

**THE USE OF FOOD AND DRINK VOCABULARY AS A MEDIUM FOR
TEACHING ENGLISH IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: A LITERATURE
REVIEW**

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ABSTRACT

The teaching of English in elementary schools plays a crucial role in preparing students to face the challenges of globalization. One key component in language learning is vocabulary, which often poses a challenge for students, especially in remembering and using new words. This article discusses the use of vocabulary related to food and beverages as a medium for teaching English in elementary schools. With a relevant and contextual approach, the theme of food and beverages is not only engaging for students but also facilitates their ability to remember vocabulary related to everyday experiences. Through a literature analysis, this article explores various methods and media that can be used to teach this vocabulary, as well as its impact on student motivation and learning outcomes. Research shows that the use of engaging media, such as images, videos, and games, can enhance student involvement. Additionally, the challenges faced by educators in integrating this theme into the curriculum are also discussed. Thus, this article provides recommendations for best practices in teaching food and beverage vocabulary, which is expected to improve students' English language skills in elementary schools.

Keywords: *English Language Learning, Food And Beverage Vocabulary, Learning Media.*

INTRODUCTION

English language learning in elementary schools is an essential aspect of education aimed at preparing students to face the challenges of globalization. In an era of rapidly advancing information, proficiency in English has become a highly valuable skill. English is not only used as a means of communication but also serves as the primary language in various fields, such as science, technology, and business. Therefore, acquiring English proficiency from an early age is crucial in equipping students with the necessary skills for their future.

One of the main components of language learning is vocabulary. A rich and diverse vocabulary enables students to express themselves more effectively and comprehend a broader range of contexts in communication. However, mastering vocabulary often poses challenges for students, particularly at the elementary school level. Many students struggle with remembering and using new vocabulary, which can hinder their ability to speak, read, and write in English.

The use of food and beverage vocabulary in English language learning in elementary schools is an interesting and relevant topic, given the significance of vocabulary mastery in the language learning process. Vocabulary is a fundamental element of communication, and a strong understanding of vocabulary can enhance students' language abilities. According to Harmer (2007), a broad vocabulary allows students to express their ideas and emotions more effectively. In the context of English learning, the theme of food and beverages is not only engaging for students but also highly relevant to their daily lives. This aligns with Nation's (2001) perspective, which states that vocabulary related to everyday experiences is easier for students to remember and understand.

This literature analysis will explore various methods and media that can be utilized to teach food and beverage vocabulary, as well as its impact on students' motivation and learning outcomes. Previous research indicates that using engaging media, such as images, videos, and games, can increase student involvement in learning (Sari, 2020). Additionally, a contextual approach to vocabulary instruction, where students interact with vocabulary in real-life situations, has also proven effective (Putri, 2019). Therefore, this study aims to examine various strategies that can be implemented in teaching food and beverage vocabulary and to provide recommendations for best practices in the classroom.

In this context, incorporating relevant and engaging themes in English language learning can serve as an effective solution. One theme closely related to students' daily lives is food and beverages. Food and beverages are not only basic necessities but also hold strong cultural and social values. By using vocabulary associated with food and beverages, teachers can create a fun and contextual learning environment. This not only makes students more interested in learning but also helps them connect new vocabulary with real-life experiences.

Literature studies suggest that using relevant themes in language learning can enhance student motivation. Previous research also indicates that students find it easier to remember vocabulary taught through familiar contexts. For instance, when learning about different types of food, students can engage in activities such as drawing, tasting, or even cooking, which reinforces their understanding of the vocabulary. Through these activities, students not only learn new words but also develop social and collaborative skills through interaction with their peers.

Moreover, the use of food and beverage vocabulary can be integrated into various enjoyable learning activities. For example, teachers can organize word games, quizzes, or group projects where students create a food menu or design a poster about healthy eating. These activities not only make learning more exciting but also provide opportunities for students to practice speaking and listening in English.

However, despite the numerous benefits of using food and beverage vocabulary, educators still face challenges. One major challenge is the lack of resources and suitable learning materials. Many teachers may not have access to relevant teaching materials or may be unsure how to integrate the theme of food and beverages into the English curriculum. Therefore, it is crucial for educators to receive adequate training and support to help them develop effective teaching methods.

