

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Theoretical Framework

This theoretical framework is presented to establish a clearer understanding of the fundamental concepts that underpin this research, which focuses on comparing the Proprioceptive Method and the Mimicry Memorization Method in relation to students' vocabulary mastery. This chapter outlines and discusses relevant theories, definitions, and principles derived from previous studies and linguistic research, providing a comprehensive foundation for the present investigation.

Furthermore, the theories elaborated in this section serve as a conceptual guide for the researcher in developing the research design, formulating hypotheses, and interpreting the findings. By examining the nature of vocabulary mastery and the pedagogical methods employed to enhance it, this chapter aims to bridge theoretical perspectives with practical classroom application, ensuring that the study is grounded in well-established academic discourse.

1. Students' Vocabulary Mastery

According to the national English curriculum, junior high school students are expected to master approximately 2,000 vocabulary words by the time they graduate³. It is in line with the This target implies that students should acquire around 667 words per academic year, which translates to about 56 words per month. In the context of this study, the researcher conducted four instructional meetings in the classroom. Therefore, it is expected that the students would master approximately seven new vocabulary items per meeting.

³ Dadang Dachajar, (2008), *Get Success UN Bahasa Inggris*, Anggota IKPI, Penerbit Grafindo Media Pratama, p.1

This target serves as a reference for measuring students' vocabulary mastery within the limited duration of the research. By setting a specific vocabulary acquisition goal, the researcher can more effectively evaluate the impact of the Proprioceptive Method and the Mimicry Memorization Method on students' progress in learning and retaining English vocabulary.

a. Mastery

The term “mastery” originates from the word “master”, which means becoming skilled or proficient in the use or understanding of something. In general, mastery implies complete command, control, or high-level competence in a particular field, subject, or skill⁴. It reflects an individual's ability to perform or apply knowledge effectively as a result of deep understanding and consistent practice. Furthermore, mastery can be viewed as both the process and outcome of learning that leads to expertise⁵. It involves not only acquiring knowledge but also developing the capacity to use that knowledge appropriately in various contexts. In the educational context, mastery signifies that a learner has reached a level of proficiency that enables them to apply learned concepts or skills accurately, confidently, and independently.

According to Bloom (1956) in his *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, mastery refers to the highest level of learning achievement in which learners demonstrate full understanding, application, and synthesis of knowledge or skills⁶. Mastery learning, as further developed by Bloom (1968), emphasizes that all students are capable of achieving a high level of understanding if provided with sufficient time and appropriate

⁴ Longman, *Advanced American Dictionary New Edition*, (England: Pearson Education Limited, 2007), p.984

⁵ Merriam Websters' *Colligate Dictionary Eleventh Edition*, (USA: Merriam Webster inc. 2003) p. 764

⁶ Benjamin S. Bloom, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956), p. 12

instructional support⁷. Similarly, Carroll (1963) in his Model of School Learning defines mastery as the extent to which a learner achieves an instructional goal, which is determined by the quality of instruction, learner aptitude, and perseverance⁸. These expert views highlight that mastery is not merely about memorizing information but about attaining deep comprehension and the ability to use knowledge effectively in various contexts.

b. Vocabulary

Vocabulary constitutes one of the most essential components of language proficiency because it provides the building blocks for communication. Without an adequate vocabulary base, learners cannot convey meaning effectively, even when they possess strong grammatical knowledge. Recent scholars argue that vocabulary is not merely a collection of words but a complex system involving form, meaning, and use, all of which must be integrated for successful language development. As Webb (2015) highlights, vocabulary knowledge functions as the core of language competence, enabling learners to understand input and express ideas accurately⁹.

Vocabulary knowledge itself is multidimensional. It includes knowledge of a word's phonological and orthographic form, denotative and connotative meaning, and contextual use, whether in spoken or written discourse. Teng (2016) emphasizes that effective vocabulary learning requires students to internalize these multiple dimensions so that words can be accessed and retrieved fluently in communication¹⁰. In other

⁷ Benjamin S. Bloom, *Learning for Mastery* (Evaluation Comment 1, no. 2, 1968), 1–12

⁸ John B. Carroll, "A Model of School Learning", *Teachers College Record* 64, no. 8 (1963): p. 723–733.

