

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON USING FLASHCARDS AND WORDLISTS TO TEACH VOCABULARY ONLINE: SECONDARY-LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Vocabulary learning and teaching is considered one of the most important mechanisms to teach a second language. Teachers use strategies to teach vocabulary to English as Second Language (ESL) learners in Sri Lanka. One such strategy is the use of flashcards. Flashcards in teaching vocabulary are very simple visual aids that facilitate learner engagement and motivation in the physical classroom context. Thus, this pilot study was conducted to identify the effect of the usage of both wordlists and flashcards on vocabulary learning for secondary-level ESL learners during online classes. This study provides an answer to the research question “How do the usage of wordlists and flashcards enhance the ESL students’ knowledge in vocabulary at the secondary level online class context?” and claims the hypothesis, a) the use of flashcards is more effective than using wordlists in teaching vocabulary during online classes. Eighty students from both grades 6 and 7 at a popular central college in Hambantota district participated in this study. In both grades, the students were grouped as the experimental group who learn the vocabulary using the flashcards and the control group who learn the vocabulary using the wordlists. The study was conducted for six weeks. The data were collected through pre-test and post-test and analyzed by using SPSS. Based on the analysis it was found that the usage of both wordlists strategy and flashcards could enhance the learners’ vocabulary learning. Yet, the use of flashcards is the most effective method to teach vocabulary in both grades. Therefore, during online classes, secondary-level English language teachers can incorporate more vocabulary teaching sessions using flashcards as a strategy to enhance learners’ vocabulary knowledge.

Keywords: Flashcards, secondary level ESL learners, teaching and learning, vocabulary

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