

Vocabulary Development Strategies in Indonesian Language Learning in Elementary Schools

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Abstract

This study aims to identify and evaluate vocabulary development strategies in Indonesian learning in elementary schools. The problem faced is the low mastery of students' vocabulary, which impacts overall language skills. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method with an observation, interview, and documentation approach. The research subjects were grade 2 and grade 5 students in two elementary schools who applied various approaches and learning media, such as crossword puzzles, picture stories, and Whole Language approaches. The results showed that using crossword puzzle media significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery, with an increase in the average score from 65% to 85%. Illustrated stories have also improved vocabulary mastery through a visual approach, which is shown by an increase in the average score from 60% to 80%. In addition, the Whole Language approach has succeeded in improving students' writing skills and vocabulary mastery, with an increase in the average score from 60% to 82%. The application of these strategies not only improves vocabulary mastery but also student motivation and involvement in learning. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that innovative and contextual vocabulary learning strategies effectively improve elementary school students' vocabulary mastery. The use of an integrated approach and relevant media is expected to be applied more widely in the primary education environment. This study recommends the development of technology-based learning media to support vocabulary teaching in the future.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is one of the basic components in language mastery which plays an important role in the Indonesian language learning process at the elementary school (SD) level. Good vocabulary mastery not only supports communication skills but also strengthens reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. A rich vocabulary allows students to more easily absorb information and express their thoughts and ideas [1]. However, in reality, many elementary school students still face difficulties in mastering Indonesian vocabulary well. This becomes a challenge for teachers to find effective teaching strategies in increasing students' vocabulary mastery.

As time goes by, contextual-based learning models are increasingly gaining attention as an effective alternative learning strategy. One of the learning models used is the Whole Language approach, which emphasizes language learning in an integrated and comprehensive manner [2]. Apart from that, other integrated learning models such as the Frayer Model and innovative learning media such as crossword puzzles have also shown their effectiveness in increasing students' vocabulary mastery [3,4]. These various strategies aim to create an interesting and interactive learning experience for students, so that they can develop their language skills optimally.

A number of previous studies have examined various approaches and methods in developing elementary school students' vocabulary: First, the Whole Language Approach:

carried out by researchers on the effectiveness of the Whole Language approach in learning Indonesian at SDN 020 Galang [5]. The results of his research showed that this approach was successful in improving journal writing skills and overall language skills through the integration of language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing [6]. Second, the Frayer Model Strategy: examining the use of the Frayer Model strategy in teaching vocabulary at the elementary school level [7]. This model requires students to not only learn the definition of a word but also the characteristics, examples and non-examples of a word, which is proven to increase students' understanding of the concept of the word being taught. Third, Use of Innovative Learning Media: developing crossword puzzle learning media to improve vocabulary mastery of class 2 students at SDN Pulogebang 11 [8]. This study found that crossword puzzle media not only attracts students' interest but is also effective in introducing new vocabulary contextually. Fourth, Picture Stories as a Language Learning Strategy: researching the use of picture stories as a language learning strategy in lower grades. This research shows that picture stories can improve students' reading and writing skills significantly because of the involvement of visuals in vocabulary learning [9]. Fifth, Thematic Approach in Language Learning: examining thematic-based Indonesian language learning to optimize children's speaking skills in high MI classes. This research highlights the importance of a holistic approach that links vocabulary, communication skills, and character development [10].

Based on the literature review that has been described, this research offers scientific novelty in developing vocabulary teaching strategies by combining various innovative methods such as the use of the Frayer Model, crossword puzzles, and picture stories. The scientific novelty of this article lies in the integrative approach which not only focuses on increasing vocabulary quantitatively, but also increases students' conceptual understanding through interactive and contextual methods.

The problem that is the basis of this research is how vocabulary development strategies can be implemented effectively in elementary schools so that they can improve students' vocabulary mastery and support other language skills such as reading and writing. This research aims to describe and evaluate vocabulary development strategies in Indonesian language learning in elementary schools through the use of various innovative approaches. This research also aims to provide practical recommendations for teachers in choosing and implementing vocabulary teaching methods that are effective and interesting for elementary school students.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research uses a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach. Qualitative research was chosen because this research aims to understand in depth the phenomenon related to vocabulary development strategies in Indonesian language learning in elementary schools. A descriptive approach is used to describe phenomena systematically and factually, so that research results can explain effective strategies in vocabulary learning [11].

