Exploring the Use of Flashcards in Teaching English Vocabulary at Ban Buketamong School, Thailand

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ABSTRACT

Teaching vocabulary plays a fundamental role in English language learning, particularly in contexts where English is taught as a foreign language. Many students still experience difficulties in understanding and remembering English vocabulary due to limited exposure and low learning motivation. Therefore, teachers are required to use appropriate and engaging learning media to support vocabulary learning. Flashcards are visual learning media that can help students understand word meanings more easily and increase their participation in the classroom. This research aims to explore the use of flashcards in teaching English vocabulary at Ban Buketamong School, Narathiwat, Thailand. This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design involving one English teacher and 19 eighth grade students. The data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, and document review. To ensure data validity, source triangulation and technique triangulation were applied. The findings showed that the teacher planned flashcard based instruction by preparing lesson plans, selecting relevant vocabulary materials, designing teacher made laminated flashcards, and organizing learning activities. The implementation emphasized clear learning goals, vocabulary related to daily activities and nature, and systematic procedures including introduction, practice, and review stages. Evaluation was conducted through formative assessment during classroom interaction and summative assessment using picture based quizzes.

Key Words: Teaching English Vocabulary, Flashcard

INTRODUCTION

Teaching vocabulary is one of the essential components of English language learning and is closely connected to the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Vocabulary knowledge enables students to understand meanings, express ideas, and participate actively in language use. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, vocabulary learning is often challenging because students have limited exposure to English outside the classroom and rely heavily on instructional input from teachers (Nation, 2008). As a result, students frequently struggle to understand texts, remember new words, and use vocabulary appropriately in communication (Schmitt, 2020). Therefore, effective teaching strategies and learning media are needed to support vocabulary learning in a more meaningful and engaging way (Rahmawati & Dahlina, 2024).

One instructional medium that has been widely used in vocabulary teaching is flashcards. Flashcards present vocabulary items through visual representations that combine images and words, helping students connect form and meaning more easily (Wulandari, 2025). The use of visual media in vocabulary instruction supports memory retention and facilitates faster word recognition, especially for beginner and junior high school learners (Yowaboot & Sukying, 2022). Through repeated exposure and interaction, flashcards allow students to learn vocabulary in a simple and enjoyable manner.

In classroom practice, flashcards encourage active student participation and interaction. Teachers can use flashcards for introducing new words, drilling pronunciation, practicing word recognition, and conducting group activities. These activities help students become more confident and motivated in learning vocabulary. Moreover, the flexibility of flashcards allows teachers to adapt the materials to students' needs, learning objectives, and classroom conditions (Uthaikun, 2024).

Previous studies have shown that flashcards are effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery. Several studies report that students taught using flashcards demonstrate better vocabulary retention and higher motivation compared to those taught using conventional methods (Wulandari, 2025; Rahmawati & Dahlina, 2024). However, most of these studies focus on quantitative outcomes and provide limited explanation of how flashcards are implemented in real classroom settings, particularly in rural and multilingual contexts.

This study investigates the use of flashcards in teaching English vocabulary to eighth-grade students at Ban Buketamong School, Narathiwat, Thailand. Based on preliminary observations and interviews with the English teacher, many students experience difficulties in remembering vocabulary and show low participation during vocabulary lessons. Therefore, this research aims to explore how flashcards are planned, implemented, and evaluated in the classroom, as well as to identify their role in supporting students' vocabulary learning.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive method to explore the implementation of flashcards in teaching English vocabulary to eighth grade students at Ban Buketamong School, Thailand. This method was chosen because it allows the researcher to gain an in depth understanding of classroom phenomena without manipulating or intervening in the teaching and learning process. In this study, the researcher acted as a non participant observer to maintain the authenticity of classroom interactions and students' learning behavior.

The data were collected through three techniques: classroom observation, in depth interviews, and document review. Classroom observations were conducted over a three week period to observe the teaching process, the use of flashcards, and students' participation during vocabulary lessons. In depth interviews were conducted with the English teacher and several students to obtain detailed information regarding their perceptions, experiences, and responses to the use of flashcards in vocabulary learning. Document analysis was carried out by examining relevant teaching documents, such as lesson plans, flashcard materials, and students' vocabulary exercises, to support and strengthen the research findings.

