ARABIC VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD: A CASE STUDY AT AN INTEGRATED ISLAMIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

This study explores the strategies and methods for teaching Arabic vocabulary to young children at an Integrated Islamic Primary School (SDIT). The research analyzes how different teaching approaches affect vocabulary acquisition in early childhood education. A qualitative descriptive method was used, with data collected through classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The main strategies identified include visual and audio media, thematic approaches, repetition, and interactive games. The results highlighted that multisensory and Total Physical Response (TPR) methods significantly improved vocabulary retention and student participation. The communicative approach also proved effective in helping students use new vocabulary in practical contexts. The findings suggest combining visual, physical, and verbal techniques is the most effective way to improve vocabulary acquisition. This study contributes to the ongoing discourse on language learning by providing insights into effective vocabulary teaching strategies in an Islamic educational setting, with implications for curriculum development and teacher training.

Keywords: Strategy; Vocabulary; Early Childhood; Integrated Islamic Elementary School.

مستخلص البحث

تستكشف هذه الدراسة الاستراتيجيات والأساليب المستخدمة في تدريس مفردات اللغة العربية للأطفال الصغار في مدرسة ابتدائية إسلامية متكاملة. يهدف البحث إلى تحليل كيفية تأثير مناهج التدريس المختلفة على اكتساب المفردات في التعليم في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة. تم استخدام المنهج الوصفي النوعي، مع جمع البيانات من خلال الملاحظات الصفية والمقابلات المتعمقة وتحليل الوثائق. تشمل الاستراتيجيات الرئيسية التي تم تحديدها استخدام الوسائط المرئية والمسموعة، والأساليب الموضوعية، والتكرار والألعاب التفاعلية. أبرزت النتائج أن أساليب الاستجابة الحسية المتعددة والاستجابة الجسدية الكلية حسّنت بشكل كبير من الاحتفاظ بالمفردات ومشاركة الطلاب. كما أثبت النهج التواصلي فعاليته في مساعدة الطلاب على استخدام المفردات الجديدة في سياقات عملية. وبشكل عام، تشير النتائج إلى أن الجمع بين الأساليب البصرية والجسدية واللفظية هو الأكثر فعالية في تحسين اكتساب المفردات. تسهم هذه الدراسة في الخطاب الجاري حول تعلم اللغة من خلال تقديم رؤى حول استراتيجيات تدريس المفردات الفعالة في بيئة تعليمية إسلامية، مع ما يترتب على ذلك من آثار على تطوير المناهج الدراسية وتدريب المعلمين.

كلمات أساسية: الاستراتيجية؛ المفردات؛ الطفولة المبكرة ؛ المدرسة الابتدائية الإسلامية المتكاملة.

Introduction

Vocabulary teaching is fundamental in early childhood language development. It is the main foundation for developing language skills, which include speaking, writing, listening, and reading.[1] This skill is indispensable for children in communicating and understanding more complex concepts in an educational and social context.[2] Good vocabulary mastery is not limited to speaking skills but also affects listening, reading, and writing skills. Children with a good vocabulary tend to understand complex texts better, improving their reading skills.[3] In addition, children's writing skills also improve as their vocabulary increases, as they have more word choices to express their ideas clearly and effectively.[4] Thus, effective vocabulary teaching contributes to language skills and supports the development of better literacy skills.

Arabic is strategically positioned in integrated Islamic Elementary Schools (SDIT). This language is used as a means of communication and becomes the primary language in understanding religious texts such as the Qur'an and Hadith.[5] As a unique language, Arabic presents challenges, especially in teaching in an environment that makes it a second language.[6] The morphological and phonological structure of Arabic is very different from that of national languages such as Indonesian, which is the mother tongue of most students in Indonesia.[7] This complexity is seen in the grammatical rules and pronunciation, which are often a significant obstacle in teaching Arabic.[8] In this context, teaching Arabic is an academic obligation and an essential tool in forming students' religious identities.[9]

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[1] Ronald Carter and Michael Mccarthy, *Vocabulary and Language Teaching* (Routledge, 2014), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315835860.

[2] Diane August et al., "The Critical Role of Vocabulary Development for English Language Learners," *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice* 20, no. 1 (2005): 50–57, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5826.2005.00120.x.

[3] Catherine E. Snow, "Academic Language and the Challenge of Reading for Learning About Science," *Science* 328, no. 5977 (2010): 450, https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1182597.

[4] Steve Graham and Dolores Perin, "A Meta-Analysis of Writing Instruction for Adolescent Students.," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 99, no. 3 (2007): 445, https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.99.3.445.

[5] Moon Hidayati Otoluwa et al., "Enhancing Children's Vocabulary Mastery Through Storytelling," *JPUD - Jurnal Pendidikan Usia Dini* 16, no. 2 (2022): 249, https://doi.org/10.21009/JPUD.162.05.