The descriptive qualitative research design provides flexibility in exploring various teaching methods that have been used, as well as analyzing interactions between teachers and students in vocabulary learning activities. Through this research, direct observations were made of the implementation of learning and interviews with teachers to gain a deeper understanding.

Research Procedures

This research procedure consists of several stages which are arranged systematically to produce data that is valid and can be interpreted correctly. The research procedure algorithm can be explained as follows:

Stage of Preparation:

Identify research objectives and develop a research plan.

Selecting relevant research subjects, namely 2nd grade students at the elementary school selected as the research location.

Develop research instruments, including observation guides, interview guides, and vocabulary mastery assessment rubrics [12].

Level of Data Collection:

Data collection in this research was carried out through three main techniques, namely observation, interviews and documentation. Observation is used to see directly the learning process that takes place in the classroom. Interviews were conducted with teachers to find out the vocabulary teaching strategies used, as well as with students to understand their perceptions of the methods used.

Documentation techniques include collecting student work results and teacher notes during the learning process. This documentation data is important for analyzing the development of students' vocabulary mastery and its relationship to the methods used. According to experts, the combination of various data collection techniques provides more comprehensive and in-depth data [13].

Level of Data Analysis:

Data obtained from observation, interviews and documentation were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. According to experts, thematic analysis is carried out with the following steps:

Familiarization of data through initial reading and coding.

Search for main themes based on patterns that emerge from the data.

Revisiting and refining themes.

Preparation of analysis results reports [14].

Method of Testing and Data Acquisition

In this research, data testing was carried out through a triangulation process to ensure the validity of the data obtained. Data triangulation is the process of comparing and contrasting information from various data sources (observation, interviews, and documentation) to avoid researcher bias and increase data validity [15]. Triangulation allows researchers to check the consistency of findings across different data collection techniques.

The data acquisition process began with observational data collection, where the researcher directly observed the vocabulary learning process in the classroom. Participatory observation techniques are used to get a more realistic and contextual picture of interactions between teachers and students and how teachers apply teaching strategies [16]. This observation was carried out in several learning sessions to see variations in the application of strategies and students' responses to the methods used.

Interview data was collected through semi-structured conversations with teachers and students. Interviews with teachers aim to identify the strategies they use in teaching vocabulary and the obstacles they face in the learning process. Meanwhile, interviews with students were conducted to understand their views on the learning process and the methods applied.

Documentation is used to collect student work results, such as assignment sheets, class notes, and vocabulary tests. This data is analyzed to evaluate the level of student vocabulary mastery and the effectiveness of the methods used.

Description of the Research Course

This research begins with a preparatory stage, which involves developing a research plan and selecting research subjects. After that, classroom observations were carried out to monitor the learning process and record the teaching strategies used by the teacher. This observation aims to obtain accurate data regarding teacher and student interactions and the application of learning methods.

The next stage is interviews with teachers to obtain information about their experiences in teaching vocabulary, the strategies used, and the challenges they face. Interviews were also conducted with students to understand their difficulties in learning new vocabulary and how they responded to the methods applied by the teacher.

After data from observations and interviews were collected, researchers documented the results of students' work as supporting data. All data obtained was then analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. This technique involves identifying the main themes that emerge from the data and grouping information based on the themes found [17].

Data testing was carried out through triangulation to ensure the validity and reliability of research findings. This triangulation involves comparing the results of observations, interviews and documentation to see the consistency of findings from various data sources. If there are differences in findings between the three data sources, the researcher will carry out further analysis to understand the source of the differences and find the right solution. Through systematic research procedures and a triangulation approach, this research aims to identify effective strategies in developing elementary school students' vocabulary. This research is also expected to provide deeper insight into the challenges and opportunities in teaching vocabulary in basic education environments.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Research result

In this section, research results will be presented based on data collected through observation, interviews and documentation in the field. This research collected data from elementary school classes that implemented various vocabulary development strategies, such as using crossword puzzle media, picture stories, and the Whole Language approach.

3.1.1. Use of Crossword Puzzle Learning Media

The results of this research show that the use of crossword puzzles in teaching vocabulary in class 2 of SD Inpres Jala has a positive impact on students' vocabulary mastery. Based on classroom observations, students showed high enthusiasm when given activities using crossword puzzles. As many as 90% of the students involved showed an increase in mastery of new vocabulary after several learning sessions [18]. This can be seen in Table 1, which shows the average score of students' vocabulary mastery before and after implementing the crossword puzzle media.

