

# Handmade Flashcards for Developing English Comprehension of Rural EFL Young Learners

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## ABSTRACT

*This research investigates the effectiveness of handmade flashcards as a teaching tool to improve English comprehension among rural EFL young learners. It aims at enhancing vocabulary retention and overall language comprehension by providing a hands-on, visually appealing learning experience. The research also addresses the lack of resources and engagement in rural EFL classrooms, bridging the gap through innovative approaches. It has implications for EFL teaching practices in rural settings, highlighting handmade flashcards as practical and accessible resources to address resource limitations. The qualitative method as research design involves data collection, classroom observations, and interviews. The sample comprises rural EFL young learners aged 12-13 from diverse backgrounds, ensuring representation of various factors affecting English comprehension. The research findings show that handmade flashcards had positive impact on the students. They exhibited increasing engagement, vocabulary retention, and better understanding of sentence structures and context. Peer interactions, fostering collaboration, and communication skills are also encouraged. These ideas can facilitate vocabulary acquisition, active learning, and language development among young learners. Further exploration and implementation of such innovative materials to support effective EFL instruction in developing English comprehension of rural areas should be conducted, ultimately for empowering both teachers and Young Learners.*

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## 1. Introduction

The teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) to young learners in rural areas poses unique challenges. Limitation access to resources, lacking of exposure to English outside the classroom, and potential language barriers can hinder their English language development. However, researches have shown that early childhood is a crucial period for language acquisition and comprehension skills. Therefore, it becomes imperative to explore effective strategies and materials that specifically cater to the needs of rural EFL young learners.

In recent years, handmade flashcards have gained attention as a practical and affordable tool for enhancing language learning among young learners. Handmade flashcards are visually appealing cards with vocabulary words or pictures on one side and corresponding translations

or descriptions on the other side. They serve as a multisensory resource that engages children actively during the learning process. Studies by Smith and Johnson (2019) have highlighted how innovative approaches like handmade flashcards can address some of the challenges faced in rural EFL classrooms by providing accessible visual aids that facilitate vocabulary retention and comprehension development. Additionally, Brown and Lee (2020) emphasized the importance of early childhood English language learning for long-term linguistic proficiency.

This research is to examine the effectiveness of using handmade flashcards as a teaching tool for improving English comprehension among rural EFL young learners. By implementing handmade flashcards in the classroom, it is aimed at investigating the impact on vocabulary retention and overall language comprehension skills. The study also explores how these visually appealing and interactive materials can enhance the learning experience for rural EFL young learners by providing them with a hands-on approach to language acquisition. The findings of the research are expected to contribute valuable insights into the practicality and efficacy of handmade flashcards as a resource for enhancing English comprehension skills in rural settings.

Furthermore, the research also seeks to identify any challenges or limitations that may arise when implementing handmade flashcards in rural EFL classrooms. By understanding potential barriers such as limited resources or cultural considerations, recommendations for optimizing the use of these materials within specific educational contexts can be provided. Additionally, exploring the perspectives and feedback from teachers and young learners regarding their experiences with handmade flashcards can offer valuable insights into its usability and effectiveness.

Despite the importance of English language learning for young learners in rural areas, there is a significant gap in effective teaching strategies and accessible resources to enhance their English comprehension skills. The limited availability of materials and resources specific to the context of rural EFL classrooms hinders the progress of these young learners. Traditional methods often fail to engage them actively, leading to lower levels of comprehension and motivation. Therefore, there is a pressing need to explore innovative approaches that address these challenges and provide practical solutions.

Handmade flashcards have shown promise in enhancing vocabulary retention and facilitating language acquisition through visual stimuli (Smith & Johnson, 2019). However, their potential impact on improving overall English comprehension skills needs further exploration within the specific context of rural EFL education. By examining how handmade flashcards can be utilized effectively in this setting, valuable insights into pedagogical practices can contribute. Those practices can specifically cater the needs and constraints faced by educators working with rural EFL young learners.

### **Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Rural Areas**

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in rural areas presents unique challenges due to the limited access to resources and potential language barriers. In these settings, educators often face constraints such as insufficient or minimal infrastructures, trained teachers, and exposure to the target language outside the classroom. Smith and Johnson (2019), highlighted that these challenges can significantly impact the quality of EFL instruction and hinder young learners' language acquisition progress. However, despite these obstacles, researches have shown that effective EFL programs in rural areas can contribute to the improvement of educational outcomes for young learners by fostering linguistic skills and promoting cultural exchange.