[6] Nur Faizin and Abdul Basid, "Arabic in the Eid Greetings in Indonesian Muslim: Linguistic Error Analysis," in *Proceedings of ISoLEC 2022*, vol. 742, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research (Paris: Atlantis Press SARL, 2023), 296–303, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-038-1_33.

[7] Mila Schwartz and Abeer Asli, "Bilingual Teachers' Language Strategies: The Case of an Arabic–Hebrew Kindergarten in Israel," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 38 (2014): 22–32, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2013.10.013.

[8] Hafida Hamzaoui Elachachi, "Exploring Cultural Barriers in EFL Arab Learners' Writing," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 199 (2015): 129, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.496.

[9] Achmad Farid and Martin Lamb, "English for Da'wah? L2 Motivation in Indonesian Pesantren Schools," *System* 94 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102310.

Teaching Arabic vocabulary is often challenging, especially in the primary school environment. One of the main challenges is the difference between the student's native language and Arabic.[10] Teaching Arabic vocabulary becomes even more challenging for children whose first language is Malay or Indonesian due to its structure, which differs significantly from the local language.[11] This is exacerbated by the lack of adequate pedagogical training for primary school educators, which results in Arabic language teaching not always being effective in improving students' vocabulary acquisition.[12] As a result, many Arabic teaching methods in Islamic schools still use traditional approaches, such as memorization, which is often insufficient to deepen students' understanding of words in their context of use.

The rote method may help students remember words, but in the long run, this approach is not always practical for promoting deep understanding.[13] Research shows that students who engage in more interactive and contextualized learning tend to understand the vocabulary they are learning better.[14] Another challenge in teaching Arabic is the lack of engaging and interactive teaching materials, which can reduce students' motivation to learn.[15] Research has also shown that image media and more creative methods can improve students' motivation and vocabulary acquisition.[16] Thus, it is essential to develop more innovative teaching approaches that suit students' needs so that Arabic vocabulary acquisition can be improved effectively.

Previous studies have shown that several factors can affect the success of second language vocabulary teaching, such as the quality of learning materials,

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[10] Mariyatul Qibtiyah and Walfajri Walfajri, "Pengajaran Bahasa Arab Menggunakan Media Gambar Bergerak Untuk Meningkatkan Penguasaan Kosakata," *An Nabighoh: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* 22, no. 01 (2020): 71, https://doi.org/10.32332/an-nabighoh.v22i01.2076.

[11] Dessy Farantika, Arif Muzayin Shofwan, and Devia Purwaningrum, "The Benefits and Purpose of Storytelling for Early Childhood Education," *SINDA: Comprehensive Journal of Islamic Social Studies* 2, no. 2 (2022): 122, https://doi.org/10.28926/sinda.v2i2.497.

[12] Yvette Slaughter et al., "Editorial: Languages in Early Childhood Education," *TESOL in Context* 30, no. 1 (2021): 1–8, https://doi.org/10.21153/tesol2021vol30no1art1571.

[13] Samy A. Azer, Anthony P. S. Guerrero, and Allyn Walsh, "Enhancing Learning Approaches: Practical Tips for Students and Teachers," *Medical Teacher* 35, no. 6 (2013): 433, https://doi.org/10.3109/0142159X.2013.775413.

[14] Abdul Razif Zaini, Yaakob Hasan, and Muhammad Harun Husaini, "Arabic Vocabulary Size among Kolej Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Selangor (KUIS) Final Year Students," *Al-Irsyad: Journal of Islamic and Contemporary Issues* 6, no. 1 (2021): 606, https://doi.org/10.53840/alirsyad.v6i1.154.

[15] Bandar Mohammad Saeed Al-Sobhi and Abdul Shakour Preece, "Teaching English Speaking Skills to the Arab Students in the Saudi School in Kuala Lumpur: Problems and Solutions," *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies* 6, no. 1 (2018): 1, https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.6n.1p.1.

[16] Ghasem Barani, Omid Mazandarani, and Seyyed Hassan Seyyed Rezaie, "The Effect of Application of Picture into Picture Audio- Visual Aids on Vocabulary Learning of Young Iranian ELF Learners," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 2, no. 2 (2010): 5362, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.03.874.

exposure to the target language, and the teaching methods applied.[17] The importance of using interactive methods is highly emphasized in teaching Arabic vocabulary. Some studies state that children acquire vocabulary more easily when involved in interactive learning activities, such as storytelling, games, or physical activities.[18] Such activities allow students to understand words more concretely and improve their recall of the words they learn. Another challenge in Arabic is the language's complexity in morphology and phonology.[19] Arabic's morphological structure allows one word to have multiple forms based on its root, which can make understanding certain words more difficult for students.[20] In addition, Arabic's phonology, which is different from Malay and Indonesian, adds to the challenges in teaching vocabulary, especially when pronouncing new words.