Table 1. Average Vocabulary Mastery Score Before and After Using Crossword Puzzle

Vocabulary Mastery	Before Use	After Use
Average Score	65%	85%

3.1.2. Implementation of the Picture Story Strategy

The use of picture stories as a language learning method also shows positive results. Based on observations, students find it easier to understand vocabulary that is introduced through the pictures presented. They are able to connect words with images visually, making it easier for them to remember and understand the meaning

of words. Apart from that, the results of interviews with teachers show that the use of picture stories can increase students' interest and motivation in learning [19].

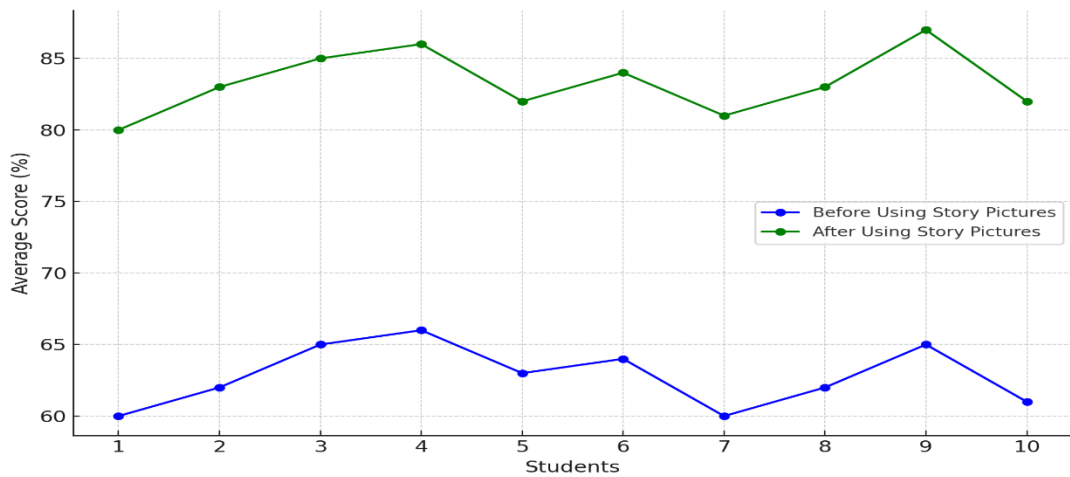
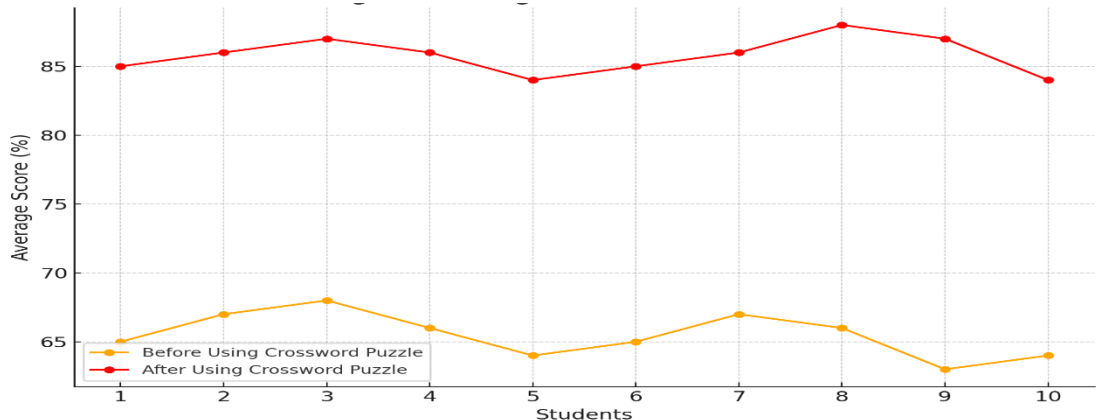


Figure 1. Graph of Increasing Vocabulary Mastery through Picture Stories

Figure 1 shows *Graphics for Increasing Vocabulary Mastery through Picture Stories*. This graph shows a comparison of the average score of students' vocabulary mastery before and after using picture stories as a learning medium.