⁹ Webb, S. (2015). Extensive reading, vocabulary learning, and the role of input. *The Language Teacher*, 39(1), p. 23–27.

¹⁰ Teng, F. (2016). Immediate and delayed effects of embedded metacognitive vocabulary strategy instruction on vocabulary retention of EFL learners. *The Language Learning Journal*, 44(1), p. 68–82.

words, vocabulary mastery involves more than memorizing word lists—it requires deep processing and meaningful engagement with lexical items.

Moreover, vocabulary development plays a crucial role in supporting other language skills such as reading, speaking, and writing. A strong vocabulary base allows learners to comprehend texts more efficiently and participate more confidently in oral communication. Schmitt (2017) notes that vocabulary knowledge strongly predicts learners' overall academic success in English, especially in EFL contexts where language exposure is limited¹¹. Therefore, improving students' vocabulary mastery is fundamental for achieving broader language learning goals.

Given its importance, vocabulary instruction must be supported by appropriate teaching strategies, meaningful practice, and varied exposure to new lexical items. Nation (2015) asserts that effective vocabulary teaching combines intentional learning—such as explicit teaching and memorization strategies—with incidental learning gained through reading, listening, and communicative tasks. When these approaches are integrated, learners are more likely to retain new vocabulary, apply it in real contexts, and gradually develop a robust lexical repertoire that supports their language proficiency¹².

In addition, the importance of vocabulary knowledge can also be viewed from an Islamic perspective. The Holy Qur'an highlights the foundational role of naming and lexical knowledge in human cognition. Allah the Almighty teaches Prophet Adam the names of all things before commanding him to mention them. As stated in Surah Al-Baqarah 33:

¹¹ Schmitt, N. (2017). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press 2nd ed., p. 3–23

¹² Nation, I. S. P. (2015). *The vocabulary dimension in language teaching*. In M. Celce-Murcia, D. M. Brinton, & M. A. Snow (Eds.), **Teaching English as a second or foreign language**. National Geographic Learning 4th ed., p. 444–457

قَالَ يَادَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ
إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ٣٣

“And He taught Adam the names of all things... He said, ‘O Adam, inform them of their names.’ And when he had informed them of their names, He said, ‘Did I not tell you that I know the unseen of the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you conceal?’”¹³

This verse signifies that the very first knowledge bestowed upon humankind was lexical—the knowledge of names, which represents the essence of vocabulary. It underscores that the ability to identify, name, and articulate concepts is central to human learning, communication, and intellectual development.

Furthermore, the Qur’an again emphasizes the role of language and vocabulary as divine gifts enabling comprehension and expression. In Surah Ar-Rahman 1–4, Allah declares:

الرَّحْمَنُ ۝ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ۝ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ۝ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ۝

“The Most Merciful taught the Qur’an, created man, and taught him articulate speech.”¹⁴

The phrase *allamahu al-bayān* (taught him articulate speech) implies that the capacity for linguistic expression—including vocabulary use—is divinely endowed and essential for human interaction. These verses collectively highlight that vocabulary is not only a linguistic necessity but also a fundamental aspect of human knowledge, granted by Allah to enable understanding, reasoning, and communication.

¹³ Abdullah Yusuf, (2004), The Meaning of The Holy Qur’an, 9th Edition Beltsville, Maryland: Amana Publication p. 33

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 531

In conclusion, vocabulary represents a foundational component of language proficiency and serves as a central determinant of learners' success in acquiring a second or foreign language. A robust vocabulary enables students to comprehend spoken and written texts, express ideas accurately, and participate more confidently in classroom interactions. Conversely, limited vocabulary knowledge often results in communication breakdowns, reduced motivation, and difficulties in mastering other linguistic aspects such as grammar, reading comprehension, and writing performance.

The theoretical perspectives and Qur'anic insights discussed above highlight that vocabulary development is not merely a linguistic process but also an intellectual endeavor encouraged in Islamic tradition—emphasizing the value of naming, understanding, and discerning meanings. Therefore, strengthening students' vocabulary mastery through effective, engaging, and pedagogically sound techniques is essential for fostering meaningful language learning and supporting overall academic achievement.