Various studies have shown that technology can be important in improving the effectiveness of Arabic language teaching. Technologies such as Augmented Reality and other digital aids have increased students' motivation and engagement in the Arabic language learning process.[21] Visual aids such as flashcards, audiovisual materials, and interactive games have also proven effective in accelerating vocabulary acquisition by early learners. In education, technology can be a handy tool to overcome limited resources in the classroom and provide more dynamic and engaging learning variations.[22] However, although various studies have highlighted the potential of technology in language learning, few studies still examine the application of technology, specifically in Arabic vocabulary learning in integrated Islamic schools.[23] This is, therefore, an area that needs to be further explored in future studies.

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[17] Uraidah Abdul Wahab, Mat Taib Pa, and Lily Hanefarezan Asbulah, "Saiz Kosa Kata Dan Pengetahuan Kolokasi Bahasa Arab Dalam Kalangan Pelajar Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia (STAM)," *Issues in Language Studies* 10, no. 1 (2021): 183–202, https://doi.org/10.33736/ils.2794.2021.

[18] Lily Hanefarezan Asbulah et al., "The Level of Holistic, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation towards Arabic Language Vocabulary Among Graduate Students in Public Universities," *Asia Pacific Journal of Educators and Education* 33 (2018), https://doi.org/10.21315/apjee2018.33.6.

[19] Anna M. Borghi et al., "Words as Social Tools: Language, Sociality and Inner Grounding in Abstract Concepts," *Physics of Life Reviews* 29 (2019): 120, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.plrev.2018.12.001.

[20] Schwartz and Asli, "Bilingual Teachers' Language Strategies."

[21] Ismail Suardi Wekke and Sanusi Hamid, "Technology on Language Teaching and Learning: A Research on Indonesian Pesantren," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 83 (2013): 585, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.06.111.

[22] Tabassum Rashid and Hanan Muhammad Asghar, "Technology Use, Self-Directed Learning, Student Engagement and Academic Performance: Examining the Interrelations," *Computers in Human Behavior* 63 (2016): 604, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.05.084.

[23] Asmah Mat Saud, Mohd. Feham Md. Ghalib, and Radhwa Abu Bakar, "Exploring Bibliometric Trends in Augmented Reality Research for Vocabulary Enhancement," *Journal of E-Learning Research* 3, no. 1 (2024): 30–44, https://doi.org/10.33422/jelr.v3i1.716.

Besides the use of technology, several other innovative approaches have been identified as effective methods for teaching vocabulary.[24] One of the most effective approaches is the Total Physical Response (TPR) method, where vocabulary is introduced to students through accompanying physical movements. Research shows that students who learn through TPR tend to have higher retention rates than students who only learn through traditional methods.[25] This approach allows students to connect learned words with physical movements, strengthening their memory of the words. Besides TPR, project-based approaches are also considered effective in improving students' language skills. In this approach, students engage in projects that require specific vocabulary, forcing them to apply the words they have learned in more creative and complex contexts.[26] Project-based teaching engages students in challenging tasks, allowing them to use new vocabulary in situations relevant to their real lives.[27] In addition, visual aids such as flashcards have also proven effective in accelerating vocabulary acquisition by early learners.[28] However, although various studies have highlighted the potential of technology in language learning, few studies still examine the application of technology, specifically in Arabic vocabulary learning in integrated Islamic schools. Therefore, this area needs to be further explored in future studies.

Although previous studies have significantly contributed to Arabic language teaching, some limitations must be addressed. Most research focuses on language teaching in higher education, while early childhood education is often neglected.[29] In addition, many studies still use traditional teaching approaches without exploring more interactive and innovative approaches.[30] Another limitation is the lack of research focusing on the context of integrated Islamic schools. Arabic in these schools is taught not only as an academic language but also as a religious

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[24] Chih-Ming Chen and Ching-Ju Chung, "Personalized Mobile English Vocabulary Learning System Based on Item Response Theory and Learning Memory Cycle," *Computers & Education* 51, no. 2 (2008): 624, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2007.06.011.

[25] Sühendan Er, "Using Total Physical Response Method in Early Childhood Foreign Language Teaching Environments," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 93 (2013): 1766, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.113.

[26] Carter and Mccarthy, *Vocabulary and Language Teaching*.

[27] Almahdi Fayad and Hajer Said, "The Teaching of Vocabulary Using the Communicative Spiraling Model to Third Year Students at High Schools in Benghazi Area," *Journal of Faculty Education*, no. 6 (2018), https://doi.org/10.37376/fesj.vi6.606.

[28] H Hasbullah et al., "Improving Vocabulary Using a Computer-Based Flashcard Program," *International Journal on Advanced Science, Education, and Religion* 1, no. 1 (2018): 31–36, https://doi.org/10.33648/ijoaser.v1i1.4.