To address the specific needs of rural EFL learners, innovative approaches are being explored. One potential solution is leveraging technology for remote learning opportunities. With advancements in digital tools and online platforms, educators can now reach young

learners in remote areas through virtual classrooms or mobile applications tailored to their context. Community engagement also plays a crucial role in enhancing EFL learning experiences. By involving local communities in curriculum design or organizing extracurricular activities focusing on English communication skills development, young learners have more opportunities for authentic language practice beyond traditional classroom settings (Brown & Lee 2020). These strategies not only bridge the gap between formal education systems and real-life contexts but also empower learners with practical language skills applicable to their daily lives.

### **The Importance of Developing English Comprehension Skills in Early Childhood**

Developing English comprehension in early childhood is of outmost importance for several reasons. Firstly, research has consistently shown that children have a remarkable capacity for language acquisition during their formative years (Brown & Lee, 2020). By focusing on comprehension skills at an early stage, young learners can establish a strong foundation for future language development. A solid grasp of English comprehension enables children to understand spoken and written texts effectively, enhancing their overall communication abilities.

Furthermore, proficiency in English comprehension plays a vital role in academic success. As children progress through their education journey, they encounter various subjects taught in the medium of English. Without adequate comprehension skills, understanding complex instructions or comprehending subject-specific content becomes challenging (Mendez-Vargas et al., 2018). Developing these skills from an early age equips young learners with the tools necessary to navigate academic tasks more efficiently.

### **Role of Flashcards in English Comprehension Learning**

Flashcards play a significant role in enhancing English comprehension skills among young learners. They provide visual stimuli that aid in memory retention and association with vocabulary words or concepts. By engaging both visual and linguistic modalities, flashcards create a multisensory learning experience that promotes active participation and deep understanding (Anderson & Jordan, 2018). The use of flashcards helps to establish connections between words and their meanings, allowing young learners to grasp the contextual usage of language more effectively.

Research by Thompson et al. (2020) has shown that flashcard-based activities improve reading comprehension abilities by reinforcing word recognition and expanding vocabulary knowledge. Flashcards also enable repetitive exposure to target language items, which is crucial for building automaticity in word recognition (Alderson & Scott, 2017). Furthermore, interactive games or exercises incorporating flashcards can enhance engagement levels during classroom instruction while fostering collaborative learning environments (Thomas & Thomas, 2019). These findings emphasize the importance of integrating well-designed flashcard materials as part of EFL curriculum planning to support young learners' English comprehension development.

## **2. Method**

### *Research Design*

To investigate the effectiveness of handmade flashcards, a qualitative method research design was employed. This approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the impact of handmade flashcards on young learners' language learning outcomes. Classroom observations and interviews with the them were be conducted to measure the changes in their English comprehension skills before and after implementing handmade flashcards as a teaching tool.

The sample consisted of young learners aged 12-13 years from selected schools in Porong Sidoarjo. A purposive sampling technique was used to ensure that participants had similar characteristics such as limited exposure to English outside the classroom. The final sample size was estimated to include approximately 7 young learners from different schools within the target region. By selecting participants from various schools, geographical locations, socioeconomic backgrounds, and proficiency levels, the researcher can obtain diverse perspectives on the use of handmade flashcards.

### *Characteristics of Rural EFL Young Learners*

Rural EFL young learners exhibit distinctive characteristics that influence their language learning experiences. Firstly, learners often come from communities with limited exposure to English outside the classroom (Smith & Johnson, 2019). The lack of English-speaking environments can result in reduced opportunities for authentic language practice and hinder the development of listening and speaking skills. Additionally, rural areas may face resource constraints, including a shortage of qualified English teachers and limited access to modern technology (Johnson et al., 2020). These factors contribute to the unique challenges faced by rural EFL young learners in acquiring proficiency in English.

Moreover, cultural diversity within rural communities can impact language acquisition. Many rural areas have rich linguistic diversity with various local dialects or indigenous languages spoken alongside the national language (Brown & Lee, 2020). This multilingual environment may present both advantages and challenges for EFL instruction. On one hand, it allows young learners to draw upon their existing linguistic knowledge as they navigate new concepts in English. On the other hand, it requires educators to employ strategies that acknowledge and leverage this linguistic diversity while fostering an inclusive learning environment.

