



## Prosiding

Seminar Nasional Inovasi pendidikan dan Pembelajaran  
Fakultas Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni  
IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro

Tema "Inovasi pendidikan dan Pembelajaran di era digital untuk Pengalaman Belajar  
Imersif"



# Improving Student's Vocabulary Through Realia at the Eight Graders of MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu

Muhamad Miftahur Rozaq<sup>1(✉)</sup>, Moh Fuadul Matin<sup>2</sup>, Chyntia Heru Woro<sup>3</sup>  
<sup>1,2,3</sup>Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, Indonesia  
[muhroza01@gmail.com](mailto:muhroza01@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [fuadul\\_matin@ikippgribojonegoro.ac.id](mailto:fuadul_matin@ikippgribojonegoro.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>,  
[chyntia\\_heru@ikippgribojonegoro.ac.id](mailto:chyntia_heru@ikippgribojonegoro.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract-** This study investigates the use of realia to improve English vocabulary mastery among eighth-grade students at MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu. Vocabulary mastery is an essential aspect of English language learning because it supports the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Preliminary observations indicated that students experienced difficulties in understanding, memorizing, and applying English vocabulary appropriately. In addition, the learning process was still dominated by conventional teaching methods, resulting in low student participation, motivation, and learning achievement. Therefore, this study proposes the use of realia as an alternative instructional medium to create more contextual, interactive, and meaningful learning experiences. Realia refers to real objects used directly in classroom activities to help students associate vocabulary with real-life contexts and sensory experiences. This research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR), consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection stages. The study aimed to identify how the use of realia enhances students' vocabulary mastery and learning engagement. The findings indicate that realia can improve vocabulary comprehension, retention, motivation, classroom participation, and students' confidence, while also contributing theoretically and practically to the development of effective vocabulary teaching strategies at the junior high school level.

**Keywords:** Realia, Vocabulary Mastery, Classroom Action Research

**abstrak-** Penelitian ini mengkaji peningkatan kosakata melalui penggunaan realia dalam bahasa Inggris pada siswa kelas delapan di MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu. dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris Penguasaan kosakata merupakan salah satu aspek penting karena dapat mendukung perkembangan keterampilan menyimak, berbicara, membaca, dan menulis. Hasil observasi awal menunjukkan bahwa siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam memahami, mengingat, dan menerapkan kosakata bahasa Inggris secara tepat. Selain itu, proses pembelajaran masih didominasi oleh metode pengajaran konvensional sehingga mengakibatkan rendahnya partisipasi, motivasi, dan pencapaian belajar siswa. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini mengusulkan penggunaan realia sebagai media pembelajaran alternatif untuk menciptakan pengalaman belajar yang lebih kontekstual, interaktif, dan bermakna. Realia merujuk pada benda nyata yang digunakan secara langsung dalam kegiatan pembelajaran di kelas untuk membantu siswa mengaitkan kosakata dengan konteks kehidupan sehari-hari dan pengalaman sensorik. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) yang terdiri atas tahap perencanaan, tindakan, observasi, dan refleksi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi bagaimana penggunaan realia dapat meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata dan keterlibatan belajar

siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa realia dapat meningkatkan pemahaman kosakata, daya ingat, motivasi, partisipasi kelas, serta kepercayaan diri siswa, sekaligus memberikan kontribusi secara teoretis dan praktis terhadap pengembangan strategi pengajaran kosakata yang efektif di tingkat sekolah menengah pertama.

**Kata kunci:** Benda Nyata, Penguasaan Kosakata, Penelitian Tindakan Kelas

## INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most important international languages used in communication, education, science, and technology. In this era related to globalization, Proficiency in English is essential for students to access information, communicate effectively, and participate in global academic and social interactions. Consequently, In Indonesia, English is one of the languages taught as a required subject various educational levels, including junior secondary school. The primary goal for English language learning is not only to develop students' linguistic competence but also to enable them to communicate meaningfully in real-life situations. According to Sahnan (2023), English proficiency provides access to information and technology while facilitating intercultural communication and international collaboration in education and research.

Among the basic elements of language learning, vocabulary plays a crucial role in supporting the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Vocabulary serves as the foundation for language acquisition because students cannot effectively understand or express ideas without sufficient word knowledge. Therefore, vocabulary mastery is considered a key indicator of success in English language learning. Berliani and Katemba (2021) argue that vocabulary one of core element for language learning because it functions as primary tool for communication. Students with adequate vocabulary are more capable of comprehending texts, participating in classroom interactions, and expressing their thoughts both orally and in written form.