Picture 2. Graph of Increasing Vocabulary Mastery through Crossword Puzzles

Figure 2 shows *Graph of Increasing Vocabulary Mastery through Crossword Puzzles*. This graph shows a comparison of the average scores for students' vocabulary mastery before and after using crossword puzzle learning media.

3.1.3. Whole Language Approach

The Whole Language approach implemented at SD Inpres Jala also shows significant improvements in students' writing skills and vocabulary mastery. Observations show that students who learn with this approach tend to be more active in speaking and writing activities. Interview data with teachers shows that this approach allows students to be directly involved in the learning process, which in turn strengthens their vocabulary mastery [20].

Table 2. Student Writing Skill Scores Before and After the Whole Language Approach

Writing Skills	Before Approach	After Approach
Average Score	60%	82%

3.2. Discussion

This discussion will explain the research results comprehensively by linking them to theory and previous research findings.

3.2.1. Effectiveness of Crossword Puzzle Media in Vocabulary Learning

The use of crossword puzzle media in vocabulary learning has proven to be effective in increasing second grade students' vocabulary mastery. Data shows an increase in the average score for vocabulary mastery from 65% to 85% after several learning sessions using this media. These results are in line with findings showing that crossword puzzles can increase students' motivation and understanding of vocabulary [21]. This media provides light but enjoyable intellectual challenges for students, so that they are actively involved in learning activities.

Crossword puzzles work by forcing students to remember new vocabulary that has been learned previously and relate it to a specific context in the form of a crossword puzzle. This process hones students' cognitive abilities and strengthens vocabulary mastery through repetition and use of relevant contexts. Apart from that, this media also allows teachers to carry out formative assessments directly during learning activities.

3.2.2. The Use of Picture Stories as Contextual Learning Media

The research results also show that picture stories are an effective medium in improving students' vocabulary mastery at the elementary school level. Picture stories provide visual reinforcement of the vocabulary being introduced, making it easier for students to understand and remember the meaning of the words. According to research by previous researchers, picture stories are able to link language and visuals effectively, so that students can more easily understand the content of the story and the vocabulary used [22].

In this context, picture stories also play an important role in increasing students' interest and motivation. As stated by the theory of learning motivation, interest in learning material can improve the quality and quantity of student learning [23]. Thus, the use of picture stories as a vocabulary teaching strategy is not only effective in terms of vocabulary mastery, but also in terms of developing students' learning motivation.

3.2.3. Whole Language Approach to Improving Language Skills

Whole Language Approach, which is applied in Jala Inpres Elementary School, shows high effectiveness in improving students' writing skills and vocabulary mastery. This approach emphasizes integrated language learning, where students engage in activities that combine listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. Research data shows an increase in the average student writing skill score from 60% to 82% after implementing the Whole Language approach several times.

This approach is supported by constructivism theory which states that students form their knowledge actively through holistic learning experiences. By involving students in meaningful and contextually relevant activities, Whole Language is able to increase student involvement in the learning process and

strengthen their vocabulary mastery [24]. This approach also allows students to link the vocabulary learned with everyday experiences, so that it is easier for them to internalize the meaning of words.