### **Sample Size and Profile of Participants Involved in the Research**

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants from rural areas with limited access to English language resources. The sample consisted of 7 EFL young learners aged between 12 and 13 years old from three different schools in rural regions. The selection criteria included young learners who had minimal exposure to English outside the classroom and they came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. This approach was to capture a representative sample that reflected the challenges faced by rural EFL learners.

The participants' demographic information showed an equal distribution across gender. They were 5 boys and 2 girls within each school. Their English proficiency levels varied, ranging from beginner to intermediate levels based on previous assessments conducted by their respective teachers. By including young learners with different proficiency levels, a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of handmade flashcards across various learning contexts can be conducted.

### **Instruments and Learning Materials**

#### *Development of Handmade Flashcards*

The development of handmade flashcards involves a creative and interactive process that caters to the specific needs and interests of rural EFL young learners. These visually appealing cards are typically made by using colorful paper or index cards, with vocabulary words or pictures on one side and corresponding translations or descriptions on the other side. The selection of vocabulary words should be based on age-appropriate content and aligned with the curriculum objectives. Furthermore, incorporating engaging visuals such as illustrations or real-life photographs can enhance comprehension and make learning more enjoyable for young learners (Smith & Johnson, 2019). Teachers can involve young learners in the creation process by encouraging them to contribute ideas or even design their own flashcards, fostering a sense of ownership and active participation in the learning experience.

Near ensure effective implementation, it is important for teachers to provide clear instructions on how to use these handmade flashcards during classroom activities. They can introduce new vocabulary by showing each card while pronouncing the word aloud, followed by group discussions or games involving matching activities (Brown & Lee, 2020). Teachers can incorporate multisensory techniques like gestures or actions related to the word depicted on the card to reinforce understanding (Smith & Johnson, 2019). By utilizing these homemade teaching aids creatively within interactive lessons tailored specifically for rural EFL young learners' needs, educators can foster language acquisition and comprehension skills effectively. Instruments used classroom observation checklist including observation objectives, indicators, and important notes. Interview question guide covered the motivation for using flashcards, effectiveness, and young learners' learning experiences.

## **Data Collection Procedure**

Intended for effective implementation of handmade flashcards in the classroom, a systematic approach is crucial. Firstly, teachers should carefully select relevant vocabulary words or phrases based on the curriculum or language proficiency goals of their young learners. These words can be categorized by themes or topics to enhance comprehension and to make learning more engaging (Johnson & Smith, 2020). Once selected, teachers can create visually appealing flashcards using colorful illustrations or real-life images that resonate with young learners (Brown & Lee, 2019). The use of visuals helps facilitate understanding and retention of new vocabulary.

Furthermore, incorporating interactive activities during flashcard sessions promotes active participation among young learners. Teachers can encourage them to engage in word-picture matching exercises or group discussions related to the presented vocabulary (Smith et al., 2018). By involving young learners actively in these activities, they develop not only their comprehension skills but also speaking and listening abilities. Additionally, regular review sessions are essential to reinforce previously learned vocabulary and ensure long-term retention (Lee & Johnsons, 2021).

Preparation of the classroom observation instrument is a checklist that includes the observation objectives, indicators, and important notes to be observed during the observation. Prepare relevant interview questions related to the research objectives, such as the use of flashcards, effectiveness, and young learners learning experiences. Take note of how teachers use flashcards in teaching, whether young learners actively engage in flashcard activities, and whether flashcards help improve their English comprehension. Observation should record interactions between teachers and young learners, as well as their responses to the use of flashcards. Interviews, ask questions to teachers regarding the motivation and purpose of using handmade flashcards in English language learning. Interview young learners to gather their perspectives on the use of flashcards, learning experiences, and whether they feel that flashcards help them better understand English. Record teachers' and Young Learners' responses in detail and take note of relevant answers related to the research objectives.

## **Data Analysis**

Transcribe the interviews and organize data from classroom observations. Read and analyze the data as a whole to identify patterns, themes, and trends in the use of handmade flashcards and their impact on young learners' English comprehension. Connect the findings with supporting theories on the use of flashcards in English language learning and interpret the results qualitatively.

This qualitative method allows researchers to gain in-depth insights into the use of handmade flashcards in enhancing the English comprehension of EFL Young Learners in rural areas. However, it is important to note that the findings are descriptive and cannot be widely

generalized. Therefore, it is crucial to interpret the results carefully and consider the specific context of this research.

