, and enjoyable learning for children (Iqbal & Elisa, 2026).

2. METHOD

This research is a Classroom Action Research (CAR). CAR is a practical, situational, and contextual research that aims to improve and enhance the quality of the learning process directly in the classroom (Nashrullah et al., 2023). This research uses the CAR model developed by Kemmis and Mc. Taggart, the implementation of which is designed in the form of a spiral cycle. Each cycle consists of four main stages that are interconnected, namely: (1) Planning, (2) Implementation of Action (Acting), (3) Observation (Observing), and (4) Reflection (Reflecting) (Bajo, 2024).

This research was conducted at Permata Kindergarten located in Batu Keruk Hamlet, Akar-Akar Village, Bayan District, North Lombok Regency. The research implementation time is planned for the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, which began intensively in June 2026. The subjects in this study were all 15 students in Group B at Permata Kindergarten, consisting of 8 boys and 7 girls. This group was chosen because, based on initial observations (pre-cycle), it was found that most of the children in the group had difficulty in recognizing and pronouncing new vocabulary.

Data collection techniques used in this study included observation, interviews, tests, and documentation. Observations were conducted directly and systematically on teacher and student activities during the flashcard learning process, utilizing a checklist as an observation sheet. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with classroom teachers and principals to explore perceptions, obstacles, and input regarding flashcard implementation (Giah, 2022). Tests were administered in the form of performance tests, in which students were asked to name pictures, repeat vocabulary words, and match pictures (Sukerta et al., 2023). Documentation was used to collect Daily Learning Implementation Plans (RPPH), syllabi, photographs of learning activities, and student work.

The performance test was assessed using a structured observation sheet/checklist completed during the learning activities. The instrument recorded three observable tasks: (1) naming the picture shown by the teacher, (2) repeating/pronouncing the target vocabulary, and (3) matching the picture with the appropriate vocabulary. Each task was observed consistently across the pre-cycle, Cycle I, and Cycle II. The assessor recorded the child's level of performance and converted the result into the percentage used to determine the developmental category.

For analysis, the categories were interpreted from the percentage score obtained from the observation/performance sheet: BB = 1–40%, MB = 41–60%, BSH = 61–80%, and BSB = 81–100%. Individual mastery was defined as a minimum score of 75 (BSH), while classical mastery required at least 80% of the 15 children, or at least 12 children, to reach BSH or BSB.

Category	Score range	Assessment rubric	Interpretation
BB (Not Yet Developing)	1–40%	Unable or only minimally able to name, repeat, or match the target vocabulary and requires substantial teacher assistance.	Expected vocabulary task has not yet been demonstrated.
MB (Beginning to Develop)	41–60%	Begins to perform the task but is inconsistent, often needs prompts, or makes several errors in naming, repeating, or matching.	Skill is emerging but not yet consistent.
BSH (Developing as Expected)	61–80%	Performs the vocabulary tasks correctly with increasing independence and only limited prompting when necessary.	Meets the individual mastery criterion.
BSB (Developing Very Well)	81–100%	Performs the vocabulary tasks accurately, consistently, and independently and responds confidently during the activity.	Demonstrates performance above the expected level.

The data analysis in this study used comparative descriptive analysis techniques, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitative data were obtained from the results of children's vocabulary ability tests, which were then calculated for the percentage of completion both individually and classically. A child is considered to have completed their learning individually if they achieve a minimum score of 75 (Developing According to Expectations / BSH Category). Meanwhile, the classical success indicator for this study was set at 80%. This means that the study is declared successful and the cycle is stopped if at least 80% of the total number of children in the class (at least 12 out of 15 children) have achieved learning completion. The formula used to calculate classical completion is $(\text{Number of Students Completed} / \text{Total Students}) \times 100\%$ (Arsyad, 2021).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Research Results

a. Description of Initial Conditions (Pre-Cycle)

Before implementing flashcards, researchers conducted initial observations (pre-cycle) to determine the actual state of language skills, particularly the mastery of new vocabulary, in Group B children at Permata Kindergarten. Based on interviews with the class teacher and

observations of conventional learning activities, it was found that the children tended to be passive. When the teacher explained the theme of animals and asked the children to name vocabulary, the children appeared hesitant and lacked the courage to speak. The teacher dominated the conversation without visual media that sufficiently stimulated the children's interest.