1. Kinds of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is not a monolithic concept; rather, it consists of multiple dimensions that reflect the different ways learners internalize and use lexical items. Scholars have proposed various classifications of vocabulary based on its function, modality, and level of mastery. One influential classification is provided by Haycraft, as cited in Hatch and Brown (1995), who distinguishes between **receptive vocabulary** and **productive vocabulary**. This distinction has become fundamental in vocabulary acquisition research because it highlights the gap between the ability to understand words and the ability to use them actively in communication.¹⁵

a. Receptive Vocabulary

¹⁵ Mofareh Alqahtani, (2015), the importance of vocabulary in language learning and how to be taught, International Journal of Teaching and Education Vol. III, p. 3

Receptive vocabulary refers to the lexicon that learners can recognize and comprehend when they encounter it in listening or reading.¹⁶ At this stage, learners are able to associate words with their meanings when the words appear in meaningful contexts, but they do not yet possess sufficient control to produce them independently.

Receptive vocabulary is therefore considered a “passive” element of lexical knowledge. However, it plays a crucial role in language development, as comprehension is typically a precursor to production. In other words, it emphasizes that receptive vocabulary is essential for understanding texts, acquiring new information, and developing reading fluency. In this sense, receptive vocabulary serves as the foundation upon which deeper lexical mastery is built.

b. Productive Vocabulary

Productive vocabulary comprises the set of words that learners can both understand and use accurately in oral or written communication.¹⁷ Mastery of productive vocabulary requires not only knowledge of word meaning but also the ability to pronounce, spell, and use the word according to grammatical rules and pragmatic contexts. Schmitt states that productive vocabulary reflects a higher degree of lexical competence because it involves active retrieval and appropriate use in real-time communication.¹⁸ Unlike receptive vocabulary, which relies on recognition, productive vocabulary requires learners to generate

¹⁶ Hatch, E., & Brown, C. (1995). *Vocabulary, semantics, and language education*, Cambridge University Press, p. 370.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 372

¹⁸ Schmitt, N. (2014). *Size and depth of vocabulary knowledge: What the research shows*, Language Learning Journal p. 153–155

language independently, making it a critical indicator of overall language proficiency.

Beyond these two categories, Hiebert and Kamil propose a broader framework that includes **oral vocabulary**, **print vocabulary**, and **productive vocabulary**, each capturing different modalities of language use¹⁹:

1. **Oral vocabulary** refers to the words learners understand and can use during spoken communication. This category is strongly associated with listening and speaking competencies and contributes significantly to verbal fluency.
2. **Print vocabulary** consists of the words learners comprehend when reading or writing. Print vocabulary is crucial for literacy development, academic reading, and comprehension of written texts.
3. **Productive vocabulary**, similar to previously defined, includes words learners can actively use in writing or speaking. These words are typically well-practiced, familiar, and integrated into learners' communicative repertoire.

Taken together, these classifications demonstrate that vocabulary knowledge is multifaceted, involving both receptive and productive dimensions across oral and written modalities. Understanding these distinctions is essential for designing effective vocabulary instruction. As Nation and Webb emphasize, vocabulary teaching must address not only recognition and meaning but also use, collocation, and fluency to equip learners with the lexical tools necessary for successful communication. This comprehensive perspective highlights the need for pedagogical approaches that integrate exposure, practice, and

¹⁹ Hiebert, E. H., & Kamil, M. L. (2005). *Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research to practice*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, p. 3–4

meaningful use of vocabulary to support students' overall language development.²⁰

2. Problems in Learning Vocabulary

Vocabulary learning presents a range of challenges for students, particularly in foreign-language contexts where exposure to authentic input is limited. Learners may encounter difficulties not only in memorizing new lexical items but also in understanding and using them appropriately. Pronunciation and spelling often pose significant obstacles, especially in English, where the relationship between sound and written form is inconsistent. As Nation explains, irregular phoneme–grapheme correspondences can create confusion for learners, making it harder for them to store and retrieve vocabulary accurately.²¹ Furthermore, the length and structural complexity of certain words can also impede learning. Longer words or words containing unfamiliar morphological components may be more difficult to process, recall, and integrate into active use. These factors highlight that vocabulary learning is not limited to memorizing definitions but requires mastery across multiple linguistic dimensions.