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive model consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Through this process, the collected data were systematically organized, interpreted, and analyzed to answer the research objectives. To ensure the validity of the data, source triangulation and technique triangulation were applied. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the English teacher and the students, while technique triangulation was carried out by cross-checking data from observations, interviews, and document review. The research was conducted in structured stages, including pre field preparation, fieldwork, and data analysis, in order to comprehensively describe

the planning, implementation, and evaluation of flashcard based vocabulary instruction in real classroom settings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Result

This research was conducted to explore how the teacher planned, implemented, and evaluated the use of flashcards in teaching English vocabulary at Ban Buketamong School, Narathiwat, Thailand. The data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with the English teacher and students, and document review. These data sources were used to obtain a comprehensive description of flashcard use in real classroom practice. Based on the results of data collection, the findings are presented as follows.

The planning of flashcards in teaching English vocabulary at Ban Buketamong school, Thailand

The teacher conducted planning before using flashcards in teaching English vocabulary. Classroom observation of the eighth grade students revealed that the teacher had prepared lesson plans, vocabulary materials, and flashcards prior to the lesson. The flashcards consisted of colorful pictures representing daily activities and natural objects that were familiar to students, such as *river, forest, mountain, wake up,* and *go to school*. The teacher also determined clear learning objectives before the lesson. The main objective was to help students recognize, understand, and use simple English vocabulary related to their daily life. The lesson was organized in a clear sequence, starting from vocabulary introduction, followed by practice activities, and ending with reinforcement.

The planning process observed in the classroom was supported by an interview with the English teacher. She stated:

> "Before I teach, I always prepare the lesson plan. I decide first what vocabulary I will teach, then I prepare the flashcards. I also plan what activities the students will do using the flashcards, such as repeating, matching, and group work. I cannot enter the class without preparation because the students will be confused."

Document review of the lesson plan also showed that the teacher had planned warming-up activities, pronunciation drills, group work, and review activities using flashcards. Overall, the findings indicate that the teacher's planning involved setting learning objectives, selecting suitable vocabulary, preparing flashcards as instructional media, and designing learning activities to support vocabulary teaching.

Based on the classroom observation, interview and document review, it can be concluded that the teacher's planning in teaching English vocabulary using flashcards at Ban Buketamong School involved setting clear learning objectives, selecting appropriate vocabulary materials, preparing flashcards as instructional media, and designing structured classroom activities to support vocabulary learning.

The Implementation of Flashcards in Teaching English Vocabulary at Ban Buketamong School, Thailand

The implementation of flashcards in teaching English vocabulary at Ban Buketamong School was observed and analyzed through three aspects: the goal of implementation, the materials used, and the teaching procedures.

First, The Goal of Implementing Flashcards in Teaching English Vocabulary at Ban Buketamong School, Based on classroom observation of the eighth grade students at Ban Buketamong School, Thailand, conducted on June 30, 2025, the teacher implemented flashcards to provide students with greater opportunities to understand and practice new English vocabulary during the lesson. Students appeared more engaged when vocabulary was introduced using pictures, and they demonstrated better recall during matching and guessing activities. The observation also revealed that flashcards encouraged active student participation, as students were required to identify vocabulary, pronounce the words, and respond to various group based games. Furthermore, It indicated that the main goal of implementing flashcards was to make vocabulary learning clearer, more interesting, and easier to understand, particularly for students with limited English exposure. The visual support provided by the flashcards enabled students to recognize word meanings immediately without lengthy explanations. For example, when the teacher showed flashcards such as *river* and *wake up*, students were able to guess the meanings and pronounce the words confidently before repeating them together as a class.

It was supported by an interview with the English teacher, Miss Musfirah Ma-auseng, who stated:

> "Flashcards are very simple materials, but I find them extremely effective in teaching English vocabulary. They are easy to make and easy to use. When students see the pictures on the flashcards, it becomes easier for them to understand the meaning of the new vocabulary. I use flashcards to make the lesson easier to understand because most of my students still find it difficult to memorize English words. Visual aids are

very important because students can directly connect the words with the pictures."

The teacher further explained that flashcards help students remember vocabulary because they can see the pictures, hear the pronunciation, and say the words themselves. According to her, repeated exposure through flashcard activities improves vocabulary learning and increases students' activeness in the classroom.