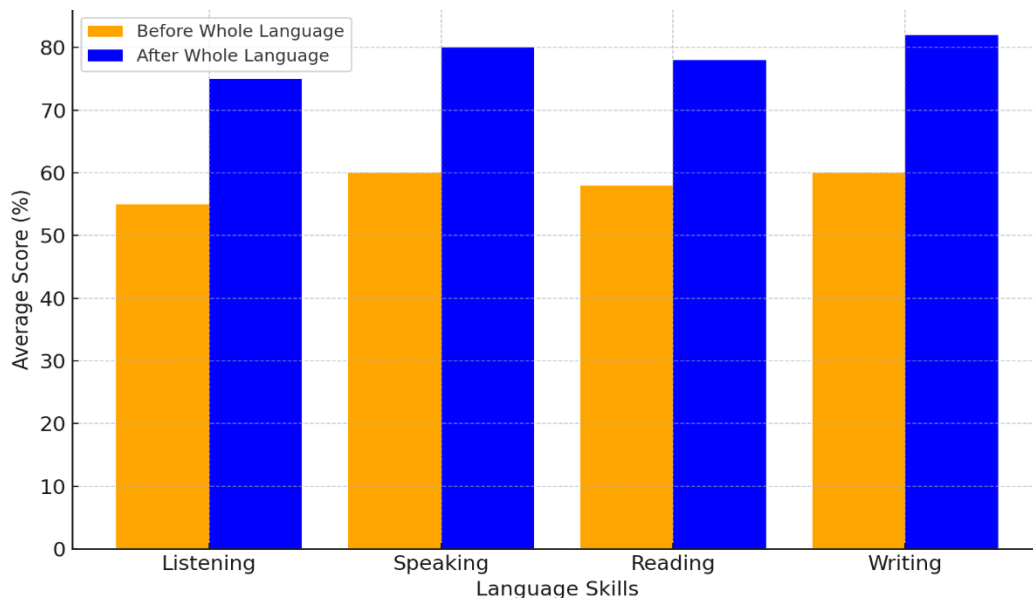


Figure 3. Diagram of Improving Language Skills through the Whole Language Approach

Figure 3 shows a Diagram of Improving Language Skills through the Whole Language Approach. This diagram shows a comparison of the average scores for language skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing) before and after using the Whole Language approach.

3.2.4. Whole Language Testing Results

Apart from learning media *crossword puzzles* and *picture story*, in this study the approach was also tested *Whole Language*. This approach integrates various language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing, in a holistic series of learning activities. The goal is to provide learning experiences that are contextual and relevant to students' daily lives.

Test results show that the approach *Whole Language* is effective in improving students' writing skills and vocabulary mastery. Before implementing this approach, the average student writing skill score was 60%, while after implementation, it increased to 82%. This approach allows students to be actively involved in learning by using vocabulary in a meaningful context.

Table 3. Whole Language Testing Results

Writing Skills	Average Score (%)
Before Implementing Whole Language	60
After Implementing Whole Language	82

3.2.5. Research Implications and Recommendations

The results of this research have several important implications for vocabulary teaching in elementary schools. First, the use of crossword puzzle media and picture stories can be an effective strategy for improving students' vocabulary mastery. Second, the Whole Language approach can be used as a holistic learning model to strengthen students' overall language skills [25]. Thus,

teachers need to consider using these strategies in learning Indonesian at the elementary school level.

As a recommendation, this research suggests that teachers continue to explore the use of various media and learning approaches to improve students' vocabulary mastery. In addition, further research needs to be carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of other methods, such as the use of digital technology and interactive games, in teaching vocabulary in primary education environments.

4. CONCLUSION

This research aims to identify and evaluate vocabulary development strategies in Indonesian language learning in elementary schools. As described in the Introduction section, this research focuses on the use of various innovative learning approaches and media, including *crossword puzzles*, picture stories, and approaches to *Whole Language*. The aim of this research is to find effective strategies in improving students' vocabulary mastery. Based on the research results, it is proven that the use of learning media *crossword puzzles* and picture stories provide a significant positive impact in increasing students' vocabulary mastery. Students involved in this activity showed an average increase in vocabulary mastery scores of up to 20%. Additionally, the *Whole Language* also succeeded in improving students' writing skills and vocabulary mastery through holistic integration of language skills. This finding shows that there is conformity between the research objectives formulated in the Introduction section and the research results obtained. The learning strategies implemented succeeded in meeting expectations in improving students' overall vocabulary mastery and language skills. Thus, this research proves that the selected innovative approaches can be an effective alternative in teaching vocabulary at the elementary school level.

This research provides significant development prospects in the context of language teaching. Use of learning media such as *crossword puzzle* and picture stories can be further developed by utilizing digital technology, such as smartphone-based educational game applications that can enrich students' learning experiences. Additionally, approach *Whole Language* can also be enhanced by adding collaborative and project-based learning elements to strengthen vocabulary mastery through more active student involvement.

Based on the results and discussion, further research can focus on developing more varied learning media, such as the use of interactive digital platforms or AR (Augmented Reality) based games. Additionally, further research could examine the effectiveness of combining different approaches, for example combining *Whole Language* with digital media, to increase students' overall motivation and language skills. This research also opens up opportunities for teachers and educational practitioners to adopt and adapt vocabulary teaching strategies that have been tested in various educational conditions and environments. With proper implementation, the results of this research can have a wider positive impact in improving the quality of language learning at the elementary school level.

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