Grammar and meaning also contribute substantially to learners' difficulties. Many English words are polysemous, carrying several meanings depending on context, which increases the cognitive load for learners. Students may also struggle with understanding how vocabulary interacts with grammatical structures, such as the correct use of word classes, inflectional forms, or syntactic patterns. Webb and Nation argue that without adequate knowledge of grammatical behaviour and collocations, learners may misuse vocabulary or fail to produce meaningful and natural expressions.²² Additionally, the

²⁰ Nation, I. S. P., & Webb, S. (2017). *How vocabulary is learned*, Oxford University Press, p. 25–27

²¹ Nation, I. S. P. (2013). *Learning vocabulary in another language*, Cambridge University Press 2nd ed., p. 67–68

²² Webb, S., & Nation, I. S. P. (2017). *How vocabulary is learned*, Oxford University Press p. 30–32

abstractness of some words, cultural nuances, or idiomatic expressions can further complicate comprehension. These challenges reaffirm the need for systematic, explicit vocabulary instruction that addresses pronunciation, form, usage, and meaning to support learners' lexical development more effectively.

3. Principles in Teaching Vocabularies

Teaching vocabulary is one of the most crucial aspects of language learning because vocabulary serves as the foundation for all communication. According to Paul Nation, vocabulary learning should be systematic, meaningful, and linked to learners' prior knowledge so that words are not memorized in isolation but connected conceptually.²³ When teachers introduce new vocabulary through relevant contexts and situations, students can associate meaning with experience, which leads to better retention and understanding. This approach not only enriches students' lexicon but also encourages active use of words in communication.

Another important principle is that vocabulary should be taught through both receptive and productive skills. Students must first recognize and understand words (receptive knowledge) before they can use them effectively in speaking and writing (productive knowledge). Teachers are encouraged to provide multiple exposures to new vocabulary in various contexts—listening, reading, speaking, and writing—to strengthen memory and usage. As Ismail et al. (2017) explain, integrated vocabulary instruction that combines oral and written exposure helps students internalize language patterns and enhances long-term retention²⁴.

²³ Nation, P. (2014). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press, p. 27

²⁴ Ismail, N. S., Zaid, S. B., Mohamed, M. H., & Rouyan, N. M. (2017). *Vocabulary Teaching and Learning Principles in Classroom Practices*. *Arab World English Journal*, 8(3), p. 125–136

A third principle highlights the importance of frequency and relevance. Learners should focus on high-frequency and need-based vocabulary items that are immediately useful for communication. Teaching too many unfamiliar or low-frequency words at once can overwhelm learners and hinder progress. Instead, teachers should prioritize vocabulary that students are most likely to encounter and use in authentic contexts. This focus ensures that vocabulary instruction remains practical, efficient, and aligned with real-life language needs.

Furthermore, effective vocabulary instruction must emphasize contextual and active learning. Vocabulary cannot be fully acquired through rote memorization; instead, students must engage with words through meaningful use. Activities such as storytelling, dialogues, games, and collaborative writing tasks provide opportunities for learners to apply new vocabulary in context, which deepens understanding and promotes communicative competence. Dakhi (2019) stresses that active engagement allows students to move vocabulary from short-term to long-term memory and fosters a sense of ownership over language learning.²⁵

Lastly, teaching vocabulary should foster learner autonomy and strategy development. Teachers need to equip students with strategies such as guessing meaning from context, using dictionaries effectively, and applying word-formation knowledge to derive meaning.²⁶ These strategies enable learners to continue expanding their vocabulary beyond the classroom. Vocabulary teaching, therefore, is not only about transferring knowledge but also about empowering students to become independent, strategic, and motivated language users.