The results of the new vocabulary recognition test at the pre-cycle stage showed low results. Of the total of 15 children, there were 11 children (73.33%) who were in the Not Yet Developing (BB) criteria, 2 children (13.33%) in the Starting to Develop (MB) criteria, and only 2 children (13.33%) who achieved the Developing According to Expectations (BSH) criteria. None of the children achieved the Very Well Developing (BSB) criteria. Thus, the classical completion rate at the pre-cycle stage was only 13.33% (only 2 children completed). This fact confirms that the children's initial abilities were very far from the expected success indicator of 80%, so intervention through Cycle I was needed.

b. Description of Cycle I Implementation

The implementation of Cycle I was based on the results of the pre-cycle reflection. The planning stage included the preparation of a lesson plan (RPPH) with the theme 'Animals' and the sub-theme 'Land Animals', the preparation of animal flashcards, and the preparation of observation instruments. In the implementation stage, the teacher began the class with exercises and prayers, followed by core activities using flashcards. The teacher showed a picture card, said its name, and asked the children to imitate it. The children were also asked to come forward to pick a card and guess the name and sound of the animal.

Observation results in Cycle I showed positive changes. Children began to be interested in the colorful flashcard media. However, when evaluated, out of 15 children, there was still 1 child (6.67%) in the BB category, 4 children (26.67%) in the MB category, 5 children (33.33%) in the BSH category, and 5 children (33.33%) in the BSB category. The number of children who achieved learning mastery (BSH and BSB categories) was 10 children, so the percentage of classical mastery increased to 66.67%.

During the reflection phase of Cycle I, researchers and teachers analyzed that despite significant improvement (from 13.33% to 66.67%), the results still fell short of the 80% target. Some children still had difficulty focusing because the picture size was considered too small and the card game lacked variety. Therefore, it was decided to continue to Cycle II with improvements, namely increasing the size of the flashcards, using more contrasting colors, and varying the playing methods (such as quick guessing and card throwing) to stimulate competition and enthusiasm in the children.

c. Description of Cycle II Implementation

Cycle II was implemented by implementing improvements from the reflections from Cycle I. The RPPH was restructured with relevant themes and more interactive game methods. During the implementation, the teacher not only showed pictures but also related them to real life and held a group game to match animals with their food using flashcards. The teacher also provided more consistent appreciation (rewards) for children who dared to participate.

The results of Cycle II observations showed very high enthusiasm for learning. Children's concentration was maintained, and their courage in mentioning new vocabulary increased rapidly. Based on the results of the vocabulary ability test evaluation, no children were at the BB (0%) criteria. Only 2 children (13.33%) were at the MB criteria. There were 3 children (20%) who reached the BSH criteria, and the majority, namely 10 children (66.67%), had reached the BSB criteria. The total number of children who completed learning reached 13 children, so the percentage of classical completion jumped to 86.67%.

Reflections on Cycle II concluded that the 80% classical success target had been exceeded. Obstacles that emerged in Cycle I were optimally addressed through innovative

delivery methods and improvements to the physical media. Thus, the classroom action program was deemed successful and discontinued in Cycle II.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the analysis of the pre-cycle, Cycle I, and Cycle II results, the application of picture card media (flashcards) was associated with a substantial improvement in children's ability to recognize new vocabulary. Classical mastery increased from 13.33% in the pre-cycle to 66.67% in Cycle I and 86.67% in Cycle II. This pattern is consistent with the direction of previous studies cited in the introduction. Afandi et al. (2022) reported that picture word-card activities supported children's early reading development, while Hakim (2021) found that picture word cards could improve early reading skills in young children. Tifani (2022) likewise reported improvement in vocabulary recognition through word-card play, and Susiana and Riyana (2022) emphasized the role of attractive flashcard media in maintaining children's cognitive engagement. The present findings therefore strengthen the existing evidence by showing a similar improvement within a two-cycle classroom action research process in Group B of TK Permata.

In the pre-cycle stage, the low completion rate (13.33%) indicates that the existing learning approach did not provide sufficient visual and interactive support for children who were still developing concrete representations of new words. The improvement to 66.67% in Cycle I suggests that introducing flashcards increased opportunities for children to see, hear, repeat, and associate words with concrete images. However, because the 80% success criterion was not reached, the Cycle I result should not be interpreted as sufficient evidence on its own. The reflection showed that the size of the cards and the limited variety of games affected attention and participation, so the action was revised rather than simply repeated.

