



Implementation of the Mimicry-Memorization Method through flashcards in learning Arabic vocabulary

Desy Abidatus Sholihah^{1*}, Umi Hanifah²

^{1,2} State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia

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Abstract:

Arabic vocabulary mastery is a critical factor in developing students' language competence and communication skills. This study aimed to examine the implementation of the Mimicry-Memorization method assisted by flashcards to enhance Arabic vocabulary learning. The research employed a qualitative phenomenological case study involving eighth-grade students, an Arabic teacher, and the school principal. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using interactive data analysis and triangulation to ensure validity. Findings revealed that integrating Mimicry-Memorization with flashcards increased students' motivation, fostered interactive classroom participation, and improved vocabulary retention, as evidenced by worksheets, quizzes, and classroom activities. The study's novelty lies in combining auditory imitation, structured repetition, and visual stimuli to create a holistic learning approach. Practically, the findings provide guidance for teachers to design engaging, student-centered vocabulary lessons. The research implies that multimodal strategies can enhance language acquisition and support long-term retention in Arabic learning.

Keywords: Arabic Vocabulary, Mimicry-Memorization, Flashcards, Language Learning, Student Engagement

Abstrak:

Penguasaan kosakata Bahasa Arab merupakan faktor penting dalam pengembangan kompetensi bahasa dan keterampilan komunikasi siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penerapan metode Mimicry-Memorization berbantuan flashcard dalam pembelajaran kosakata Bahasa Arab. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus fenomenologis yang melibatkan siswa kelas VIII, guru Bahasa Arab, dan kepala sekolah. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis dengan model analisis data interaktif serta triangulasi untuk memastikan validitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi metode Mimicry-Memorization dengan flashcard meningkatkan motivasi siswa, mendorong partisipasi interaktif di kelas, dan memperkuat retensi kosakata, dibuktikan melalui lembar kerja, kuis, dan aktivitas kelas. Kebaruan penelitian terletak pada kombinasi imitasi lisan, pengulangan terstruktur, dan stimulasi visual untuk menciptakan pendekatan pembelajaran holistik. Secara praktis, temuan ini memberikan panduan bagi guru untuk merancang pembelajaran kosakata yang menarik dan berpusat pada siswa. Strategi multimodal terbukti meningkatkan akuisisi bahasa dan mendukung retensi jangka panjang.

Kata Kunci: Kosakata Bahasa Arab, Mimicry-Memorization, Flashcard, Pembelajaran Bahasa, Keterlibatan Siswa

*Corresponding author

Email: desy.abida29@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION / المقدمة

Foreign language proficiency, particularly Arabic, plays a strategic role in developing global literacy competencies, religious understanding, and cross-cultural communication in Muslim communities. Arabic serves not only as a means of communication but also as the primary medium for understanding authentic sources of Islamic teachings (Atta, 2020; Gutub, 2021; Sakirah et al., 2020). Therefore, the quality of Arabic language learning in formal educational institutions is a crucial issue for developing human resources with character and competitiveness. However, students' low vocabulary skills are often a major obstacle to achieving this goal. Various studies show that limited vocabulary directly impacts poor reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills (Alkhateeb, 2023; Stimpson, 2021). This situation emphasizes that improving vocabulary mastery is not merely a pedagogical necessity but also a social need that supports the quality of religious education and communication among the wider community.

Although Arabic is taught in stages in madrasas, many students still struggle to master vocabulary effectively and sustainably. This problem stems not only from the complexity of the language structure but also from a learning approach that lacks variety and tends to be oriented towards mechanical memorization (A. S. Alharbi, 2024; Versteegh, 2020). Conventional methods that position students as passive recipients often fail to foster cognitive and affective engagement in vocabulary learning. As a result, students easily forget learned vocabulary and experience a decline in learning motivation. This problem is further compounded when the learning media used fail to provide adequate visual or contextual stimuli. Therefore, a learning approach is needed that emphasizes not only memorization but also strengthens the internalization of vocabulary through more interactive and meaningful strategies (Amehdar, 2020; Yazit et al., 2020).