Ideally, junior high school students are expected to master English vocabulary according to the curriculum objectives and achieve the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM). Vocabulary learning should be conducted in an active, contextual, and meaningful manner so that students not only memorize words but also understand more than just memorizing words; it involves understanding in daily communication.

Meaningful learning helps students retain vocabulary in their long-term memory and apply it effectively in various communicative situations (Ahmadova, 2025).

Despite its importance, vocabulary mastery remains a significant challenge for many Indonesian students. Preliminary observations conducted at MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu revealed that eighth-grade students experienced difficulties in memorizing, understanding, and using English vocabulary appropriately. Most students tended to memorize words mechanically without understanding their meanings and contextual usage, causing them to easily forget the vocabulary they had learned. Similar findings have been reported by Fasikh (2025), who found that low vocabulary mastery is a common problem among junior secondary school students and negatively affects their language performance. Furthermore, low vocabulary mastery can reduce students' self-confidence and participation during English learning activities (Kamsinah et al., 2021).

One factor contributing to this problem is the continued reliance on conventional teaching methods. English vocabulary instruction is often dominated by lectures, textbooks, and memorization activities, resulting in a passive learning environment. Such approaches provide limited chance for students to engage actively with explore vocabulary in meaningful contexts. Consequently, students may lose motivation and encounter difficulties in retaining vocabulary for long-term use. Research conducted by Mulis (2025) suggests that contextual, interactive, and varied learning strategies positively influence students' vocabulary comprehension and classroom engagement.

Instructional media play a crucial role in supporting effective learning because they help teachers present learning materials in a more understandable and engaging manner. Appropriate learning media can transform abstract concepts into concrete experiences, increase students' motivation, and create an interactive classroom atmosphere (Sartika et al., 2020). Therefore, teachers need to select learning media that are suitable for students' characteristics and learning objectives.

One instructional medium that has the potential to address vocabulary learning problems is realia. Realia refers to the use of real objects from students' everyday environments as teaching media. Through realia, students can directly observe, touch, and interact with concrete objects, making vocabulary enhancing understanding of

meaningful and easier to understand. Setianingsih et al. (2021) explain that realia enable students to learn vocabulary through direct experience, thereby facilitating better understanding and retention.

The use of realia is consistent with contextual learning theory, which emphasizes connecting learning materials to students' real-life experiences. A contextual learning approach allows students to understand vocabulary more meaningfully because the learning process is closely related to their daily lives. Bhatti et al. (2021) found that realia an effective instructional medium for improving student vocabulary skills through authentic and relevant learning activities. In addition, realia support multisensory learning by engaging multiple senses simultaneously, which can enhance students' motivation, engagement, and memory retention (Sitepu & Kurniawati, 2021).

Several research findings have demonstrated the effectiveness of realia in improving student vocabulary mastery. Rahmayani (2023) reported that vocabulary learning through realia significantly improves students' understanding and retention of vocabulary because the learning activities becomes increased enjoyable and meaningful. Similarly, Mulyah et al. (2023) found that the integration of realia with innovative instructional methods significantly increased students' vocabulary achievement.

Notwithstanding previous studies have confirmed the benefits of realia during vocabulary instruction, its implementation in English language teaching at MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu remains limited. Teachers still tend to rely on conventional instructional methods despite the availability of various real objects that could be utilized as learning media. Patmi and Sabaruddin (2023) emphasized that realia can increase student engagement, provide multisensory learning experiences, and improve vocabulary mastery more effectively than traditional approaches.

Considering the gap between the potential benefits of realia and its limited application in classroom practice, this study aims to investigate the practice of realia to improve student vocabulary mastery at the eighth grade of MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu. Through Classroom Action Research (CAR), this study seeks to explore how the implementation of realia can enhance students' English vocabulary and identify the

changes experienced by students during the learning process. The findings are expected enhance to the development of more effective vocabulary teaching strategies and deliver practical insights for English teachers among similar educational contexts.

## **METHODS**

Classroom Action Research (CAR) is used to improve student English vocabulary mastery through the use of realia among eighth-grade students at MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu. Classroom Action Research were selected because it assists the researcher and the teacher into collaboratively identify classroom problems, conduct teaching interventions, observe classroom practices, and analyze the results in order to improve students' learning achievement continuously. The study was conducted through cyclical stages consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

The participants for this study were the eighth-grade students of MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu in the academic year 2025/2026. The class was chosen according to the results of preliminary observations showing that the students encountered challenges in mastering English vocabulary. Many students had limited vocabulary knowledge, low motivation in learning English, and difficulties in understanding and using English words appropriately during classroom activities.