²⁵ Dakhi, S. (2019). *The Principles and the Teaching of English Vocabulary: A Review*. *Journal of English Teaching*, 5(1), p. 48–61

²⁶ Oxford, R. (2016). *Teaching and Researching Language Learning Strategies: Self-Regulation in Context*. Routledge, p. 112

2. Proprioceptive Method

The proprioceptive method is an instructional approach that integrates bodily movement with cognitive processing to enhance vocabulary acquisition and retention. The term *proprioception* refers to the body's sense of movement, position, and orientation, enabling learners to connect physical action with language meaning.²⁷ In this method, students are encouraged to engage in physical activities—such as mimicking actions, using gestures, or manipulating objects—while learning new vocabulary. This kinesthetic engagement stimulates multiple senses, creating stronger neural connections that aid long-term memory retention.

From a theoretical standpoint, proprioceptive learning aligns with the concept of *embodied cognition*, which asserts that cognitive processes are grounded in the body's sensory and motor systems. When learners perform physical actions associated with words, their comprehension and recall improve significantly because the experience becomes embedded in both cognitive and motor memory. For instance, when a student physically acts out the verb “jump,” the motor activity reinforces the conceptual meaning of the word, making it easier to recall later. This principle mirrors Asher's (2015) *Total Physical Response (TPR)* approach, which demonstrates that movement-based language learning increases understanding and retention.²⁸

The proprioceptive method not only supports vocabulary mastery but also enhances learners' motivation and engagement. Physical participation reduces classroom anxiety and fosters a more dynamic, enjoyable learning environment.⁶ Instead of passively memorizing lists of words, students actively interact with the language, which sustains their interest and concentration. In a study by Ismail and Zainuddin (2016), students who learned vocabulary

636 ²⁷ Wilson, M. (2016). *Six Views of Embodied Cognition*. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 9(4), p. 625–

²⁸ Asher, J. (2015). *Learning Another Language Through Actions* (7th ed.). Sky Oaks Productions, p. 45

through kinesthetic activities achieved higher retention and greater motivation than those taught through traditional lecture-based methods²⁹. This approach also aligns with affective learning principles, which emphasize the importance of emotional involvement in the learning process.

A core strength of the proprioceptive method lies in its multi-modal reinforcement. Learners who combine auditory, visual, and physical cues when learning new words develop more durable memory traces. When they hear a word, visualize it, and act it out simultaneously, their sensory experiences overlap, strengthening neural encoding. This process leads to improved pronunciation, faster recall, and a more natural use of vocabulary in speech. Teachers who use this approach help learners move beyond rote memorization toward meaningful, embodied understanding of language.

In line with constructivist theory, the proprioceptive method enables students to construct knowledge through active experience. According to Vygotsky (2016), learning occurs most effectively when learners interact with their environment and internalize concepts through guided social and physical activity.³⁰ By applying this principle, teachers transform their classrooms into interactive learning spaces where students can “feel” and “experience” language, not just memorize it. This approach promotes higher-order thinking skills and strengthens the connection between perception, action, and meaning.

To effectively implement the proprioceptive method in vocabulary teaching, teachers can follow several key steps:

- 1. Introduce words through movement** — Present new vocabulary along with physical gestures or actions. For example, when teaching verbs like *run*, *jump*, or *clap*, the teacher performs the action while saying the word aloud, prompting students to imitate.

²⁹ Ismail, N. S., & Zainuddin, S. Z. (2016). *The Effect of Kinesthetic Activities in Teaching Vocabulary to Young Learners*. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 9(9), p. 50–60

³⁰ Vygotsky, L. S. (2016). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Harvard University Press, p. 85

2. **Use total physical response (TPR) activities** — Provide commands such as “stand up,” “open your book,” or “touch your head,” allowing students to demonstrate comprehension through physical response before speaking.
3. **Incorporate role-playing and dramatization** — Ask students to act out short dialogues or real-life scenarios that require using target vocabulary.
4. **Create gesture-based games** — Implement games like *Simon Says*, *Action Bingo*, or *Charades* to reinforce vocabulary through play.
5. **Use movement for abstract words** — For non-physical vocabulary, use symbolic gestures (e.g., heart gesture for *love*, hands over ears for *ignore*) to maintain physical association.
6. **Encourage reflection** — After each activity, ask learners to verbalize what they did and how it relates to the vocabulary, reinforcing both motor and cognitive connections.