The phenomenon of low Arabic vocabulary mastery is also reflected in learning practices in Islamic junior high schools (*madrasah tsanawiyah*). Based on initial observations, the *mufradāt* learning process is still dominated by textbooks and lecture methods, with minimal use of visual media. Students tend to memorize vocabulary without understanding the context of its use or proper pronunciation (Hussin et al., 2021; Joseph, 2020). This condition makes learning monotonous and unengaging, resulting in low student participation. Furthermore, teachers face limitations in developing innovative media appropriate to the characteristics of adolescent students. This phenomenon indicates a gap between the communicative goals of Arabic language learning and classroom learning practices. Therefore, innovation in learning methods and media is an urgent need to significantly improve students' vocabulary mastery (Ashiq, 2023; Elzeky et al., 2025).

Several previous studies have examined the effectiveness of the Mimicry-Memorization (Mim-Mem) method in Arabic language learning. Arribathi et al. (2024) and Alharbi et al. (2020) found that the Mim-Mem method can improve Arabic language learning outcomes at the elementary madrasah level through intensive repetition and imitation. Altakhaineh (2025), Sanusi (2025), and Eltahir et al. (2021) also reported that the implementation of Mim-Mem was effective in improving memorization of vocabulary in junior high school students. Meanwhile, Khalid (2024) and Ouahabi et al. (2024) emphasized that Mim-Mem makes vocabulary learning more enjoyable and meaningful because it simultaneously involves both auditory and verbal aspects. These studies demonstrate that Mim-Mem has great potential as an effective vocabulary learning method. However, the focus of these studies is still limited to memorization and specific

educational levels.

The novelty of this research lies in the systematic integration of the Mimicry-Memorization method and flashcard media in Arabic vocabulary learning at the junior high school level. This research not only assesses learning outcomes but also describes the process of applying the method contextually according to the characteristics of the students. By combining aspects of oral imitation, structured repetition, and visual stimuli, this research presents a more holistic learning approach (Mabrouk, 2022; Parveen, 2021). This approach is expected to address the challenges of vocabulary learning, which has historically been mechanical and lacking in meaning. Therefore, this research holds a strategic position in the development of Arabic language learning based on complementary methods and media that are relevant to contemporary learning needs.

Based on the above description, the main problem in this research is how to apply the Mimicry-Memorization method with flashcards in Arabic vocabulary learning and to what extent this method is effective in improving students' mastery of vocabulary. The main argument of this research is that combining the Mim-Mem method with flashcards can create a more interactive, engaging, and student-centered learning experience. Through accurate pronunciation imitation and strong visual support, students are expected to be able to internalize vocabulary more optimally. This approach is believed to overcome the limitations of conventional methods that emphasize memorization without context.

This research offers an original contribution in the form of an implementation model for Mimicry-Memorization-based Arabic vocabulary learning supported by flashcards at the junior high school level (*madrasah tsanawiyah*). The theoretical contribution of this research lies in strengthening the study of Arabic language learning methodology that simultaneously integrates auditory and visual aspects. Meanwhile, its practical contribution is providing strategic references for Arabic language teachers in developing innovative and effective vocabulary learning. Therefore, this research is expected to not only enrich the scientific body of Arabic language education but also have a tangible impact on improving the quality of learning in madrasahs.

RESEARCH METHOD / المنهجية

This research employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen based on the research objective, which emphasized an in-depth understanding of the implementation process of the flashcard-assisted Mimicry-Memorization method in Arabic vocabulary learning (Rifa'i, 2023). This approach allowed the researcher to explore the meanings, experiences, and perceptions of the research subjects in a contextual and naturalistic manner. The case study design was chosen because this research focuses on a specific learning case, allowing for an in-depth exploration of ongoing learning practices. Meanwhile, the phenomenological approach was used to understand the subjective experiences of teachers and students in responding to the implementation of the Mimicry-Memorization method, both from a pedagogical and psychological perspective, during the learning process.

This research was conducted at MTsN 3 Kota Surabaya, a state Islamic junior high school (Islamic junior high school) that offers Arabic language learning as a compulsory subject. The research location was chosen based on several academic considerations: the dominance of conventional memorization-based methods in Arabic vocabulary learning at the madrasah, the limited use of visual media in the learning process, and the low level of student vocabulary retention based on initial observations. Furthermore, this madrasah

has institutional support for learning innovation, enabling optimal and sustainable implementation of the flashcard-assisted Mimicry-Memorization method.