### **3. Result and Discussion**

#### *A. Description of Observational Results from Handmade Flashcards Implementation*

The implementation of handmade flashcards in the classroom yielded promising results in enhancing English comprehension among rural EFL young learners. Through careful observation and data collection, it was observed that young learners exhibited increasing engagement and active participation during vocabulary learning activities. The visual appeal and interactive nature of handmade flashcards captured their attention and stimulated their curiosity, making the learning process more enjoyable (Smith & Johnson, 2019). Furthermore, young learners demonstrated improved retention of vocabulary words as they were able to associate the pictures or visuals on the flashcards with their corresponding meanings or descriptions (Brown & Lee, 2020).

Moreover, qualitative analysis revealed that handmade flashcards facilitated better understanding of sentence structures and context. As young learners interacted with these tangible resources during group discussions or individual exercises, they gained a deeper grasp of grammar patterns and language usage. The hands-on nature of manipulating physical cards allowed for kinesthetic learning experiences that supported cognitive development (Smith & Johnson, 2019). Additionally, peer interactions while using handmade flashcards encouraged collaboration and communication skills amongst young learners.

#### *Data Analysis on Young Learners' English Comprehension Skills after Using Handmade Flashcards*

Headed the effectiveness of handmade flashcards in enhancing English comprehension skills among young learners, a comprehensive data analysis was conducted. These results are consistent with previous research by Johnson et al. (2018), which demonstrated that visual aids like handmade flashcards can enhance language acquisition and retention among young learners.

After analyzing data, the researcher found not only main findings that are English comprehensions dealing reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and speaking comprehension, but also other English proficiencies of EFL young learners, namely vocabulary, grammar, tenses, pronunciation, and writing skill. They are described at Table 1 below.

Moreover, a study by Lee and Smith (2020) highlighted how regular exposure to visually stimulating materials positively impacts young learners' motivation, engagement, and overall language development. These findings further support the notion that incorporating handmade flashcards into EFL classrooms can effectively improve English comprehension abilities among rural young learners.

**Table 1. Differences in ability in English before and after using the flashcard method**

No.	Aspect of English Language Proficiency	Before Using Flashcard Method	After Using Flashcard Method
1	Grammar	Often Inaccurate	More Accurate and Structured
3	Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension	Superficial	Deeper and Comprehensive
4	Listening Comprehension	Limited and Distracted	More Focused and Improved
5	Tenses	Inconsistent	More Consistent and Skilled
6	Pronunciation	Inaccurate	More Accurate and Fluent
7	Speaking comprehension	Hindered and Not Fluent	More Fluent and Confident
8	Writing Skills	Disorganized and Untidy	More Organized and Neat

The table shows that vocabulary before using the flashcard method, the young learners had limited vocabulary.

However (diganti), after implementing the flashcard method, their vocabulary improved significantly. Grammar, prior to using flashcards, the young learners often made inaccuracies in their grammar usage. Nevertheless, after incorporating flashcards into their learning process, their grammar became more accurate and structured. Reading comprehension, initially, the young learners had a superficial understanding of the texts they read. However, after utilizing flashcards, their reading comprehension deepened, allowing them to grasp the content more comprehensively.

Listening comprehension, the young learners' listening comprehension was limited and easily distracted before using flashcards. However, after adopting the flashcard method, they became more focused and their listening skills improved.

Tenses, the young learners' usage of tenses was inconsistent at the beginning. However, after practicing with flashcards, their understanding and application of tenses became more consistent and skilled.

Pronunciation, prior to using flashcards, the young learners had difficulties with accurate pronunciation. After all, incorporating flashcards, their pronunciation became more precise and fluent.

Speaking ability, the young learners' speaking ability was hindered, and they lacked fluency initially. Though, after incorporating flashcards into their learning, their speaking skills became more fluent and they gained confidence.

Writing skills, the writing skills were disorganized and untidy before using flashcards. Another, after implementing the flashcard method, their writing became more organized and neater. Those finding highlight the improvements observed in various aspects of the young learners' English language proficiency after incorporating the flashcard method into their learning process.

Using handmade flashcards in language learning has been found to offer numerous benefits for enhancing English comprehension abilities among young learners. Firstly, the visual nature of handmade flashcards aids in facilitating vocabulary acquisition and retention. According to a study by Johnson et al. (2018), visual stimuli help learners associate words with corresponding images, making it easier to grasp and remember new vocabulary. The

colorful and engaging visuals on handmade flashcards capture the attention of young learners, stimulating their curiosity and motivation to learn.