[29] Abdul Wahab, Pa, and Asbulah, "Saiz Kosa Kata Dan Pengetahuan Kolokasi Bahasa Arab Dalam Kalangan Pelajar Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia (STAM)."

[30] Asbulah et al., "The Level of Holistic, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation towards Arabic Language Vocabulary Among Graduate Students in Public Universities."

language that has religious implications for students.[31] Therefore, it is crucial to explore pedagogical approaches that are effective in teaching vocabulary and relevant to students' religious and spiritual needs.[32]

This study aims to explore and understand further effective Arabic vocabulary teaching strategies for early childhood in Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools. Using a qualitative approach, this study examines the challenges educators face and the effectiveness of teaching methods implemented in the classroom. Some innovative approaches, such as TPR and project-based teaching, improved students' vocabulary retention and engagement in learning. This study also underlines the importance of using technology in Arabic language teaching, especially to create a more interactive and engaging learning environment. However, further research is still needed to explore the application of technology and other innovative methods in integrated Islamic schools, primarily to address the unique challenges in Arabic language teaching. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this study can make practical and theoretical contributions to developing more effective and relevant Arabic language teaching methods for young children in Islamic schools.

Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study approach to explore in-depth and holistically Arabic vocabulary learning strategies in Integrated Islamic Elementary Schools. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore students' experiences, practices, and responses in learning Arabic in specific educational settings, such as SDIT. Using this approach, researchers can understand how teaching strategies are implemented in the classroom and how students respond. This qualitative descriptive approach allows researchers to collect diverse data, such as interviews, observations, and documentation, which are indispensable to provide a comprehensive picture of the learning process.

This research was conducted at SDIT Riau Islands for grades one and two. The selection of SDIT as the research site was based on the Islamic educational context of the school, where the Arabic language is an essential part of the curriculum. The teachers who became the research subjects were chosen because of their experience in teaching vocabulary to young children, which was considered relevant to the purpose of this study. By observing and interviewing teachers, the researcher hoped to obtain rich data on the teaching methods used,

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[31] Mohd Zaki Ismail et al., "Penggunaan Strategi Pembelajaran Kosa Kata Bahasa Arab Pada Kalangan Pelajar Cemerlang," *Asia Pacific Journal of Educators and Education* 31 (2016): 47–68, https://doi.org/10.21315/apjee2016.31.4.

[32] Edsoulla Chung, "Effecting Change in Teachers' Epistemological and Pedagogical Beliefs about Vocabulary Learning and Teaching: The Role of Dialogic Reflection," *Sage Open* 12, no. 1 (2022), https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211071084.

the challenges faced in the learning process, and the impact of these strategies on students' understanding.

The data collection process was conducted through several techniques, namely observation, interview, and documentation. Classroom observation was conducted to directly observe the interaction between teachers and students during the learning process of Arabic vocabulary. Observations were conducted in two ways. The first was a direct observation, where researchers entered the classroom directly for schools around Tanjungpinang. The second observation model is by sending learning videos to island teachers. The researcher focused on the teaching methods teachers use, such as the direct approach, the communicative approach, and the use of multisensory aids. In addition, we also recorded students' responses to these teaching methods, both in terms of their participation in class and their ability to understand and remember the new vocabulary taught. These observations provided rich data on classroom dynamics, especially concerning how the method successfully improved students' vocabulary acquisition.

In addition to observations, in-depth interviews were conducted with teachers to explore further the teaching strategies they use and the challenges faced during the teaching process. The participants in this study were selected by contacting them through the WhatsApp application. The teachers contacted were the Riau Islands Arabic Language Teachers' Working Group members. The researcher asked for the willingness of teachers who were members of the Riau Islands Arabic Language Teacher Working Group WAGroup; as a result, 20 Arabic language teachers were willing to be interviewed. After explaining the purpose of the research, the researcher sent the prepared open-ended interview questions and was given ample time to answer them to obtain accurate data. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they allowed the researcher to explore the views and experiences of the teachers more deeply. In the interviews, the researcher asked about the different methods the teachers used in teaching vocabulary, the effectiveness of the methods, and how the students responded to the teaching. These interviews provided additional data that enriched the findings from the classroom observations and helped the researcher understand the teaching practices implemented in the classroom more deeply.

Data was also collected through documentation analysis, such as lesson plans, teaching materials, and students' work. These documents were analyzed to see how vocabulary is presented in the learning materials and how teachers plan and implement teaching strategies. Document analysis helped provide additional context that reinforced the findings from observations and interviews and provided a broader picture of how Arabic vocabulary learning is integrated into the curriculum and classroom activities at SDIT.