This was also supported by students interviewed by the researcher. Student A said:

"I think the teacher uses flashcards because she wants us to understand new English words more easily. When she shows us the pictures on the flashcards, I can see what the word means right away. It helps me remember the vocabulary faster. I also think, it is to make the lesson more interesting so we don't get bored because English words are difficult"

The student B added:

"Miss Firah uses flashcards to make learning English easier and more enjoyable for us. The pictures on the flashcards help me know what the word means without needing a long explanation. And also, to help us memorize vocabulary faster"

Based on classroom observations, teacher and students interviews, it can be concluded that the use of flashcards aimed to facilitate vocabulary understanding, increase student engagement, and improve vocabulary retention through repeated exposure and interactive activities.

Second, The Materials Used in Implementing Flashcards in Teaching English Vocabulary at Ban Buketamong School, Based on classroom observation, It showed that the teacher used flashcards as the main instructional material in teaching English vocabulary. The flashcards consisted of printed pictures accompanied by English vocabulary words related to the topics presented in the lesson plan. These materials were prepared by the teacher prior to the lesson and were printed in full color and laminated to ensure durability, as they were frequently used during classroom activities. The vocabulary presented on the flashcards was selected based on themes relevant to students' daily experiences. For example, when teaching daily activities, the teacher used flashcards such as *wake up, brush teeth, eat breakfast, go to school,* and *study English*. When teaching nature and environment topics, the teacher used flashcards such as *river, mountain, forest, tree,* and *desert*.

The teacher explained how she prepared and selected the flashcard materials:

"I usually make the flashcards myself. I print the pictures and vocabulary words, then laminate them to make them more durable. By making the flashcards myself, I can adjust the materials according to the lesson topics and students' needs."

It was supported by the student A:
"The teacher gives us many kinds of vocabulary. For example, she teaches us vocabulary about nature like 'mountain', 'river' and others. She also teaches us about daily activity like 'go to school', 'study English' and others."

Another student also explained
"Miss Firah gives us vocabulary based on different themes. For example, we have learned about daily activities and nature. Each flashcard has a clear picture, so even if I don't know the English word yet, I can guess from the picture."

It can be concluded that the materials used in flashcard implementation consisted of teacher-made laminated picture cards containing thematic and contextual vocabulary aligned with the lesson plan and students' daily experiences.

Third, The Procedure of Implementing Flashcards in Teaching English Vocabulary at Ban Buketamong School, Based on classroom observation the teacher implemented flashcards through a structured, step by step procedure that encouraged active student participation. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher introduced new vocabulary by showing flashcards one by one and pronouncing the words clearly. The vocabulary included nature related words such as *mountain, river,* and *forest*, as well as daily activities such as *wake up, study English,* and *go to school*. Students were asked to repeat the words several times. After guided repetition, the teacher showed the flashcards again and asked students to pronounce the vocabulary independently. The teacher then randomly selected students to read the vocabulary aloud, which helped maintain students' focus and attention.

After the introduction, the teacher conducted various practice activities using flashcards, including role play, pair work, group activities, and games. In role play activities, students worked in pairs to practice simple question and answer dialogues using flashcards. In group activities, students were divided into groups of two to five

members and asked to create short stories based on the vocabulary shown on the flashcards. These activities encouraged collaboration, creativity, and active use of vocabulary. At the end of the lesson, the teacher provided feedback by commenting on students' pronunciation, participation, and group work. The teacher also gave encouragement and positive reinforcement to motivate students.

The teacher explained the procedure during the interview as follows:

> "I use flashcards in different stages of the lesson. I start by introducing the vocabulary, then use flashcards for games, matching activities, and group exercises. Through these activities, I can see which students understand and which ones need more support."

Student' A interview confirmed and said:

> "The teacher usually starts the class by showing us the flashcards one by one. She holds up the card, says the word clearly, and then asks us to repeat it together. After that, she sometimes explains the meaning by pointing at the picture. She also uses the flashcards for games. Sometimes she also asks us to guess the vocabulary of the picture."

And student B said:

> "The teacher uses the flashcards in many ways, like, she introduces the vocabulary by showing the flashcards and saying the words slowly so we can follow her. She lets us repeat the words several times until we can say them correctly. After that, she uses the flashcards in group activities."