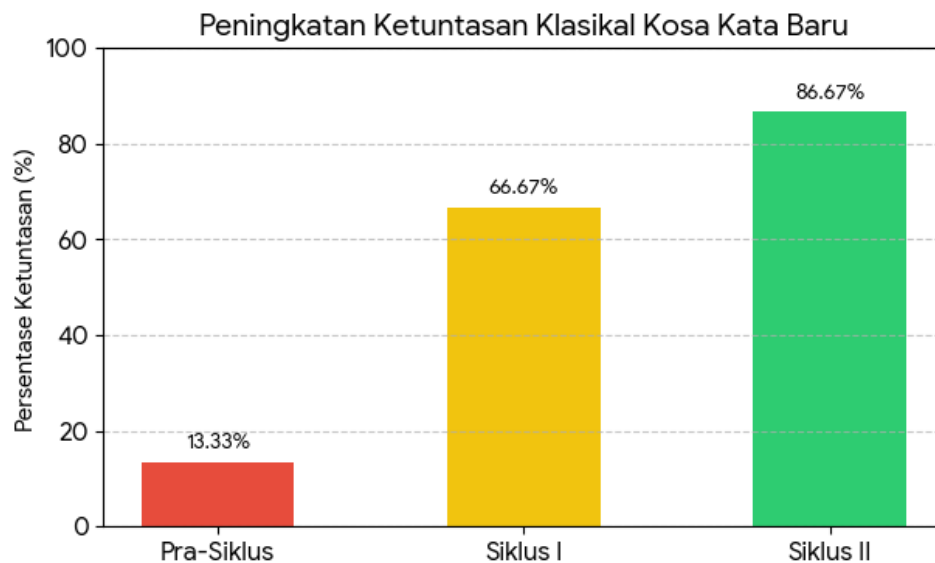
The increase to 86.67% in Cycle II provides stronger practical evidence for the effectiveness of the revised flashcard strategy in this classroom. The improvement coincided with larger and more contrasting cards, varied guessing and matching games, stronger links between pictures and children's everyday experiences, and more consistent appreciation for participation. This result is compatible with Afandi et al. (2022) and Tifani (2022), who also reported positive effects of card-based activities on early language or literacy development. It also supports Susiana and Riyana's (2022) emphasis on engaging visual design. Nevertheless, the present study cannot separate the effect of flashcards from the other changes introduced in Cycle II; therefore, the improvement should be interpreted as the effect of the overall revised learning intervention rather than as an isolated media effect.

To see more clearly the comparison and progress of classical completion in each cycle, please see Table 1 and Graph 1 below:

Table 1. Recapitulation of Classical Completion of Recognizing New Vocabulary

Stage / Cycle	Number of Children Completed (≥ 75)	Number of Children Not Yet Completed	Percentage of Completion
Pre-Cycle	2 Children	13 Children	13,33%
Cycle I	10 Children	5 Children	66,67%
Cycle II	13 Children	2 Children	86,67%

Graph 1. Increase in Classical Completion of Children's New Vocabulary



The table and graph show a clear upward pattern from 13.33% to 66.67% and finally 86.67%. The pattern supports the classroom action hypothesis, but the interpretation should remain contextual. The study involved one Group B class with 15 children and used a classroom action research design without a comparison group. Consequently, the findings demonstrate improvement within the observed classroom rather than establishing that flashcards would produce the same magnitude of improvement in other schools or populations. The practical value of the finding is nevertheless clear: flashcards provided a concrete and interactive way to support repeated exposure to new vocabulary, while cycle-based reflection allowed the teacher to adjust the media and learning activities to children's needs.

Study limitations. This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the participants were limited to 15 children in one Group B classroom at TK Permata, so the findings have limited generalizability. Second, the research used classroom action research with two cycles and no comparison group; therefore, the observed improvement cannot be attributed exclusively to flashcards because teacher guidance, game variation, repeated practice, and other Cycle II improvements were implemented together. Third, the study assessed immediate classroom performance and did not examine whether vocabulary gains were retained over a longer period or transferred consistently to children's spontaneous communication outside the learning activities.

Recommendations for future research. Future studies should involve more than one class or school and, where feasible, compare flashcard-based learning with another instructional approach. Researchers could also extend the observation period to examine vocabulary retention and children's use of newly learned words in spontaneous communication. In addition, future research could compare physical flashcards with digital or interactive flashcards while keeping the learning objectives and assessment indicators consistent. Such designs would help clarify which features of flashcard-based learning contribute most strongly to vocabulary development.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of Classroom Action Research (CAR) conducted in Group B at Permata Kindergarten, it can be concluded that the use of flashcards significantly improves children's ability to recognize and master new vocabulary. This success is demonstrated by the increase in the percentage of learning completion in each class stage.

In the pre-cycle stage, learning completion only reached 13.33%. After implementing flashcard-based learning in cycle I, completion increased to 66.67%. Furthermore, with improvements in the approach and game variations in cycle II, the classical completion percentage reached 86.67%. This achievement in cycle II exceeded the research success indicator set at 80%.

The use of flashcards also made the learning process more interactive and child-centered, but the findings should be understood within the context of this classroom action research. The intervention was effective in helping the observed children reach the 80% classical criterion, yet the study does not establish long-term retention or generalizability beyond the 15 children involved. Teachers are therefore encouraged to use concrete and varied visual media such as flashcards as part of interactive vocabulary instruction, while adapting card size, visual contrast, and game variation to children's needs. Future researchers are recommended to examine larger samples, longer-term retention, spontaneous vocabulary use, and comparisons between physical and digital flashcards.

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