

Analysis of the Contextual Teaching and Learning Model Assisted by Flashcard Puzzles in Elementary School Students' Creative Thinking Skills

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Abstract

One of the demands of 21st century education is the development of creative thinking skills from the elementary school level, because these skills are the basis for students to generate new ideas, provide alternative answers, and solve problems independently. This study aims to analyze the use of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model assisted by Puzzle Flashcard media in supporting students' creative thinking skills in learning Indonesian language of noun and adjectives in grade II of SDN Beberan 2. The study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with classroom teachers as the main informants and students as supporting informants. Data was collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and student work results, then analyzed using thematic analysis. The results of the study show that the application of the CTL model assisted by Puzzle Flashcard media creates concrete, active, and meaningful learning. Students become more enthusiastic, dare to answer, and work together. Creative thinking skills are seen in the smoothness of producing ideas, the flexibility to provide alternative answers, the authenticity of arranging word pairs, and the elaboration of explaining reasons and developing words into sentences. The CTL model assisted by Puzzle Flashcard media can be an effective alternative to learning Indonesian to support the creative thinking skills of elementary school students.

Keywords

Bahasa Indonesia; Creative Thinking; Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL); Elementary School; Puzzle Flashcard



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INTRODUCTION

Indonesian is one of the compulsory subjects in elementary schools that plays an important role in shaping language skills as well as students' thinking skills. One of the demands of 21st century education is the development of creative thinking skills from the elementary school level, because these skills are the basis for students to generate new ideas, provide alternative answers, and solve problems independently. However, various studies

show that the creative thinking skills of elementary school students in Indonesia are still relatively low and have not been optimally developed (Anggrella & Permatasari, 2023; Ardilansari et al., 2023).

This condition also occurs in the learning of Indonesian nouns and adjectives in grade II of SDN Beberan 2. Based on initial observations, students still tend to imitate the teacher's answers and are less likely to develop their own opinions. The learning that takes place is also still teacher-centered and memorized, so that student involvement in the thinking process is not optimal (Ali, 2020; Mubin & Aryanto, 2024). In fact, the material of nouns and adjectives can actually be directly related to the objects and real experiences of everyday students.

One of the learning models that can be used to overcome this problem is the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model, which is a model that emphasizes the relationship between subject matter and students' real experiences so that students build their own understanding, not just memorize (Agustiningasih et al., 2024). Various studies show that the application of CTL in elementary schools can increase students' activeness, learning outcomes, and creative thinking skills (Chaeroh et al., 2021; Haziyah et al., 2024; Jariyah et al., 2025; Rahmawati et al., 2024). To strengthen the application of CTL in this learning, Puzzle Flashcard media is used, which is a combination of picture cards with activities to arrange word pairs that are visual, concrete, and fun for elementary students (Amini & Suyadi, 2020; Ariani et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2024).

Although research on CTL models and flashcard media in elementary schools has been conducted, studies that specifically analyze the relationship between the use of CTL models assisted by Puzzle Flashcard media and students' creative thinking skills on noun and adjective materials are still limited (Maulida et al., 2024; Nurjehan et al., 2024). This study aims to analyze the use of the CTL model assisted by Puzzle Flashcard media, analyze students' creative thinking skills, and analyze the relationship between the two in learning Indonesian nouns and adjectives in grade II of SDN Beberan 2.

METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which is an approach that aims to describe in depth a phenomenon as it is, without testing hypotheses or comparing groups (Fadli, 2021). This approach was chosen because the research aims to understand in depth how the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model assisted by Puzzle Flashcard media is used and how students' creative thinking skills appear in the learning process. The research was carried out at SDN Beberan 2, Ciruas District, Serang Regency, with the research subjects of grade II teachers as the main informants and 38 grade II students as supporting informants, because they experienced firsthand the application of the model and media studied.

Data was collected through four techniques, namely direct observation of learning activities, semi-structured interviews with teachers and students, documentation in the form of photos of student activities and work, and data triangulation to compare the results of observations, interviews, and documentation so that the data obtained is more valid

(Maesaroh et al., 2025; Nurfajriani et al., 2024). Primary data was obtained directly from teachers and grade II students, while secondary data was obtained from school documents and supporting scientific references.