The research subjects were eighth-grade students directly involved in Arabic vocabulary learning using the flashcard-assisted Mimicry-Memorization method (Asad et al., 2022). The research informants consisted of one Arabic language teacher as the primary implementer of the learning, several eighth-grade students as participants who directly experienced the method's application, and the madrasah principal as the authority on academic and curriculum policies. Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, taking into account the informants' experience, direct involvement, and ability to provide relevant and in-depth data in line with the research objectives.

Data collection techniques included participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Participant observation involved researchers directly participating in learning activities to observe the stages of the flashcard-assisted Mimicry-Memorization method implementation, interactions between teachers and students, and student responses during the learning process. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers and students to explore learning experiences, perceptions of the methods used, and obstacles encountered in vocabulary learning. Documentation was used as supporting data, including learning tools, student learning records, academic archives, and visual documentation of learning activities.

Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model, which includes three main stages: data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification (Waruwu, 2023). Data condensation was carried out by selecting, focusing, and simplifying raw data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation to ensure relevance to the research focus. The condensed data was then presented in descriptive narrative form and thematic categorization to facilitate researchers in identifying patterns and relationships among the data. The final stage was drawing conclusions, which was carried out continuously by verifying the research findings through data re-examination until credible conclusions were reached.

Data validity was checked using source and technical triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing data obtained from teachers, students, and the madrasah principal, while technical triangulation was carried out by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. In addition, researchers conducted member checking by confirming the findings with key informants to ensure the data interpretations aligned with the research subjects' experiences. This procedure systematically ensured the validity and reliability of the research results.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION / نتائج البحث و المناقشة

Finding

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the implementation of the Mimicry-Memorization method assisted by flashcards in Arabic vocabulary learning. It provides a detailed description of students' motivation, the interactivity of the method, and the impact of flashcards on vocabulary retention. The results are analyzed through interviews, classroom observations, and documentation to highlight patterns, engagement, and learning outcomes.

Students' Increased Motivation in Learning Arabic

In this study, student motivation is defined as the level of enthusiasm, interest, and willingness of students to actively engage in Arabic vocabulary learning. Motivation was considered observable when students showed eagerness to participate in class activities, paid attention to instructions, and demonstrated persistence in completing tasks related to the Mimicry-Memorization method assisted by flashcards. This operational definition guided the data collection and analysis, ensuring that both verbal expressions and behavioral indicators were used to identify increases in students' learning motivation during the implementation of the method.

One student stated, "I feel more excited to learn Arabic now because the flashcards make it easier to remember the words, and practicing together with my friends is fun." This statement reflects that the combination of visual aids and group imitation activities enhanced the student's intrinsic motivation. The researcher interprets this as evidence that the method engages both cognitive and affective aspects of learning, making students more willing to participate actively in vocabulary exercises. Another student mentioned, "Before, I often forgot the words, so I felt bored, but now I enjoy repeating and mimicking the words with the cards." The researcher interprets this as a clear indication that students' prior frustration and lack of engagement decreased after the implementation of the Mimicry-Memorization method. The method provided a more structured and enjoyable way to internalize vocabulary, which strengthened students' persistence and interest in learning Arabic.

During classroom observation, students were seen actively raising their hands, repeating vocabulary aloud, and responding to peer prompts with enthusiasm. The researcher noted that students' body language, facial expressions, and verbal participation indicated higher engagement compared to previous conventional lessons. This observation supports the interview data, restating that students exhibited more energy, focus, and willingness to engage in Arabic learning activities.

The pattern emerging from the data shows that integrating flashcards with the Mimicry-Memorization method positively influences student motivation. Both subjective reports (interviews) and objective behavioral indicators (observations) consistently indicate increased enthusiasm, engagement, and persistence in learning vocabulary. Students became more active participants, demonstrating that motivation can be enhanced when learning strategies are interactive, visual, and socially engaging.

Interactivity of the Mimicry-Memorization Method

In this study, interactivity of the Mimicry-Memorization method is defined as the degree to which students and teachers actively engage with each other during Arabic vocabulary learning. Interactivity is operationally observed when students participate in imitation exercises, repeat vocabulary aloud, respond to teacher prompts, and engage collaboratively with peers using flashcards. It is also identified through the dynamic flow of classroom activities, including the back-and-forth of teacher instructions, student responses, and peer-assisted learning. This definition guided the observation focus, ensuring that both verbal and non-verbal interactions were systematically recorded to

capture the method's interactive nature.