By consistently applying these strategies, teachers can transform vocabulary lessons into interactive, engaging, and memorable experiences that support all learning styles—visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.

In conclusion, the proprioceptive method represents an effective pedagogical approach that unites movement, cognition, and emotional engagement in language learning. Through embodied experiences, students achieve deeper comprehension, stronger retention, and higher motivation. When implemented systematically, this method not only improves vocabulary mastery but also fosters holistic language development across listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

3. Mimicry Memorization Method

The Mimicry Memorization Method is a traditional yet effective approach to language teaching that emphasizes imitation and repetition as primary tools for language acquisition.

It is based on the belief that language is best learned through frequent exposure and accurate repetition of model sentences or dialogues. Learners first listen attentively to language input, imitate the sounds, intonation, and rhythm, and then memorize the structures to internalize the target language.³¹ This method is deeply rooted in the audiolingual approach, which views language learning as the formation of habits through repetition and reinforcement. In vocabulary teaching, mimicry memorization is used to help students acquire correct pronunciation, stress patterns, and contextual usage through continuous practice and imitation.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), the mimicry memorization approach emphasizes listening and speaking before reading and writing, enabling students to master oral proficiency as the foundation of language learning.³² The technique reflects a *behaviorist learning model*, where habit formation occurs through stimulus-response reinforcement. Learners imitate linguistic patterns from teachers or audio materials, receive corrective feedback, and gradually form accurate speech habits.⁵ This approach is particularly beneficial for learners in early stages of language acquisition who need structured, repetitive input to internalize vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar patterns.

In addition, Brown (2015) asserts that mimicry memorization builds confidence among learners by reducing cognitive load and promoting automaticity in language use.³³ When learners repeatedly practice familiar phrases and vocabulary, they become more fluent and less dependent on conscious translation. This method also strengthens phonological awareness, an essential skill for accurate pronunciation and listening comprehension.

Research by Rahman and Arif (2016) indicates that students taught through mimicry

³¹ Dakhi, S. (2019). *The Principles and the Teaching of English Vocabulary: A Review*. *Journal of English Teaching*, 5(1), p. 48–61

³² Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press, p. 57–59

³³ Brown, H. D. (2015). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (6th ed.). Pearson Education, p.

memorization retained vocabulary more effectively and were able to use it spontaneously in oral communication compared to those taught through text-based memorization.³⁴

To effectively apply the Mimicry Memorization Method, teachers can follow a structured set of instructional steps designed to foster repetition, reinforcement, and active participation:

1. **Model the target vocabulary or sentence pattern** — The teacher pronounces or plays an audio model of the word or phrase several times, ensuring students hear the correct pronunciation and rhythm. For example, for the phrase “How are you?”, the teacher says it slowly and naturally three times.
2. **Choral repetition** — The class repeats the word or phrase together in unison to practice pronunciation and intonation.
3. **Individual repetition** — The teacher calls on individual students to repeat the word or phrase, providing immediate feedback and correction if necessary.
4. **Substitution drills** — Once the basic form is memorized, the teacher substitutes key words with new vocabulary. For example:
 - Teacher: “How are you?”
 - Students: “How are you?”
 - Teacher: “How is your mother?”
 - Students: “How is your mother?”

This reinforces both sentence structure and vocabulary.

5. **Dialogue memorization and performance** — Students practice short dialogues in pairs, then perform them for the class. This reinforces memorized expressions through context.

³⁴ Rahman, F., & Arif, M. (2016). *Improving Vocabulary Retention through Mimicry Memorization Technique. International Journal of Language Education*, 4(2), p. 22–31

6. **Gradual transfer to spontaneous use** — Finally, students use the memorized vocabulary in free practice activities such as short conversations, storytelling, or classroom discussions.

Through these steps, learners internalize vocabulary and structures not only through repetition but also through contextualized communication. Teachers play a critical role as *models and facilitators*, ensuring accurate pronunciation and encouraging confidence in speaking. This method is especially effective in environments where English exposure is limited, such as EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms, because it allows learners to simulate authentic language use through guided practice.