The collected data is analyzed using thematic analysis through three stages, namely understanding the data by reading all the data repeatedly, compiling the code by labeling important data, and finding themes by grouping the codes into the main themes presented in the form of narrative descriptions (Nurhaliza et al., 2025; Rahmani et al., 2025). The framework of this research can be briefly described as follows: the initial condition of students who still have difficulty distinguishing nouns and adjectives, then given treatment in the form of the application of the CTL model assisted by Puzzle Flashcard media, so that it is expected to result in increased student involvement and the development of their creative thinking skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

The research was carried out at SDN Beberan 2 with 38 students in grade II. The results of observations and interviews showed that teachers succeeded in associating noun and adjective material with real objects around students, such as books, bags, and tables. Flashcard Puzzle Media is used in groups, and students look enthusiastic, actively ask questions, discuss, and be more confident in delivering answers. However, there are also obstacles, namely that some students still have difficulty explaining the reasons behind the choice of certain word pairs, especially at the stage of composing simple sentences.

Students' creative thinking skills were seen in all four indicators observed. In the fluency aspect, students are able to say many nouns such as books, pencils, and balls spontaneously. In the flexibility aspect, students are able to give several different adjectives to one object, for example "book" is described as thick, thin, new, or good. In the aspect of authenticity, a unique pair of words emerged from the students' own ideas. Meanwhile, in the elaboration aspect, some students are able to compose simple sentences from the prepared word pairs, although others still need the guidance of the teacher. The recapitulation of the findings on the four indicators is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Recapitulation of Students' Creative Thinking Skills Findings based on Indicators

Yes	Indicator	Description of Findings	Sample Data
1	Smoothness	Students are able to say many nouns and adjectives spontaneously in a short period of time.	Books, pencils, balls, bags, chairs, desks
2	Flexibility	Students are able to assign several different adjectives to one common noun.	"Book": thick, thin, new, nice
3	Authenticity	Students are able to compose unique and different word pairs from their peers.	"red bag", "light ball"
4	Elaboration	Some students are able to develop word pairs into simple sentences; Others still need guidance.	"I brought a red bag."

Source: Processed by researchers from observations, interviews, and documentation (2026)

Discussion

The finding that teachers successfully associate nouns and adjectives with real objects around students reinforces the findings of a number of previous studies that the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model is effective in improving the activity and learning outcomes of elementary school students, both in Indonesian language learning and in other subjects such as science (Chaeroh et al., 2021; Jariyah et al., 2025; Maryani et al., 2024). The active involvement of students in this study is in line with the main characteristics of CTL, which are meaningful, active, and collaborative, because students not only receive the teacher's explanation, but also observe, try, and cooperate directly in groups (Agustiningsih et al., 2024).

The emergence of the four indicators of creative thinking fluency, flexibility, authenticity, and elaboration in this study shows that the combination of the CTL model with the Puzzle Flashcard media is able to provide space for students to think more openly, not just focus on one correct answer. These findings are in line with research showing that the creative thinking skills of elementary school students can be improved through appropriate learning methods and media (Alfarisa et al., 2025; Ardilansari et al., 2023). However, the finding that the elaboration aspect is still the most difficult aspect for some students is also in line with the results of research by Anggrella and Permatasari (2023) who stated that the creative thinking skills of elementary school students in Indonesia in general are still relatively low, especially in aspects that require the ability to explain and develop ideas in more detail.

The use of Puzzle Flashcard media in this study has proven to play an important role in creating concrete and fun learning for low-grade students. This is in line with the findings that picture word card and flashcard media are effective in increasing vocabulary mastery and involvement of elementary school students in learning Indonesian (Amini & Suyadi, 2020; Ariani et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2024). The visual and kinesthetic elements of this media provide opportunities for students to learn while playing, so that students are more courageous to try and are not afraid to make mistakes in conveying answers.

Compared to the research of Rahmawati et al. (2024) who applied the CTL model assisted by pop up book media to improve the creative thinking skills of elementary school students, this study shows the same results, namely that the CTL model combined with concrete learning media is both able to support the development of students' creative thinking skills. The difference lies in the media used and the learning material, where this study focuses on Puzzle Flashcard media for noun and adjective material, while the research uses pop up book media. The similarity of the results of these two studies strengthens the argument that the success of the CTL model in supporting creative thinking depends not only on the model alone, but also on the accuracy of the selection of supporting media that is in accordance with the characteristics of elementary school students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the use of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) model assisted by Puzzle Flashcard media in Indonesian language learning nouns and adjectives in grade II of SDN Beberan 2 was carried out well, characterized by active student involvement although obstacles were still found in the ability to explain the reasons for answers. Students' creative thinking skills show good development in the aspects of fluency, flexibility, authenticity, and elaboration, although it is not evenly distributed to all students. The CTL model and the Puzzle Flashcard media have proven to support each other in fostering students' creative thinking skills, so that they can be an effective alternative to learning Indonesian in elementary school. Further research is suggested to expand the subject and location of the research, test the application of these models and media to other Indonesian materials, and consider the design of classroom action research or mixed methods to obtain a more comprehensive picture.

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