CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Children in their development period can mostly be seen from how the environment around them works because the development of elementary school children is often referred to as cognitive development stage, where they see and analyse the environment around them, feeling emotions, follow instructions, complete tasks, and provide reasoning according to the context given.

In terms of learning, children always use their cognitive intelligence to see first and then process what they saw with a natural awareness that their visualization still has no meaning, then naturally they would ask and find out what they just saw to the teacher or parent who then taught them something new, in this case, their little brain start to elaborate various visualizations from the environment or short interaction with the people around them so that if they reencounter the same situation they can easily grasp the meaning of what is happening there, unlike the first time, they already find the answer for the question they asked or it can be called the experience of remembering and repeating situations where eventually they face in their growth and development process.

Visual delivery of learning has been widely used in language teaching, especially in second languages where children tend to be more active, flexible and easy to focus. Learning a second language at an early age is one form of children's intelligence because they tend to focus on using the language alternately according to their needs, in this case, learning English for children whose mother tongue is Indonesian usually have a wide social reach because they tend to have an independence on building conversation and keep it on going with anyone they have the conversation with, therefore, they have a better social skills than those who do not learn a second language, besides that the age of elementary school children is still included in the crucial age of learning a new language where their brains is easier and faster to capture a new language with more appropriate pronunciation and use when compared to adults.

The use of picture cards or flashcards in the learning process is one form of efficient visual learning to do. The tools used are only small cards containing pictures and words that describe the picture, and because it is efficient and easy to use, the teaching methods that must be adjusted according to age are a challenge for teachers who want to use flashcards as a medium for increasing vocabulary. The use of flashcards is considered very suitable for elementary school age learning, not only does it have a variety of pictures, flashcards also very colourful to look at and naturally attract students' interest in learning new vocabulary, because basically learning through images is a type of learning that is suitable for the elementary school age category when compared to too much text as is done in high schools. In addition, there are also more diverse learning method to use with flashcards, such as learning in large groups, small groups, or individually, flashcards can be used as instructions to describe the images seen on the card by then forming new sentences that help students improve their vocabulary over time.

Several previous studies have recorded that learning using flashcards as contextual learning can influence the development of students' vocabulary, as stated by Kurnia & Kumalasari (2024) "The use of contextual learning models helps students understand new vocabulary in English". For example, in this case it is explained that Elementary school student learning process is always carried out with objects around the learning environment, both at home and at school, and also what is depicted in the flashcard can represent well the usefulness and concept of the images themselves in real terms in the real world and certainly is not based on mere imagination from an interesting picture card.

This study is conducted by the writer in the form of an approach with students as the target of vocabulary learning with flashcards where the writer provided a pre-test and post-test as dependent variable which aims to measure students' abilities in knowledge of English vocabulary as their second language, this study also aims to determine how effective visual learning with flashcards as independent variable that is studied among elementary school age where learning is more focused on paying attention to their surroundings and surely not forgetting that they are still children who like to play around.

This study hypothesizes that by conducting interactive learning, the use of flashcards for elementary school students can be considered effective where, the writer believes that with repeated interactions and recall activities carried out by students tend to show how effective visual learning is using flashcards. In addition, assuming that the age of

learners is relatively young to start learning a second language, the writer believes that their cognitive development is better for remembering and repeating what has been learned which can then be used in their daily lives as a form of communication that has a wider reach. Based on the factors above, the writer has concluded that the results of the post-test after the pre-test and treatment is higher which indicates the effectiveness of using flashcards to acquire new vocabulary.

Language is something that we use every day to communicate, with this stated that the urgency of the research the writer conducted is to know the most effective method in acquiring new vocabulary, especially for elementary school children with their ability to capture information which is fairly fast assuredly is having a big impact on how other learning abilities to follow, such as writing, speaking, reading, listening and managing information which is needed as a skill in socializing as a human being.

Based on what have been stated above, the writer conducted this study at Elementary School level with a sample of 30 students in level sixth class at SD INPRES Kantisang Makassar with sample criteria, the population, and place where the study took place were in accordance with the writer needs to conduct a study on vocabulary acquisition using flashcards.

This study was conducted at SD INPRES Kantisang because this elementary school provides openness to conduct research with the availability of samples that are in accordance with what is needed for the smooth running of this research. This school also has a consistent curriculum and classroom environment in the sense that all students receive the same treatment in language learning which can make it easier to see whether the results of this study can be stated as effective or not.

The results of this study are expected to be a reference material for vocabulary teaching at the elementary school level, with the hope that it can be a comparative study with vocabulary context studies at other levels of education in Indonesia.

B. Identification of Problem

1. Students struggle to recall and use vocabulary in practical contexts.
2. The lack of engagement in providing English material with interactive learning as a second language at SD INPRES Kantisang.