The data analysis technique used in this study is thematic analysis, where data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation are identified

based on emerging themes. In conducting data analysis, the researcher uses thematic analysis theory, where the first stage in data analysis is data reduction, which is the process of sorting data to select data relevant to the research objectives. Irrelevant data is discarded so that the analysis focuses on the information that matters. After that, relevant data is compiled based on themes, such as teaching methods, student responses, and challenges faced by teachers. The presentation of data is carried out in the form of a descriptive narrative that provides an in-depth description of the observed phenomenon, supported by direct quotes from interview results and observation notes. Through this analysis technique, researchers can identify patterns and relationships between the teaching strategies used and the level of students' vocabulary mastery.

Result and Discussion

Based on the results of data analysis obtained through classroom observation, in-depth interviews with teachers, and document analysis, the general data are as follows: Classroom observation provides an overview of the interaction between teachers and students during Arabic vocabulary learning, where the use of visual media such as images and videos is proven to attract students' interest and increase their active participation, especially when using the TPR method which involves physical movements related to the vocabulary taught. Data from in-depth teacher interviews revealed strategies and challenges in teaching Arabic vocabulary. Teachers share experiences using communicative methods that help students apply vocabulary in everyday conversations and a theme-based approach that makes it easier for students to relate vocabulary to relevant contexts in their lives. Analysis of the documents, which included lesson plans, teaching materials, and student work, showed that visual media such as flashcards and images were often used to reinforce the vocabulary taught, as well as increase students' ability to remember and use new vocabulary after using project-based methods that required students to apply vocabulary in real-world contexts. Data from these three sources were validated through triangulation to ensure the reliability of the reported themes or patterns, such as the effectiveness of multisensory approaches and TPR methods in improving vocabulary acquisition and active participation of students.

Arabic Vocabulary Learning Strategies for Early Childhood

Based on the Integrated Islamic Primary School research results, there are some key findings regarding Arabic vocabulary learning strategies in early childhood. These strategies are designed to facilitate the understanding and acquisition of Arabic vocabulary more effectively. The strategies most commonly used by teachers at SDIT include using visual and audio media, thematic approaches, learning through songs and games, and repetition and repetition approaches. Interviews with teachers show that visual media such as pictures and

videos are essential in attracting children's interest, helping them associate new vocabulary with visuals they can understand better.

The distribution of the use of these learning strategies can be seen in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Learning Strategies Used by Teachers

No	Learning Strategy	Percentage of Use by Teachers (%)
1	Visual and Audio Media	40%
2	Thematic Approach	25%
3	Songs and Games	20%
4	Repetition	15%

The table above shows that the most dominant strategy used is visual and audio media (40%), followed by thematic approaches (25%), songs and games (20%), and repetition and repetition (15%). These results confirm that teachers use engaging and interactive media to maximize students' vocabulary acquisition.

**Methods Used to Improve Arabic Vocabulary Acquisition**

In addition to learning strategies, this study also found several methods applied to improve Arabic vocabulary acquisition. These include TPR, communicative methods, project-based teaching, and multisensory approaches. The TPR method involves physical movements that support vocabulary teaching, while the communicative method emphasizes using vocabulary in daily conversations to strengthen students' understanding in relevant contexts.

The teaching methods applied by teachers vary widely but aim to create an environment that supports children in acquiring new vocabulary. Standard methods based on interview results include: a) Total Physical Response: This method involves associating vocabulary with physical movement. The teacher asks students to perform specific physical actions following the meaning of the word taught. For example, when introducing a word like "المشي / walking," the teacher will show or practice walking movements that the students then follow. b) Communicative Method: Teachers use simple conversations in Arabic during everyday classroom activities, such as greetings or basic instructions. This approach invites students to apply vocabulary in practical and authentic contexts, which aims to strengthen students' understanding and ability to use new words in everyday interactions, such as "اِجْلِسْ /sit down" or "أغلق الكتاب/close the book." c) Project-Based Teaching: Some teachers design small projects that require the use of specific vocabulary, such as projects about "family" or "animals." In these projects, students are asked to use relevant vocabulary to complete an assignment, such as creating a poster or writing about أعضاء العائلة(family members). Thus, students can apply new words in more complex contexts, encouraging more profound and practical understanding. d) Multisensory Approach: Teachers use a variety of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic stimuli to introduce new vocabulary.

Teachers combine images, sounds, and real objects to help students associate words with concrete objects they can see and touch. For example, teachers can use pictures of apples, play the sound of the word "التفاح/apple," and show real apples to help students understand and remember vocabulary more effectively.