Additionally, cultural differences among students present another challenge. Food and beverages hold different meanings in various cultures, and students may have diverse experiences related to this theme. As a result, teachers need to be culturally sensitive and ensure that all students feel included and valued in the learning process. By understanding students' cultural backgrounds, teachers can create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

In the context of education in Indonesia, the use of food and beverage vocabulary as a medium for teaching English in elementary schools aligns with the existing curriculum. The 2013 Curriculum, for example, emphasizes the importance of developing language competencies that include listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. By incorporating the theme of food and beverages into English learning, teachers can help students achieve these competencies in a more enjoyable and engaging way.

Through this study, the authors aim to explore various literature sources discussing the use of food and beverage vocabulary in English language learning in elementary schools. The primary focus of this study is to identify strategies that teachers can employ to optimize vocabulary instruction, as well as the challenges that may arise in its implementation. Therefore, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of English language teaching methods in elementary schools and to enhance students' English proficiency.

To achieve this goal, this study will examine various approaches that have been applied in the use of food and beverage vocabulary in English learning contexts. The study will also analyze the effectiveness of the methods used and their impact on student motivation and learning outcomes. By understanding the existing approaches, teachers can select and implement the most suitable methods for their students' needs.

One approach that can be applied is project-based learning. In this approach, students engage in projects related to food and beverages, such as creating a video about how to cook a traditional dish or compiling a healthy recipe book. Such projects not only enhance students' English skills but also provide them with opportunities to learn about different cultures and eating habits. Additionally, project-based learning encourages students to collaborate in groups, thereby improving their social skills.

Another effective approach is game-based learning. Games can be a powerful tool for teaching new vocabulary, as they create an enjoyable and interactive learning environment. For instance, word-guessing games or bingo with food-related vocabulary can help students remember and use the words in broader contexts. Through this method, students do not passively absorb knowledge but actively participate in the learning process.

Furthermore, integrating technology into learning can be an innovative solution. By utilizing educational applications or online learning platforms, teachers can provide more varied and interactive materials. For example, students can use apps to learn food vocabulary through engaging games or quizzes. Technology also enables students to learn independently, allowing them to review materials at their own pace.

However, it is essential to note that each approach has its advantages and limitations. Therefore, teachers must consider students' characteristics and the learning context before choosing a suitable method. Additionally, continuous evaluation is necessary to assess the effectiveness of the implemented methods. Through evaluation, teachers can determine

whether students have truly understood the vocabulary and can use it appropriately in context.

In conclusion, the use of food and beverage vocabulary as a medium for teaching English in elementary schools holds great potential for improving students' language skills. With the right approach, students can learn in a fun and meaningful way that relates to their daily lives. However, the challenges involved must also be addressed to ensure effective learning. Through this study, it is hoped that strategies can be identified to help teachers optimize vocabulary instruction and gain deeper insights into the significance of the food and beverage theme in English language learning in elementary schools.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach with a primary focus on a literature review. The qualitative approach is considered the most suitable for exploring in-depth and comprehensively understanding education from a broader and more holistic perspective. The literature review serves as the foundation for gathering information and analyzing various teaching strategies that have been implemented in the context of English language instruction, specifically related to food and beverage vocabulary as a learning aid in elementary school English education.

The data in this study is obtained from various relevant academic sources, including scholarly journals, books, theses, dissertations, research reports, and articles published in educational forums. Utilizing these sources is crucial for acquiring reliable information. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that the sources used are valid, credible, and appropriate for the context of this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the literature analysis, based on previous studies, indicate that many students still struggle with mastering English vocabulary related to food and drink. This difficulty arises because students are not accustomed to using English dictionaries and have limited mastery of English vocabulary in the material presented by teachers. Additionally, students are not used to using English in their daily lives (Sucandra et al., 2022).

Other studies reveal that students' vocabulary mastery remains low, and many students are still unable to correctly write English vocabulary words. This includes difficulties in listing vocabulary words in written form according to the meaning requested by the teacher, providing synonyms and antonyms in writing, and spelling words correctly (Sugiharti & Riftina, 2019).

After analyzing relevant data and reviewing previous studies on English vocabulary acquisition difficulties, the researchers believe that these challenges arise due to several factors, both internal and external. Internal factors refer to aspects within the students themselves, including their learning attitudes, physical health, intelligence, and learning motivation (Sucandra et al., 2022). A student's learning attitude significantly impacts their academic performance; if they enjoy learning English, they are more likely to engage positively with the subject and complete assignments enthusiastically, leading to better learning outcomes. Conversely, if students lack interest in English from the beginning, they are more likely to face learning difficulties, resulting in suboptimal academic achievement.