C. Scope of the Problem

1. This research investigated the effectiveness of flashcards as a tool for enhancing vocabulary acquisition among elementary school students.
2. This study is exclusively focused on the use of flashcards as an interactive and fun learning medium for elementary school children.

D. Research Question

1. How effective are flashcards in improving vocabulary acquisition among elementary school students?
2. What factors are influencing student' ability in learning vocabulary?

E. Objective of the Study

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of flashcards in improving vocabulary acquisition among elementary school students.
2. To reveal the factors influencing student' vocabulary acquisition.

F. Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is expected to deliver new knowledge and insight to readers both as a theory and practical method in teaching English vocabulary.

1. **Theoretically**
   a. This research can be useful for teachers of elementary school to find out the diversity of vocabulary teaching methods, one of which is through flashcards.
   b. The writer hopes that the results of this research can encourage teachers to innovate with the tools used in second language teaching that are appropriate to the age category of each student.

2. **Practically**
   a. Many previous studies have examined the use of flashcards specifically for children with learning disabilities. The writer wants every child to have the opportunity to experience various learning methods from all the tools that have been developed to support second language learning without exception.
   b. With the renewal of teaching methods and tools, the writer hopes that many teachers would be able to develop learning methods that suit the needs of each student.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Previous Studies

This chapter contains theories obtained by the writer from reading media articles, books and also theses that discuss the use and learning using flashcards in the process of learning a second language. These theories are used as a reference by the writer to write this research. There are a number of previous studies that the writers found indicating that the kind of the learning tools especially flashcards in the classroom that have a major effect on the quality development of the students, one of which is speaking and memorizing ability.

The first one stated about how efficient flashcards in all form as stated by Yowaboot (2022) "Flashcards are a set of double-sided cards designed for direct vocabulary learning that allows learners to practice recalling the form and meaning links in repeated retrieval of L2 words by flipping the front and back sides of the cards." With the efficiency of flashcards, users will be immediately attracted, especially elementary school children who enjoy seeing brightly colored images. This will motivate them to learn more vocabulary.

Secondly, as stated by Naderi & Moafian (2023) (as cited in Coyne et al., 2009). "As learners become involved with activities that pique their interests and engage them in reflecting on words, they will gain a deeper understanding of the target words, which will lead to better retention and easier recall". And also, by Naderi & Moafian (2023) (as cited in Uberman, 1998). "This way of teaching also makes it easier for teachers to create meaningful, appealing, and stress-free environments for learning." It is written in their reseach that learning with flashcards is considered more effective than learning using technology. This explains that the activeness of the teacher is one of the factors in the effectiveness of vocabulary learning using flashcards.

The third, "Since young learner students have a short concentration span, the media that can be recommended are songs, videos, pictures, and cards. Commonly, teachers become familiar with cards known as flashcards in teaching vocabulary. It contains words, pictures, pronunciations, etc." as stated by Rachmadi et al., (2023). This study shows that students appear to be happier with learning using flashcard media, this is considered effective by researchers because it shows very significant results.

The fourth, "Intentional vocabulary learning for L2 learners might be undertaken in different ways. Besides using available resources such as dictionaries and course books in the classroom, a range of approaches including using flashcards, learning from word lists, writing tasks, serious games, and fill-in-the-blanks activities contribute significantly to vocabulary learning." Xodabande et al., (2022) (as cited in Webb et al., 2020; Li and Hafner, 2022; Soyoof et al., 2022). There is also learning through the technology presented here, which concludes that with the different motivations and challenges that each participant has, the data collection process shows improved results.

The fifth is stated by Pramadanti (2023) that, "To improve students' vocabulary mastery and learning motivation, several issues that arise in the classroom should be addressed. Instructors must choose the finest English teaching strategy to get the most significant outcomes. Based on the issues identified, the writer hopes to offer a valuable tool to assist instructors in strengthening their command of language. Flashcards are a great technique to help kids who struggle with word memorization."

Thus, the writer indicates that this research is useful to continue with the main problem where the role of the teacher using flashcards as tools in the learning process can greatly influence students' motivation to learn languages and improve their vocabulary acquisition.

B. Theoritical Discussion

1) Flashcards

Flashcards are sheets of cards containing pictures and words in a particular language that are usually used as a visual learning tool for early childhood. Because of the efficiency of this tools, flashcards are often used as a learning method to learn many new vocabularies for early childhood which is very suitable for them because they are just starting to recognize objects around them and flashcards can easily represent what they see in a form of learning that is no less interesting.

"…flashcards work so well for vocabulary because vocabulary words are short bits of information, and they can be totally randomized. When you listen and speak the language in real life, you'll be getting streams of random words, So, in one sense, the flashcard practice is very similar to the actual skill." As stated by Daulay (2016).

The use of flashcards is also free to follow the teacher's pursuit style, which is one of the reasons why flashcards are a unique tool that is unlimited, with this efficient function flashcards can be used in the form of groups, quizzes, personal and even games, making its use very helpful for children to acquire new vocabulary in a fun way.