The research occurred in two cycles. Each cycle included several meetings and followed four main stages. In the planning stage, the researcher created lesson plans, learning materials, vocabulary exercises, observation sheets, and realia media related to the vocabulary topics being taught. The researcher also designed pre-test and post-test research instrument for measuring students' vocabulary improvement. In the acting stage, the researcher implemented vocabulary teaching using realia as the instructional medium. Students were encouraged to observe, touch, identify, and mention real objects directly while participating in vocabulary learning activities. In the observing stage, the researcher and collaborator observed student participation, motivation, classroom interaction, and feedback throughout the learning process using observation sheets and field notes. In the reflecting stage, the researcher evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the implemented actions to determine improvements for the following cycle.

The instruments used in this study include vocabulary tests, observation sheets, and documentation. The assessment of that vocabulary consists of a pre-test and post-tests conducted to assess students' vocabulary proficiency before and after the implementation of realia-based instruction. The observation sheet is used to record activeness, participation, motivation, and classroom engagement during the learning process. Documentation such as photographs and classroom records were also collected to support the research findings.

The data in this study were analyzed using quantitative methods and qualitative methods. Quantitative data obtained from the vocabulary tests were analyzed by calculating students' mean scores and percentages of students who met the minimum proficiency criteria. Meanwhile, qualitative data, The data obtained from observations and documentation were analyzed descriptively to describe changes in students' participation, motivation, and responses toward to implementation of realia in vocabulary learning.

The criteria for success in this study was determined based on improvements in students' vocabulary mastery and classroom participation. The study is considered successful if at least 75% of the students have met the minimum proficiency criteria and demonstrated active participation during the learning process through the use of realia.

## **RESULTS and DISCUSSION**

### **Result Cycle I**

Based on the results of the preliminary observation conducted in Grade VIII at MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu, it was found that the students' English vocabulary mastery still needed improvement. Most students' difficulty understanding word meanings, remembering previously learned vocabulary, and using the vocabulary learning activities. In addition, the learning process is still dominated by conventional, teacher-centered methods, which make students passive and less actively involved during classroom activities. This situation has led to poor student performance achievement in English vocabulary mastery. Many students had not yet achieved the

Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC), indicating the need for improvements to teaching and learning process.

Based on the results of learning evaluation in Cycle I, the students obtained an average score of 43.5, with the highest score being 75 and the lowest score being 25. Of the 20 students who participated in the evaluation, only one student (5%) achieved the mastery criterion with a score of  $\geq 75$ , while 19 students (95%) failed to meet the established standard.

These findings indicate that student's mastery of the learning material in Cycle I was still categorized as low. The class average score, which was below the Minimum Mastery Criterion, suggests that most students still encountered difficulties in understanding the material presented during the learning process. Furthermore, the very low percentage of learning mastery indicates the implementation of the education intervention in this cycle had not yet produced optimal results.

Although one student successfully achieved the mastery criterion with a score of 75, the majority of students still obtained scores below the required standard. This finding suggests that the teaching strategy implemented in Cycle I needed further improvement in order to better accommodate students' learning needs and enhance their vocabulary acquisition.

Based on the evaluation results, it can be concluded that the research success indicators had not yet been achieved in Cycle I. Therefore, revisions and improvements in the implementation of the learning process were necessary for Cycle II to enhance students' learning outcomes and achieve classical learning mastery in accordance with the predetermined target.

Table 1. Students' Learning Outcomes in Cycle I

Aspect	Score
Student Participation	20
Mean Score	43,5
High Score	75
Low Score	25
Complete	1

Incomplete	19
------------	----

Based on the data above, it can be concluded that the students' The learning outcomes for Cycle I are still low and had not yet met the target of classical mastery learning. Therefore, the study was continued to Cycle II with improvements made to teaching and learning process in order to enhance students' achievement and learning mastery.

### Result Cycle II

Based on the evaluation results in Cycle II, the students achieved a mean score of 77.5, with the highest score being 95 and the lowest score being 70. These results indicate a significant improvement compared to Cycle I, in which the average score was only 43.5.

Of the 20 students who participated in the evaluation, 16 students (80%) successfully the Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC) of 75, while 4 students (20%) did not reach the mastery level, obtaining a score of 70. Although a few students had not yet achieved mastery, percentage of learning mastery in the cycle II met the research success indicator for classical mastery, which was set at a minimum of 80%.