Based on classroom observations and interviews, it can be concluded that the teacher's procedure in implementing flashcards consisted of three main stages: vocabulary introduction, practice through interactive activities, and feedback and reinforcement.

The Evaluation of the Use of Flashcards in Teaching English Vocabulary at Ban Buketamong School, Thailand

Based on classroom observation of the eighth grade students at Ban Buketamong School, Thailand, conducted on June 30, 2025, it was showed that the teacher evaluated students' vocabulary understanding continuously during the teaching process while using flashcards. The evaluation was carried out through classroom interaction and learning activities. First, the teacher showed

flashcards containing pictures such as *river*, *forest*, and *mountain*, then asked students questions such as, "What is this?" Students were expected to respond orally in English. Through this activity, the teacher assessed students' vocabulary comprehension based on their answers. Some students responded quickly and confidently, while others hesitated or provided incorrect answers. When incorrect responses occurred, the teacher immediately corrected them and encouraged students to try again. Second, During group activities, particularly when students were asked to create short stories using vocabulary related to daily activities, the teacher conducted further evaluation by observing students' participation and interaction. The teacher walked around the classroom to monitor which students actively contributed ideas, which students took the lead in arranging sentences, and which students appeared less involved. Some students confidently produced sentences such as *"I wake up at six o'clock"* and *"I go to school at seven o'clock,"* while others required assistance from their peers. This observation allowed the teacher to assess students' vocabulary use in context.

In the following meeting, the researcher also observed that the teacher conducted a small written quiz as a follow up evaluation. The quiz consisted of pictures accompanied by multiple-choice questions. Students were asked to select the correct English vocabulary corresponding to each picture. This activity functioned as a summative evaluation to measure students' retention of vocabulary learned through flashcards in the previous lesson.

It was supported by an interview with the English teacher, who explained:

> "Usually, I evaluate the students while the activity is going on. When I ask the English of the picture and they answer correctly, it means they understand. If they answer incorrectly, I correct them immediately. I also observe who is active in the group. Sometimes I give a small quiz with pictures and questions to see who still remembers and who has forgotten."

Based on classroom observation and interviews with both the teacher and students, it can be concluded that the evaluation of vocabulary teaching through flashcards involved both formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation occurred during classroom activities through oral questioning, pronunciation practice, and observation of students' participation in group work. Summative evaluation was conducted through a small quiz containing pictures and multiple choice questions. Oral evaluation

was also consistently applied throughout the lesson when students were asked to pronounce and identify vocabulary using flashcards.

Discussion

This study explored the use of flashcards in teaching English vocabulary to eighth grade students at Ban Buketamong School, Narathiwat, Thailand. The discussion integrated findings from classroom observations, interviews and document reviews with relevant theoretical perspectives and previous studies related to visual media, vocabulary instruction, and classroom assessment. The purpose of this discussion was to analyze how the teacher's planning, implementation, and evaluation of flashcards in teaching English vocabulary.

In relation to instructional planning, the teacher conducted preparation before implementing flashcards in teaching English vocabulary. The planning process included determining learning objectives, selecting appropriate vocabulary materials, preparing flashcards, and organizing instructional procedures. The flashcards were not used spontaneously but were intentionally integrated into the lesson design. The learning objectives focused on helping students recognize, understand, and use simple English vocabulary related to daily activities and the surrounding environment. Vocabulary items such as *river, forest, mountain, wake up,* and *go to school* reflected efforts to contextualize learning. This finding was consistent with the principle that effective lesson planning requires clear objectives and relevant instructional content to guide the teaching and learning process (Brown, 2001). The preparation of instructional materials prior to teaching also contributed to smoother classroom implementation. Flashcards with clear pictures and familiar contexts supported students' comprehension and minimized confusion during learning activities. Well prepared materials have been shown to help teachers manage classroom activities more effectively and support students' understanding (Harmer, 2007). Thus, careful planning served as a strong foundation for the successful use of flashcards in vocabulary instruction.