2) Vocabulary

"The term vocabulary can be defined as the collection of words, phrases, and expressions that a language comprises and that enable effective communication" as stated by Benziane, (2023) as it known vocabulary is the initial form of a sentence that can then be formed into a conversation if done by two or more people, in teaching and learning activities to enchance vocabulary, a person must have the ability to capture and also have a strong memory, in this case, initially early childhood is the main target in learning a vocabulary because as is known they have the ability like a sponge that absorbs what they heard, saw, or touch, in their

surroundings because in reality they have not knew all the existing vocabulary before being taught to.

The learning about vocabulary is done instinctively because humans will continue to socialize with one another which is also clear that every social conversation is something that is difficult to avoid. Therefore, the formation of the best child's vocabulary acquisition actually comes from the environment where the child develops and grow.

"Since beginning-level students do not have the competence to engage in conversations and understand what is heard or read in the target language, the instructor's job is to help students' vocabulary knowledge grow to the level where they can understand TV, radio and general reading texts." Feng (2020).

As stated above the writer strongly agreed that supervision of a child's growth and development must always be monitored by their teachers and parents, because in reality their brains still have a lot of capacity to be filled with knowledge and they are naturally the most critical thinkers of how the world works around them, considering that they have little experience compared to their educators.

3) Memorizing Vocabularies

Recalling and memorizing are very related in learning a new language, both are forms of foundation for mastering a language by continuously repeating and remembering a word, this method is certainly different in its application to each language learner. The method of recalling with context make it easier for someone to know what they want to convey. therefore, the ability to remember a word with its context or visual with an understanding that can be understood by a student himself is very beneficial for second language learners.

"The purpose of memorizing learning is to strengthen the brain's ability to be more efficient in learning. With memorizing, the brain will always work and it will make the brain work automatically in uncovering

every problem that often occurs in our daily lives." Rumbouw (2021).

As stated above, remembering is training the human brain by actively helping the brain to continue thinking and working which automatically become something familiar and unconsciously learner tends to have better abilities than before because the brain work is to configure and use new words that have been recorded previously in the continuation of future conversations using a second language.

4) Learning English as a Second Language

Learning a second language is not easy but it is not impossible either. Usually, the introduction of a second language to a child comes from their surroundings, such as parents who master more than one language, television shows, or even books that are read every day. With the curiosity about the diversity of languages, a child is undeniably very curious about their surroundings, if intentionally or unintentionally they are introduced to their second language, it is very likely that they learn the language as a form of cognitive development in terms of communicating, expressing themselves and also understanding their surroundings.

As stated by Suliman et al., (2024) "Curiosity is the intrinsic motivation that directs behavior of the individuals toward fulfilling their targets. Hence, teaching and learning English as an L2 can be fruitful if the learning environment is dynamic and interesting." Children who are facilitated with an environment that learns the language comprehensively have better cognitive development where they have higher self-confidence, good communication levels, and more controlled emotional feelings. Having the advantage of being able to learn a second language is certainly a very good opportunity where they have wider and more diverse socializing abilities.

5) Extrinsic Motivation

Creating an exciting learning atmosphere in the classroom is not an easy thing, in this case the teacher's unique ideas for learning methods determine the students' interest in the class, the teacher's attention of several external factors also have a big influence, the students would feel safe and comfortable if their external factors can be met, this can be friends, parents or even their own teachers, having good emotional support can help students focus more on their lessons in the classroom. As stated by Chowdury et al., (2024) (as cited in Vygotsky, 1978). "Learning is inextricable from context and is the result of interactions between learners and features of their environments, such as other learners, tools, resources, language, and social structures".

Several other motivations can be increased with interesting learning methods created and tools that is used by the teachers, therefore acting as a teacher who is cheerful and can make the environment comfortable as a place to study is one of the job descriptions that must be fulfilled, having a supporting tools is one of the example, they can use their environment to help gain knowledge as well as having unique tools and methods such as computer, flashcards, game session, quizzes and many more.

6) Teachers-Students Interaction

The interaction of teachers and students in the classroom must be paid with attention, because everything that happens in the classroom must always be under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher acts as a supervisor as well as a friend providing social aspects where the interactions that are formed in their daily life that become their identity as social beings, the teacher teaches while students receive learning according to their nature.

Teachers who provide a lot of moral values in learning are one example of a good teacher as written in the research owned by Taylor et al., (2023) "Observable teacher-child interactions focused on cognitive facilitation can include integrating concepts, making real-world

connections, asking children to explain their thinking, asking open-ended questions, and introducing advanced vocabulary." Thus, some examples of this interaction can be a provision for students in the future besides that as a form of self-development by prioritizing students' willingness to have the courage to speak out about their ideas and also as a means of adding insight such as the function of a school in essence.