The mimicry memorization method also complements proprioceptive learning by combining auditory and verbal repetition with limited physical cues. Teachers can integrate gestures, visual aids, or contextual prompts to help students associate meaning with sound. For instance, while teaching the word “*open*,” the teacher can demonstrate the action of opening a book as students repeat the word aloud. This hybrid approach ensures that learners not only memorize vocabulary but also understand its practical meaning. When consistently practiced, mimicry memorization strengthens automatic recall, pronunciation accuracy, and fluency in everyday communication.³⁵

In conclusion, the Mimicry Memorization Method remains a valuable instructional strategy in vocabulary teaching, particularly for beginners. It offers a structured, repetition-based learning environment where learners can develop pronunciation accuracy, rhythm, and confidence in speaking. By implementing it systematically through listening, imitation, and memorized dialogues, teachers can help learners internalize vocabulary more deeply and use it effectively in communicative contexts.

³⁵ Thornbury, S. (2017). *How to Teach Vocabulary*. Pearson Education Limited, p. 59–61

B. Conceptual Framework

Mastering vocabulary is a fundamental component of second language acquisition, serving as the foundation for effective communication and comprehension. Vocabulary knowledge enables learners to express ideas precisely, comprehend written and spoken texts, and engage meaningfully in communication. The larger the learner's vocabulary repertoire, the greater their capacity to understand and convey complex ideas and emotions. Therefore, vocabulary mastery is not merely about memorizing words but about developing a deep understanding of their meanings, usage, and contextual application.

Several factors influence the mastery of vocabulary, such as learners' age, exposure to language, motivation, frequency of word use, and the teaching methods employed. Among these factors, the method of teaching plays a particularly significant role, as it determines how effectively students internalize and retain new lexical items. The use of appropriate teaching methods can enhance students' engagement, foster long-term retention, and transform vocabulary learning from a monotonous task into an enjoyable and meaningful experience.

In this research, two methods—the Proprioceptive Method and the Mimicry Memorization Method—are applied to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The Proprioceptive Method emphasizes multisensory learning by engaging the learners' body movements and physical responses, which strengthens memory through kinesthetic reinforcement. This approach aligns with the theory of embodied cognition, which posits that cognitive processes are deeply rooted in the body's interactions with the world. When students physically act out or associate gestures with words, they create deeper mental connections, thereby enhancing retention and recall.

Meanwhile, the Mimicry Memorization Method relies on imitation, repetition, and contextual recall. This method supports the behaviorist theory of language learning, where repetition and reinforcement help learners internalize linguistic structures and vocabulary

(Brown, 2014). Through repeated imitation of models—whether from the teacher, recordings, or peers—students strengthen both their pronunciation and word recall. This process also builds automaticity, allowing learners to retrieve words more fluently in communicative contexts.

Combining these two methods allows students to benefit from both kinesthetic engagement and auditory reinforcement. While proprioceptive learning helps anchor vocabulary in physical experience, mimicry memorization reinforces it through repetition and sound pattern recognition. The synergy of these approaches can significantly improve learners' motivation and retention rates, making vocabulary learning a more dynamic and interactive process.

In conclusion, this study assumes that both the Proprioceptive Method and the Mimicry Memorization Method can enhance vocabulary mastery, though their effectiveness may differ depending on individual learner characteristics and classroom dynamics. By comparing these two methods, the researcher aims to determine which strategy provides more substantial improvement in students' vocabulary mastery and offers more engaging learning experiences in the English classroom.

C. Relevant Studies

Several researchers have investigated strategies to enhance students' vocabulary mastery, particularly focusing on effective teaching methods that foster active engagement and retention.