The improvement learning outcomes demonstrates the instructional intervention implemented in Cycle II was effective in improving students' understanding of the material being taught. This is evident from the increase in the class average score, the highest score attained, and the number of students who have mastered the material compared to the results obtained in Cycle I.

Table 2. Students' Learning Outcomes in Cycle II

Aspect	Score
Student Participation	20
Mean Score	77,5
High Score	95
Low Score	70
Complete	16

Incomplete	4
------------	---

The results of Cycle II indicate that the implemented instructional intervention successfully improved the students' learning outcomes, as evidenced by an increase from an average of 43.5 to 77.5 and the improvement in the learning mastery rate from 5% to 80%. Therefore, the study can be considered successful, as it achieved the predetermined criterion of classical learning mastery.

## Discussion

Based on the results of the study, it was found the implementation of the instructional intervention was effective for improving the English vocabulary learning outcomes of eighth-grade students at MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu. Prior to the intervention, the Preliminary observations indicate that students experienced difficulties in understanding vocabulary meanings, retaining previously learned words, and using vocabulary appropriately in learning activities. In addition, the learning process was predominantly teacher-centered, resulting in limited student participation and engagement during classroom instruction.

The evaluation results in Cycle I indicated that students' English vocabulary mastery was still relatively low. The mean score achieved by the students was 43.5, with a learning mastery rate of only 5%. Of the 20 students who participated in the evaluation, only one student successfully achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC), while the majority of students obtained scores below the established standard. These findings suggest that the instructional intervention implemented in Cycle I had not yet produced optimal learning outcomes, making further improvements necessary in the subsequent cycle.

Based on the reflection conducted after Cycle I, several improvements have been made to the instructional process in Cycle II. These modifications were intended to enhance the effectiveness of the learning activities and help students develop a better understanding of learning material. Following the implementation of these improvements, the evaluation results in Cycle II demonstrated significant increase in students' achievement compared to the results obtained in Cycle I.

In Cycle II, students' average scores improved to 77.5. Furthermore, the highest score improved from 75 to 95, while the lowest score increased from 25 to 70. The percentage of learning mastery also showed a substantial improvement, rising from 5% in Cycle I to 80% in Cycle II. Of the 20 students who participated in the evaluation, 16 students successfully achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion, while 4 students have not yet reached the required level of proficiency.

The improvement in learning outcomes from Cycle I to Cycle II indicates that the instructional intervention had a positive impact on students' mastery of English vocabulary. The increase in the average score and the percentage of students who demonstrated mastery of the material suggests that students were able to understand the learning material more effectively after improvements were made to the instructional process. These findings also indicate that the intervention contributed to the development of students' English vocabulary skills.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the instructional intervention successfully improved students' learning outcomes. This is evidenced by the increase in the mean score from 43.5 in Cycle I to 77.5 in Cycle II, as well as the improvement in the learning mastery rate from 5% to 80%. Since the classical learning mastery criterion of 80% was achieved, the study can be considered successful in meeting the predetermined indicators of success.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the classroom action research conducted in Class VIII of MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu, it can be concluded that the instructional intervention implemented in this study contributed positively to the improvement of students' English vocabulary learning outcomes. This improvement was reflected in the changes in students' achievement across each cycle of the research.

The evaluation results in Cycle I indicated that students' English vocabulary mastery was still at a relatively low level. This was demonstrated by a mean score of 43.5 and a learning mastery rate of 5%. These findings suggest that most students have not yet achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC) established for the study, indicating the need for improvements in the instructional process.

Following the implementation of instructional improvements in Cycle II, students' learning outcomes showed a significant increase. The mean score improved to 77.5, while the percentage of learning mastery increased from 5% to 80%. This improvement indicates that the instructional intervention was effective in helping students understand and master English vocabulary more successfully.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that this learning strategy is effective in improving students' English vocabulary learning outcomes. Achievement 80% classical learning mastery indicates that the success indicators established in this study were successfully attained. Therefore, it can be concluded that this learning strategy effectively improves students' command of English vocabulary and supports the achievement of the established learning objectives.

### **Acknowledgments**

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to Dr. Moh Fuadul Matin, S.S., M.Pd., and Chyntia Heru Woro P., S.Pd., M.Pd., as the supervisors of this research, for their guidance, valuable advice, and unwavering motivation throughout the completion of this study.