The distribution of the use of these methods can be seen in Graph 2 below:

Graph 2. Distribution of the Use of Learning Methods
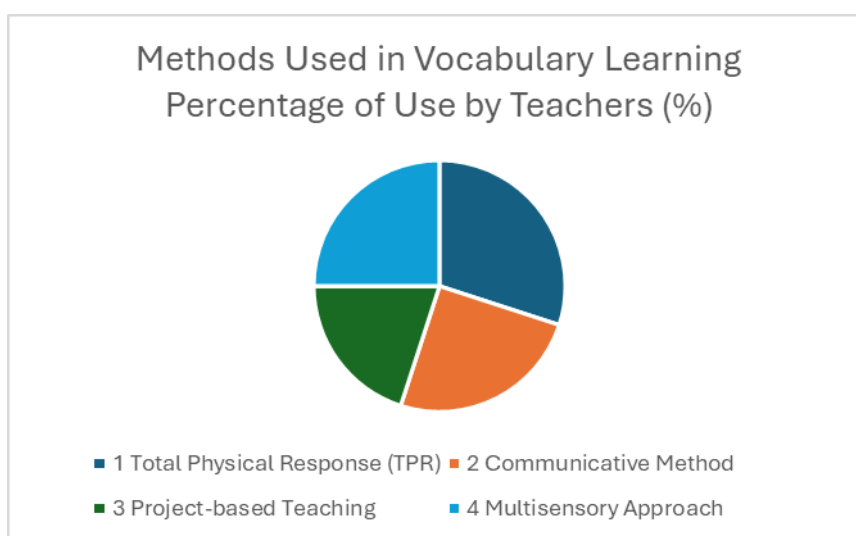
When it comes to learning methods, TPR and the multisensory approach are used with the same percentage (30%), followed by communicative methods (25%) and project-based teaching (20%). These methods help children be more active and engaged in learning Arabic vocabulary.

Effectiveness of Learning Strategies Used on Arabic Vocabulary Development

The effectiveness of learning strategies used in teaching Arabic vocabulary in early childhood can be measured through several indicators, such as the level of mastery of new vocabulary, students' active participation, students' ability to use language in sentences, and improved evaluation results. Teachers reported that students exposed to visual and audio-based learning strategies significantly improved vocabulary acquisition. Students' active participation increased significantly using methods such as TPR and games.

The effectiveness of learning strategies can be measured through students' ability to understand, remember, and use new vocabulary in relevant contexts. Based on interviews with teachers, here is a sample table displaying the results of interviews with 30 teachers regarding the effectiveness of using Arabic learning strategies, organized by four main factors. Each teacher answered the efficacy of the methods they use:

Table 2. Teacher Interview: Effectiveness of Learning Strategies

No.	Teacher Name	Strategy Effectiveness	Teacher's Answer
1	Teacher 1	New Vocabulary Mastery Level	"Using pictures and videos makes students remember new vocabulary faster."
2	Teacher 2	New Vocabulary Mastery Level	"Visual media helps students memorize new vocabulary easily and quickly."
3	Teacher 3	Active Student Participation	"The TPR method makes students more active when learning, especially when they move with the words."
4	Teacher 4	Active Student Participation	"Students were enthusiastic when using the interactive game method to learn vocabulary."
5	Teacher 5	Ability to Use Vocabulary	"The communicative method helps students use new vocabulary in simple classroom conversations."
6	Teacher 6	Ability to Use Vocabulary	"Daily conversations in Arabic improve students' ability to use vocabulary in the right context."
7	Teacher 7	Improvement in Periodic Evaluation	"Students who use audio-visual based projects tend to do better in vocabulary tests."
8	Teacher 8	Improvement in Periodic Evaluation	"Through simple projects, students can remember vocabulary better, reflected in higher test results."
9	Teacher 9	New Vocabulary Mastery Level	"Song-based teaching strategies help students memorize vocabulary in a fun way."
10	Teacher 10	Active Student Participation	"Students are more engaged when learning using TPR and fun movements."
11	Teacher 11	Ability to Use Vocabulary	"Encouraging students to speak in Arabic in class helps to reinforce understanding of new vocabulary."
12	Teacher 12	Improvement in Periodic Evaluation	"Students who studied with the audio-visual method showed significant improvement in periodic evaluation results."
13	Teacher 13	New Vocabulary Mastery Level	"Flashcards and other visuals help students remember vocabulary faster."
14	Teacher 14	Active Student Participation	"Game activities make students more active and enthusiastic in learning Arabic vocabulary."
15	Teacher 15	Ability to Use Vocabulary	"Simple conversations with students allow them to use new vocabulary in sentences more confidently."
16	Teacher 16	Improvement in Periodic Evaluation	"Practice-based projects are very effective; the results are visible in the increase in test scores."
17	Teacher 17	New Vocabulary Mastery Level	"Students remember new words faster when introduced with pictures and colors."
18	Teacher 18	Active Student Participation	"The physical movement in TPR makes students more enthusiastic and less bored during the lesson."
19	Teacher 19	Ability to Use Vocabulary	"Students tried to use them more often in class conversations after being introduced to the new vocabulary through the communicative method."
20	Teacher 20	Improvement in Periodic Evaluation	"Periodic evaluations showed improvement after students were taught using interactive media."
21	Teacher 21	New Vocabulary Mastery Level	"Visuals used during teaching make students remember and be more interested in new vocabulary."
22	Teacher 22	Active Student Participation	"Group games excite students and actively participate in vocabulary learning."