The implementation of flashcards at Ban Buketamong School was reflected through instructional goals, materials, and procedures used during teaching. The goal of using flashcards was to make vocabulary learning clearer, more engaging, and easier to understand through visual support. Classroom observations showed that students were able to identify word meanings more quickly when pictures were presented, reducing the need for lengthy explanations. This condition aligns with Dual Coding Theory, which explains that learning becomes more effective when information is

processed through both visual and verbal channels (Wooten & Cuevas, 2024). In classroom practice, flashcards allowed students to simultaneously see images, hear correct pronunciation, and repeat vocabulary items, supporting deeper cognitive processing. The use of flashcards also increased students' participation during learning activities. Students were involved in pronunciation drills, guessing games, pair work, and group activities that required them to identify, pronounce, and apply vocabulary. Visual media have been reported to encourage active learning by engaging learners directly with instructional content (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Repeated exposure to vocabulary through flashcard based activities further supported vocabulary retention, as students encountered the same words in various contexts. Vocabulary learning required frequent repetition and meaningful exposure to ensure long term retention (Nation, 2008), which was evident in students' learning responses during the lesson.

In terms of materials, the teacher used self made laminated flashcards containing vocabulary related to daily activities and natural environments. The pictures were clear, simple, and culturally familiar to students. The flashcards should present a single clear concept and be visually attractive so learners can easily grasp word meanings (Haycraft, 1978). The contextual selection of vocabulary also reflected the principle that vocabulary instruction should be closely related to learners' daily lives to promote meaningful learning (Nation, 2008).

Regarding instructional procedures, the teacher applied three main stages: vocabulary introduction, practice, and review. This sequence reflected established principles of vocabulary instruction that emphasize presenting new words, practicing them through learning activities, and reinforcing understanding through review (Harmer, 2007). The structured procedures helped students gradually move from recognizing vocabulary items to actively using them in learning activities.

The evaluation of vocabulary learning was conducted through both formative and summative assessment. Formative evaluation occurred continuously during classroom activities through oral questioning, immediate correction, and observation of students' participation in group work. Such formative assessment played an important role in monitoring students' understanding and providing ongoing feedback during the learning process (Drummond, 2022). Oral questions such as *"What is this?"* allowed the teacher to quickly identify students' comprehension levels, while observation during group activities provided insights into pronunciation accuracy,

participation, and vocabulary use in context. Summative evaluation was carried out through a short quiz consisting of pictures and multiple choice questions administered in the following meeting. This quiz aimed to measure students' retention of vocabulary after instruction. Summative assessment is essential for evaluating learning outcomes at the end of a learning period (Drummond, 2022). The combination of formative and summative assessment provided a comprehensive evaluation of students' vocabulary development.

In conclusion, the use of flashcards in teaching English vocabulary at Ban Buketamong School demonstrated strong alignment between instructional planning, classroom implementation, and evaluation. The teacher's preparation, including clear learning objectives, appropriate material selection, and structured teaching procedures, supported the use of flashcards as a visual learning medium. Through interactive activities and repeated exposure, flashcards facilitated students' vocabulary comprehension, participation, and retention. Continuous formative assessment and follow up summative evaluation further supported students' learning progress. Overall, this study indicated that flashcards serve as a practical instructional medium for vocabulary teaching in EFL classrooms when implemented through careful planning and evaluation.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the use of flashcards in teaching English vocabulary to eighth grade students at Ban Buketamong School, Narathiwat, Thailand, focusing on instructional planning, classroom implementation, and evaluation practices. The findings indicate that the teacher integrated flashcards into vocabulary instruction through clear learning objectives, contextual vocabulary selection, teacher made visual materials, and structured teaching procedures. The implementation of flashcards involved interactive classroom activities that encouraged students' participation in vocabulary recognition, pronunciation practice, and contextual use of words. Visual support provided by flashcards facilitated repeated exposure to vocabulary and supported students' engagement during the learning process. Evaluation was carried out through continuous formative assessment during instruction and supported by summative assessment in the form of picture based quizzes, allowing the teacher to monitor students' understanding and vocabulary retention over time. Overall, flashcards play an important role as a practical instructional medium in vocabulary teaching.

For future researchers, further studies are recommended to investigate the use of flashcards in different educational contexts, grade levels, or language skills, such as speaking or reading. Future research may also examine students' vocabulary development over a longer period to identify patterns of long-term retention. In addition, comparative studies involving flashcards and other instructional media, including digital or multimedia-based tools, may provide broader insights into vocabulary teaching practices in EFL classrooms. This study was conducted in a single school with a relatively small number of participants, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. The study also focused primarily on classroom practices and did not measure vocabulary mastery quantitatively or over an extended period.

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