Raudha (2012), in her thesis *The Comparison Between Mimicry Memorization and Proprioceptive Methods on the Students' Ability in Mastering Vocabulary at MAS Mu'allimin UNIVA Medan*, conducted an experimental study to compare the effects of mimicry memorization and proprioceptive methods on students' vocabulary mastery. The findings revealed that the mimicry memorization method had a more significant positive impact on students' vocabulary achievement compared to the proprioceptive method. This was attributed

to the structured use of repetition, imitation, and contextual memorization, which helped learners internalize new vocabulary effectively. Raudha's research provides a strong theoretical foundation for the present study, as it examines the same two methods but seeks to validate their effects in a different educational setting with updated instructional contexts and learner characteristics.³⁶

Similarly, Pane (2011), in her thesis *The Effect of Using Card Media on the Students' Vocabulary Achievement*, investigated whether the use of visual aids could enhance vocabulary learning outcomes. Employing an experimental design with 60 second-year students from SMA Negeri 1 Sipirok in the 2010/2011 academic year, the study divided participants into an experimental group (taught using card media) and a control group (taught without card media). The vocabulary test results analyzed using a *t*-test showed that the *t*-observed value (3.84) exceeded the *t*-table value (1.67) at the 0.05 significance level. This indicates that card media effectively improved students' vocabulary performance, highlighting the value of interactive and visual-based learning tools.³⁷

Another relevant study was conducted by Awita (2011) in her thesis *The Effect of Applying Multisensory Teaching Method on the Students' Vocabulary Achievement*. This research aimed to determine whether a multisensory approach could enhance students' vocabulary acquisition. The study involved seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Batang Kuis, totaling 300 participants across ten classes. The experimental group was taught using the multisensory teaching method, while the control group received conventional instruction. The analysis, conducted using the *t*-test formula, revealed that the *t*-observed value (4.16) was higher than the *t*-table value (1.67) at a 0.05 significance level, indicating a statistically

³⁶ Raudha, H. (2012). *The comparison between mimicry memorization and proprioceptive methods on the students' ability in mastering vocabulary at MAS Mu'allimin UNIVA Medan* (Undergraduate thesis, State Institute for Islamic Studies of North Sumatra).

³⁷ Pane, S. (2011). *The effect of using card media on the students' vocabulary achievement* (Undergraduate thesis, State Institute for Islamic Studies of North Sumatra)

significant effect. The study concluded that integrating multiple sensory channels—visual, auditory, and kinesthetic—can significantly improve vocabulary retention and understanding.³⁸

Taken together, these studies underscore the importance of choosing effective teaching methods to improve vocabulary mastery. Whether through imitation-based repetition (as in the mimicry memorization method), visual aids (as in card media), or multisensory engagement, each method emphasizes active participation and learner-centered instruction. Building on these prior findings, the present research re-examines the comparative effectiveness of the mimicry memorization and proprioceptive methods in a modern Islamic boarding school context. This replication study aims not only to validate previous results but also to explore how contemporary students respond to these traditional yet practical vocabulary teaching methods.

D. Research Hypothesis

Based on previous theories and studies, the teaching method used greatly affects students' vocabulary mastery and retention. Both the Proprioceptive Method and the Mimicry Memorization Method are structured techniques for vocabulary learning but differ in their approaches. The Proprioceptive Method strengthens memory by involving learners' physical movements and bodily responses, while the Mimicry Memorization Method focuses on imitation, repetition, and contextual practice to internalize vocabulary through auditory and visual reinforcement.

Given that students possess diverse learning styles, cognitive capacities, and preferences in processing linguistic input, it is reasonable to predict that these two methods may yield different levels of effectiveness in improving vocabulary mastery. Previous research, such as Raudha (2012), demonstrated that the Mimicry Memorization Method produced a more

³⁸ Awita, S. (2011). *The effect of applying multisensory teaching method on the students' vocabulary achievement* (Undergraduate thesis, State Institute for Islamic Studies of North Sumatra).

substantial effect on students' vocabulary achievement than the Proprioceptive Method. Nevertheless, this study seeks to re-examine and validate such findings in a different educational context, specifically at the Modern Islamic Boarding School Nurul Hakim Medan, where learning settings and student characteristics may vary. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

Ha (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant difference between the Proprioceptive Method and the Mimicry Memorization Method on the students' ability in mastering vocabulary.

Ho (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant difference between the Proprioceptive Method and the Mimicry Memorization Method on the students' ability in mastering vocabulary.

These hypotheses will be tested statistically to determine whether the observed differences between the two teaching methods are significant, thereby providing empirical evidence for the effectiveness of each method in promoting vocabulary mastery among students.