No.	Teacher Name	Strategy Effectiveness	Teacher's Answer
23	Teacher 23	Ability to Use Vocabulary	"Students can make simple sentences after being trained with new vocabulary through practical conversations in class."
24	Teacher 24	Improvement in Periodic Evaluation	"Creative projects help students better understand vocabulary, and the results are seen in periodic tests."
25	Teacher 25	New Vocabulary Mastery Level	"Audio-visual media is very effective in helping students remember and understand new vocabulary."
26	Teacher 26	Active Student Participation	"Physical activities such as TPR and singing make students more enthusiastic and participative in class."
27	Teacher 27	Ability to Use Vocabulary	"Students can use new vocabulary in class conversations, especially with the communicative method we apply."
28	Teacher 28	Improvement in Periodic Evaluation	"Regular evaluations show that students understand vocabulary better after learning through project-based and visual approaches."
29	Teacher 29	New Vocabulary Mastery Level	"Students memorize vocabulary faster through song-based teaching and engaging images."
30	Teacher 30	Active Student Participation	"Students are more active and enthusiastic when learning vocabulary with movement through TPR."

These indicators of strategy effectiveness are summarized in Graph 3 below:

Chart 3. Learning Strategy Effectiveness Based on Teacher Measurement
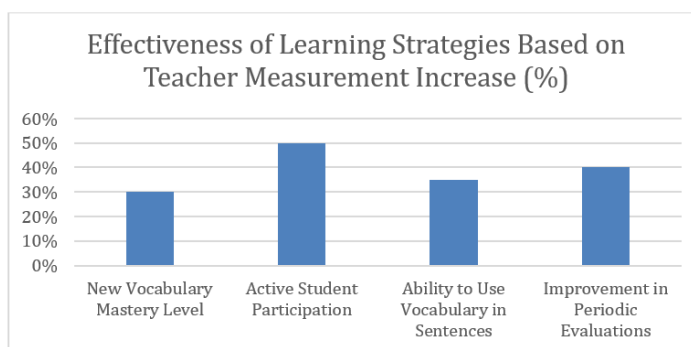
The graph above illustrates the effectiveness of the learning strategy based on measurements taken by the teacher. Students' active participation showed the most significant improvement (50%), followed by mastery of new vocabulary (45%), improvement in periodic evaluation (40%), and students' ability to use language in sentences (35%). This shows that the multisensory approach and interactive methods strongly support students' engagement in learning, which impacts vocabulary acquisition.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide strong evidence of the importance of using interactive and multisensory learning strategies in teaching Arabic vocabulary in early childhood at Integrated Islamic Primary Schools. Based on the observations and interviews, visual and audio media played a key role in improving students' vocabulary comprehension. Using pictures, videos, and sound helps students

associate new words with concrete visual concepts and captures their interest and attention during learning. This finding is consistent with research by Mashhadi & Jamalifar, which shows that visual media can improve vocabulary comprehension and retention in second language learning. They noted that children who learn with visual aids can better remember and use words in the proper context.[33]

In addition, the TPR method is highly effective in learning Arabic vocabulary at SDIT. TPR involves physical movements aligned with the taught words, allowing children to process vocabulary through motor sensors. This finding aligns with a study by Kuo et al., who found that the TPR method effectively improves vocabulary retention in second-language students, combining physical stimulation with verbal learning.[34] Students who use physical movements to pronounce new words tend to understand better and retain more extended vocabulary.

The communicative method, which focuses on using vocabulary in everyday conversation, has also proven effective in strengthening students' ability to use language in real contexts. This study found that students who engaged in Arabic discussions in class were better able to use the learned vocabulary in meaningful sentences. This result is similar to the research conducted by Ismail, where the use of a communicative approach in Arabic language teaching improves students' ability to apply new vocabulary in daily conversation situations.[35] This study shows that when vocabulary is used in social interactions, students tend to more easily understand the context of its use and integrate it into their daily lives.

The thematic approach is also widely applied in teaching Arabic vocabulary in SDIT. This approach involves teaching vocabulary based on themes relevant to students' daily lives, such as family, school, or animal themes. Noorhidawati's research supports this strategy, which states that the thematic approach can make it easier for children to understand and remember vocabulary because they can relate the words to familiar contexts.[36] This approach also increases learning relevance, indirectly strengthening students' interest in Arabic.

About similar research, several studies have found consistent results regarding the effectiveness of multisensory approaches and project-based learning. Research by Daza Gonzales et al. shows that multisensory strategies

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[33] Farzad Mashhadi and Golnaz Jamalifar, "Second Language Vocabulary Learning Through Visual and Textual Representation," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 192 (2015): 298–307, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.06.043.