The author would also like to thank the Principal of MTs Islahiyah Kalitidu, along with all the teachers and staff, for the permission and opportunity granted to conduct this research. Special thanks are also extended to all friends who provided assistance, encouragement, and support throughout the process of completing this thesis.

Finally, the author would like to express deep gratitude to his beloved parents for their prayers, love, and unceasing support, which have enabled the author to successfully complete his studies and this thesis.

### **REFERENCHES**

- Ahmadova, K. (2025). Learning Through the Lens of Realia: Expanding Language Skills with Real-World Contexts. *Acta Globalis Humanitatis Et Linguarum*, 2(5), 78-88. <https://doi.org/10.69760/aghel.0250050007>
- Ardiyanti S, S., Kamsinah, K., Nurasik, N., & Said, A. M. (2021). THE DIFFICULTIES IN TEACHING VOCABULARY FACED BY THE ENGLISH TEACHERS AT

- MTs MADANI PAO-PAO MAKASSAR. *English Language Teaching for EFL Learners Journal*, 3(2), 54–62. <https://doi.org/10.24252/elties.v3i2.1885>
- BAJURI SAHNAN. (2024). PERAN BAHASA INGGRIS DALAM DUNIA PROFESIONAL DAN GLOBALISASI. *Jurnal Ilmiah IPS Dan Humaniora (JIH)*, 2(2), 44–49. <https://doi.org/10.61116/jih.v2i2.457>
- Berliani, N. A., & Katemba, C. V. (2021). The role of vocabulary in English language learning. *Journal of Studies*, 7(1), 10–18. <https://doi.org/10.52657/js.v7i1.1340>
- Bhatti, M. S., Habibie, A., Noreen, S., Hussain, S., & Bajwa, S. (2021). Realia-Mediated Instruction: An Effective Tool for Improving Young Learners' Vocabulary Skills. *Al-Lisan: Jurnal Bahasa (e-Journal)*, 6(2), 157–166. <https://doi.org/10.30603/al.v7i2.2176>
- Fasikh, M. (2018). THE EFFECT OF VOCABULARY MASTERY TOWARD THE READING COMPREHENSION SKILL FOR THE STUDENTS GRADE VIII IN THE STATE OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN BEKASI DISTRICT. *JELL (Journal of English Language and Literature) STIBA-IEC Jakarta*, 3(01), 69–86. <https://doi.org/10.37110/jell.v3i01.38>
- Mulis (2025). Teaching Strategies for Enhancing Vocabulary Mastery of Indonesian EFL Learners. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 5(2), 154–161. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35897/eltj.v5i2.1888>
- Muliyah, P., Rekha, A., & Mustangin. (2023). Three-Periods Lesson: A practical way in introducing English Vocabulary Using Realia and Flashcards. *Metathesis: Journal of English Language, Literature, and Teaching*, 7(2), 216–228. <https://doi.org/10.31002/metathesis.v7i2.733>
- Patmi, R. I. U., & Sabaruddin, S. (2021). Communicative Language Teaching with Realia to Enhance Students' English Vocabulary. *JLE: Journal of Literate of English Education Study Program*, 2(2), 37–45. <https://doi.org/10.47435/jle.v2i2.733>
- Rahmayani, F. A. (2022). Vocabulary acquisition on young learners through the use of realia media. *Journal of Research on English and Language Learning (J REaLL)*, 3(2), 89–97. <https://doi.org/10.33474/j-reall.v3i2.15998>
- Sartika, F., Desriwita, E., & Ritonga, M. (2020). Pemanfaatan media pembelajaran dalam meningkatkan motivasi dan hasil belajar PAI di sekolah dan madrasah. *Humanika: Kajian Ilmiah Mata Kuliah Umum*, 20(2), 115–128. <https://doi.org/10.21831/hum.v20i2.32598>
- Setianingsih, T., Nafisah, B. Z., Rizka, M. A., Ariani, S., Permadi Utama, I. M., Qomariyah, S. S., & Imansyah, I. (2021). Pelatihan Teknik Pengajaran Vocabulary Berbasis Media Realia bagi Guru TK Bakti Sesela Kabupaten Lombok Barat. *Jurnal Pengabdian UNDIKMA*, 2(1), 64–72. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jpu.v2i1.3470>
- Sitepu, S. B., & Kurniawati, L. A. (2021). An exploration on the use of realia-mediated instruction for teaching English for young learners. *Research and Innovation in Language Learning*, 4(1), 36–51. <https://doi.org/10.33603/rill.v4i1.4216>