External factors, on the other hand, originate from outside the students and include teaching variations, instructional media, and teaching methods. These factors must be carefully planned by teachers to minimize learning difficulties. In the context of improving English vocabulary mastery among elementary school students, teachers need to develop creative and engaging teaching variations and employ appealing instructional media or methods to facilitate vocabulary learning in an enjoyable and easily comprehensible manner.

However, some teachers still rely on conventional teaching methods, such as lectures, question-and-answer sessions, and assignments, which often lead to student boredom and difficulty in retaining English vocabulary. A viable solution is for teachers to incorporate food and drink vocabulary as a learning medium in English instruction. Additionally, teachers can implement engaging and enjoyable learning activities to reinforce food-related vocabulary as a teaching tool.

The following section will discuss effective learning media that researchers consider engaging for teaching food and drink vocabulary.

Flashcard Media

Flashcards are a learning medium made of paper, usually featuring words, expressions, and attractive images. Flashcards are also used as an educational game in learning to enhance several aspects, including fostering independence, improving memory, and expanding vocabulary (Masna, 2022). According to Faizah (2022), the advantages of flashcards are as follows:

1. Easy to carry anywhere: Due to their small size, flashcards can be easily placed in a pocket or bag. They can be used anywhere, both inside and outside the classroom, and do not require a large space.
2. Practical: In terms of use and production, flashcards do not require electricity. To use them, simply arrange the images according to the learning needs. After use, they can be tied together and stored in a box.
3. Easy to remember: The combination of words and images helps children recognize the pictures stored in their memory, making it easier for them to recall the available text. This provides clear information about the names of the illustrated objects.
4. Enjoyable: Flashcard media can create a fun and engaging learning experience. Users may feel challenged to find the names of specific objects on the cards, making the learning process more interactive and less monotonous.

Engaging and Fun English Learning Activities on the Topic of "Food and Drink"

1. The first activity focuses on "Vocabulary of Food and Drink." The session begins with an introduction, where the teacher greets students using simple English phrases, such as "Hi everyone, how are you today?" and other greetings. Additional questions related to the topic can also be included, such as "Have you had breakfast?" or "What did you have for breakfast?"
2. Next, students sing together to a song titled "Food and Drink."
3. The third stage involves the "Look and Say Vocabulary of Food and Drink" game using flashcards. This language game is beneficial at the beginning of the lesson as it aims to expand students' vocabulary. Additionally, it contributes to the development of students' speaking skills during the early stages of learning a foreign language.
4. The fourth stage is the "Cut and Stick" game. This activity involves worksheets with food and drink names, with blank spaces underneath. Students receive sheets with cut-out images of different foods and drinks and are instructed to paste them into the correct blank spaces on the worksheet.
5. The fifth stage is an "Ice Breaking" session. After completing the previous games, students engage in ice-breaking activities titled "What Did You Eat?" and "What Did You Drink?" This stage aims to recapture students' attention and boost their motivation, helping them refocus on the lesson.
6. The final stage is the "Guess the Word with Prizes" game. This activity serves as the closing part of the lesson. Students who can correctly guess the words will receive flashcards as prizes.

The combination of activities, including singing together, playing the "Look and Say" game with flashcards, the "Cut and Stick" game, ice-breaking exercises, and the "Guess the

Word" game with prizes, successfully creates a fun and interactive learning environment. These activities effectively motivate students to actively participate in learning, increase enthusiasm, and build confidence (Indah Puspitasari et al., 2025).

Role-Playing

Below are role-playing activities in a restaurant setting related to food and drink that elementary school students can engage in during English learning:

1. Exciting Preparation

Before starting the role-playing activity, the teacher assigns roles to the students. These roles include customers, waiters, and chefs. The students are very enthusiastic when receiving their respective roles. They begin to prepare by learning vocabulary and sentences related to restaurants.

2. Creating a Delicious Menu

The teacher asks the students to create an appealing and delicious menu. They can choose different types of food and drinks commonly found in restaurants. The students are very creative in designing their menus, adding images and interesting descriptions.

3. Engaging Role-Playing

Once all preparations are complete, the students begin role-playing. The students acting as customers enter the restaurant and order food. The students acting as waiters take the orders and repeat them to ensure accuracy. The students acting as chefs prepare the ordered food.

4. Fun Interactions

Customers and waiters interact using English. Customers can ask about the menu, prices, and food delivery time. Waiters must respond politely and kindly. The students are highly enthusiastic in interacting and confidently using English.

5. Serving Delicious Food

Once the food is ready, the students acting as waiters serve the food to the customers' tables. Customers can check their food and ensure their orders are correct. The students are delighted to see the delicious and appealing meals.