Secondly, the interactive nature of using handmade flashcards promotes active engagement during language lessons. As highlighted by Thompson et al. (2020), interaction plays a crucial role in language development as it encourages meaningful communication and increases learner participation. Handmade flashcards allow educators to incorporate various interactive activities such as matching games or group discussions that encourage young learners' speaking skills while reinforcing their comprehension abilities (Teacher gak pakek 's;)

### *Challenges and Constraints that may arise when implementing Handmade Flashcards in Rural Areas*

Implementing handmade flashcards in rural areas for English language learning can bring about certain challenges and constraints. Firstly, limited access to resources and materials can pose a significant challenge. Rural areas often have restricted availability of educational supplies, including art materials required for creating visually appealing flashcards. This limitation hinders teacher ability to produce high-quality handcrafted cards or restrict the variety of vocabulary words that can be covered. Additionally, the lack of technological infrastructure in some rural schools may limit opportunities for printing or reproducing digital images onto flashcards (Smith & Johnson, 2019).

Secondly, another constraint is related to cultural relevance and contextual appropriateness. The content depicted on the handmade flashcards needs to align with the local context and resonate with the cultural backgrounds of learners in rural settings. Failure to incorporate culturally relevant images or vocabulary might lead to reduced engagement among young learners as they struggle to connect with unfamiliar concepts presented on the cards (Brown & Lee, 2020). It is crucial for educators to consider local customs, traditions, and everyday experiences while designing handmade flashcards so that learners find them relatable.

### *Recommendations for Further Development of EFL Learning using Handmade Flashcards*

Towards further enhance EFL learning using handmade flashcards, several recommendations can be considered. Firstly, incorporating interactive activities and games into flashcard-based lessons can increase engagement and motivation among young learners. For example, educators can design matching or sorting games where young learners have to associate words or pictures on the flashcards with corresponding categories. This approach not only reinforces vocabulary retention but also promotes critical thinking skills (Jones & Smith, 2021). Additionally, providing opportunities for peer collaboration through group discussions or role-playing activities using the flashcards allows young learners to practice language skills in a communicative context (Brown & Wilson, 2018).

Furthermore, continuous professional development programs should be offered to teachers working in rural EFL settings to enhance their pedagogical knowledge and creativity in utilizing handmade flashcards effectively. Workshops and training sessions could focus on techniques such as adapting flashcard materials to different proficiency levels or integrating them with other teaching resources like songs or stories (Davis et al., 2020). By equipping educators with new strategies and approaches tailored for rural contexts, they are better prepared to meet the specific needs of their young learners.

## **4. Conclusion**

The researcher summarizes the key findings of the research, highlighting the effectiveness of handmade flashcards in improving English comprehension among rural EFL young learners. Discuss any significant improvements observed in vocabulary retention,



language comprehension skills, and overall engagement during classroom activities. implications and relevance to EFL teaching practices in rural settings (are can be ..)....., emphasize how handmade flashcards can serve as a practical and accessible resource that addresses limitations faced by educators in these contexts.

Highlight their potential to enhance vocabulary acquisition, foster active learning experiences, and promote language development among young learners with limited resources. (kalimat perintah)

Encourage further exploration and implementation of innovative teaching materials like handmade flashcards to support effective EFL instruction in rural areas, by incorporating handmade flashcards into EFL classrooms within rural settings, educators can provide meaningful opportunities for English language development while catering to specific challenges faced by young learners. These findings contribute to our understanding of effective pedagogical strategies that empower both teachers and young learners.

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## 6. Apendixs

### Meeting 1

#### Activity

- Introduction
- Greetings Card
- My body Card
- Questions and Answers
- Repeat
- Writing

#### Documentation



### Meeting 2

- Introduction
- Vocabulary classroom objects
- Match the picture activity card
- Questions and Answers
- Repeat



### Meeting 3

- Introduction
- Compose Sentence about holidays and make them into cards
- Vocabulary Parts of the House
- Questions and Answers
- Repeat writing



### Meeting 4

- Introduction
- Vocabulary classroom objects
- Match the hobby in picture of activity by cards
- Questions and Answers Repeat
- Writing



Meeting 5

- Introductions
- Understanding of short stories about family
- Questions and Answers translation in Indonesian
- Writing stories about family
- Repeat the results of short stories about families



Meeting 6

- Introductions
- Understanding of the text about the rules at home
- Translation into Indonesian
- Repeat the results of the translation
- Writing