[34] Fan-Ray Kuo et al., "The Effects of Embodiment-Based TPR Approach on Student English Vocabulary Learning Achievement, Retention and Acceptance," *Journal of King Saud University - Computer and Information Sciences* 26, no. 1 (2014): 63–70, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jksuci.2013.10.003.

[35] Ismail et al., "Penggunaan Strategi Pembelajaran Kosa Kata Bahasa Arab Pada Kalangan Pelajar Cemerlang."

[36] A. Noorhidawati, S.Ghazal Ghalebandi, and R. Siti Hajar, "How Do Young Children Engage with Mobile Apps? Cognitive, Psychomotor, and Affective Perspective," *Computers & Education* 87 (2015): 385, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2015.07.005.

involving students' five senses, such as seeing, hearing, and touching, can naturally and interactively accelerate vocabulary acquisition. This research supports the finding in this study that children who learn through multiple sensory stimuli have a deeper understanding of the vocabulary being taught.[37] On the other hand, research by Malkova and Kiselyova highlights the importance of project-based teaching in developing language skills. In this study, students who engaged in vocabulary-based projects could integrate new vocabulary with more complex contexts, helping them understand the use of language in a more functional way.[38]

This analysis shows that the strategies and methods applied at SDIT in teaching Arabic vocabulary are very practical and relevant to similar studies. Using visual media, the TPR method, and communicative and thematic approaches support vocabulary acquisition and increase students' active involvement in learning. This study adds strong empirical evidence on the importance of a holistic approach incorporating visual, physical, and verbal aspects in language teaching, particularly for young children.

Research Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

Although this study has shown significant results in improving early childhood Arabic vocabulary acquisition, some limitations must be acknowledged. Firstly, this study was only conducted in SDITs in the Riau Islands, so the results may not fully represent a broader context. Therefore, further research involving more schools with different backgrounds is needed to test the generalizability of these findings. Secondly, the study's relatively short duration may not be sufficient to evaluate the long-term effects of the implemented learning strategies. Long-term research is needed to assess whether methods such as TPR and multisensory approaches have a sustainable impact on students' language acquisition.

In addition, although this study highlights the importance of thematic and project approaches, there is not yet enough data to compare the effectiveness of these two approaches with other methods over a more extended period. Future research could focus on a comparative evaluation of different ways to identify the most optimal strategy for improving children's acquisition of Arabic vocabulary.

Overall, this study's findings are essential to Arabic language teaching, especially among early childhood in SDIT. By expanding the scope of the survey and exploring more variables, future research is expected to provide more comprehensive guidance for educators in improving the quality of Arabic language learning in Islamic schools.

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[37] María Teresa Daza Gonzalez et al., "Improving Phonological Skills and Reading Comprehension in Deaf Children: A New Multisensory Approach," *Scientific Studies of Reading* 27, no. 2 (2023): 119, https://doi.org/10.1080/10888438.2022.2095280.

[38] Irina. Yu. Malkova and Polina V. Kiselyova, "Development of Personal Competences in Project-Based Learning in the EFL Classroom," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 154 (2014): 254, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.10.146.

Conclusion

This study aims to explore the strategies and methods of learning Arabic vocabulary for early childhood in an Integrated Islamic Primary School, focusing on the effectiveness of using various interactive and contextual approaches, such as visual media, the TPR method, the thematic approach, and educational games. The results showed that these approaches were beneficial for students in remembering and understanding vocabulary, strengthening their mastery of the Arabic language, increasing active class participation, and supporting students' ability to use vocabulary in everyday sentences.

The study also revealed that interactive and contextual methods, such as TPR and multisensory approaches, improve vocabulary acquisition better than traditional methods. Students who learned through these approaches significantly improved new vocabulary acquisition, active class participation, and the ability to use vocabulary in everyday sentences. This confirms that learning strategies that combine visual, physical, and verbal techniques positively impact early childhood Arabic vocabulary development in SDIT. Overall, this study makes an essential contribution to the field of Arabic language teaching by showing that innovative and interactive strategies and methods can increase the effectiveness of vocabulary learning in early childhood. However, further research is needed to expand the scope, explore the potential of digital technology methods, and look at the long-term impact of these strategies on Arabic language learning in Islamic schools.

This study shows that teaching methods that combine visual, physical, and verbal effectively accelerate early childhood Arabic vocabulary acquisition in SDIT, improving students' recall and engagement in learning. However, some challenges are still faced, including limited learning resources that support innovation and the need for more significant support from parents at home. Further research is recommended to examine the use of digital apps and augmented reality technologies to increase student engagement and explore the long-term impact of multisensory and project-based approaches, which are expected to build a strong foundation of Arabic as a communication tool.

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