6. Processing Payments

After finishing their meals, customers make payments to the waiters. They can pay using cash or credit cards. The waiters must correctly calculate the change and hand it to the customers.

7. Constructive Evaluation

After completing the role-playing activity, the teacher asks the students to conduct an evaluation. They can self-evaluate and share their thoughts on the activity. The teacher provides constructive feedback to help students improve their English skills.

8. Fun Reflection

Finally, the teacher asks the students to reflect on the role-playing activity. They can think about what they have learned and what they can do to enhance their English skills. The students enjoy the reflection process and feel that they have gained new knowledge.

Learning Applications and Interactive Videos

Below are activities using learning applications and interactive videos for food and drink topics in English lessons for elementary school students:

1. Learning Food and Drink Vocabulary

The teacher introduces an interactive and engaging learning application to help students learn food and drink vocabulary in English. Students can learn new words through games, quizzes, and exercises provided by the application. They are very enthusiastic about learning new vocabulary and practicing it in sentences.

2. Watching Interactive Videos About Food and Drinks

The teacher plays an interactive and engaging video related to food and drink lessons.

The video can be an animation, a short film, or a music video that teaches vocabulary and English sentences about food and drinks. The students enjoy watching the video and understand the material more effectively.

3. Practicing with Interactive Exercises and Games

After watching the video, students engage in interactive exercises and games to practice the vocabulary and sentences they have learned. The learning application provides various types of exercises and games, such as puzzles, quizzes, and word-matching activities. The students enjoy the exercises and games while improving their English skills.

4. Creating Food and Drink Recipes in English

The teacher asks students to create food and drink recipes in English using a learning application. They can choose a recipe they want to make and write it in English. The students are excited about creating recipes and practicing the vocabulary and sentences they have learned.

5. Presenting Food and Drink Recipes

Finally, the students present their food and drink recipes in English. They practice their speaking skills and present their ideas in English. The teacher provides positive and constructive feedback to help them improve their English proficiency.

Discussion

In enhancing English vocabulary mastery, the teaching methods used by teachers play a crucial role. Studies have shown that conventional methods, such as lectures and assignments, are often less effective as they tend to make students bored and less active in learning (Harmer, 2007). On the other hand, more interactive methods, such as project-based learning and language games, are more engaging for students and can improve their vocabulary retention (Nation, 2001).

One recommended approach is the use of flashcards, which have been proven effective in introducing new vocabulary to elementary school students (Faizah, 2022). Flashcards enhance students' memory by associating words with relevant images, making it easier for them to recall and understand the meaning of the words.

Additionally, context-based learning can also be applied, for example, by using the theme of food and drink, which is closely related to students' daily lives. Studies indicate that students find it easier to remember vocabulary linked to their personal experiences (Putri, 2019). Teachers can design activities such as role-playing in a restaurant, writing a food menu in English, or playing a "guess the food" game to increase student engagement in learning.

With the advancement of technology, digital media, such as learning applications and interactive videos, can also be utilized. Research suggests that the use of technology in English learning can boost student motivation and help them understand vocabulary in a more engaging way (Lestari, 2024).

By implementing innovative and relevant teaching methods, English vocabulary mastery in the food and drink topic can be significantly improved. Therefore, teachers must continuously develop effective learning strategies to make the learning experience more enjoyable and meaningful for students.

CONCLUSION

English learning in elementary schools plays a crucial role in preparing students to face the era of globalization. One of the key aspects of language learning is vocabulary mastery, which remains a challenge, especially in remembering and using new words. However, an engaging approach can be implemented by utilizing food and drink vocabulary as a learning medium.

The theme of food and drink has proven to be relevant and contextual, capturing

students' attention as it is closely related to their daily experiences. Through literature analysis, it is revealed that various methods and media can be used to teach this vocabulary, such as using images, videos, and games to enhance student engagement. Project-based learning, such as creating videos of traditional dishes or composing healthy recipes, is also effective in improving students' language skills and comprehension. Game-based approaches, such as word guessing or vocabulary bingo, create an interactive and enjoyable learning environment that helps develop students' critical thinking skills.

However, limitations in resources and appropriate learning materials, differences in students' cultural backgrounds, and the need for teacher training remain key concerns. Additionally, research indicates that many students still struggle with vocabulary mastery, particularly in spelling and dictionary usage.

Therefore, it is essential for educators to continuously innovate, integrate technology, and utilize food and drink vocabulary as a learning medium. This approach holds great potential to effectively and enjoyably enhance students' language skills in elementary schools.

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