Table 1. Observation Data Table of Interactivity of the Mimicry-Memorization Method

Observation	Indicator
Students repeated words after teacher's demonstration	Active verbal imitation
Students used flashcards in pairs to quiz each other	Peer-to-peer engagement
Teacher prompted students to correct pronunciation	Responsive teacher-student interaction
Students raised hands and participated voluntarily	Student initiative and attentiveness
Group repetition exercises were performed collaboratively	Cooperative learning and shared attention

The data in the table indicate that the Mimicry-Memorization method encourages continuous interaction between teacher and students, as well as among students themselves. Students actively mimic and repeat vocabulary, respond promptly to teacher prompts, and collaborate in group exercises. This observation confirms that the method fosters a more engaging and participatory learning environment compared to conventional memorization techniques. Restating the data, students not only follow instructions but also initiate responses, collaborate with peers, and show attentiveness, demonstrating the method's capacity to make vocabulary learning interactive, dynamic, and student-centered.

The pattern from the observations shows that interactivity is a consistent characteristic of the Mimicry-Memorization method when combined with flashcards. Classroom interactions are multi-directional, involving teacher guidance, peer collaboration, and individual student participation. The structured use of imitation, repetition, and visual aids creates a learning environment that actively engages students, promotes cooperation, and sustains attention, resulting in a more effective and lively vocabulary learning process.

Flashcards Improve Students' Vocabulary Retention

In this study, vocabulary retention is defined as the students' ability to recall, recognize, and accurately use Arabic words learned through the Mimicry-Memorization method assisted by flashcards. Operationally, retention is measured by students' performance in written exercises, quizzes, and classroom tasks that involve reproducing vocabulary items after a period of learning. Documentation serves as the primary source of evidence, including student worksheets, test results, and visual records of students engaging with flashcards during learning sessions. This definition ensures that retention is assessed based on concrete, observable outputs rather than subjective perception alone.

The documentation revealed that students' completed worksheets showed accurate spelling and usage of targeted vocabulary items. Quiz scores indicated an increase in correct responses compared to previous assessments using conventional methods. Visual records, such as photos of students actively using flashcards in pairs or small groups, also supported the evidence of active engagement. For example, photos captured students holding flashcards, pointing to words, and collaborating with peers to recall vocabulary. These visual and written records corroborate the claim that flashcards facilitated memorization and retrieval of Arabic words.

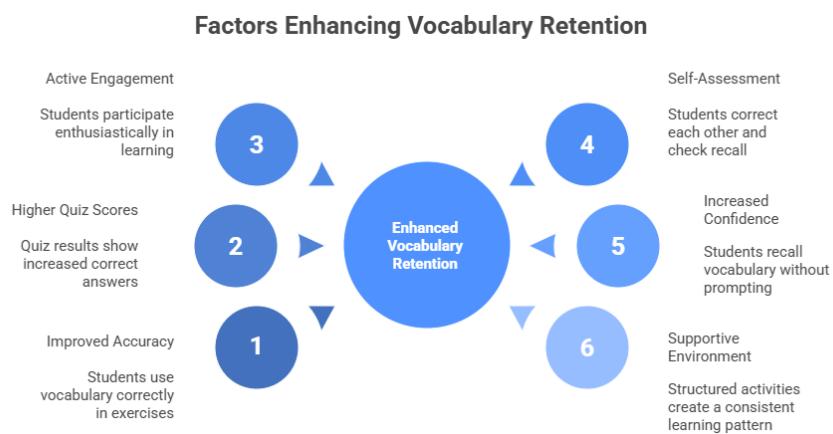


Figure 1. Factors Enhancing Vocabulary Retention

Observations from classroom documentation showed that students frequently referred to flashcards during exercises, repeated vocabulary aloud, and corrected each other's answers in pairs or groups. The researcher interpreted this as an indication that flashcards not only served as a visual memory aid but also promoted self-assessment and peer-assisted learning. Students appeared more confident in recalling words and completing exercises without direct teacher prompting. This demonstrates that the integration of flashcards into the Mimicry-Memorization method effectively enhances students' vocabulary retention.

Restating the data, the combination of visual aids, repetitive practice, and structured flashcard activities allowed students to internalize Arabic vocabulary more efficiently. Both written and visual documentation consistently show improved recall, correct usage, and active participation. The data indicate that flashcards functioned as both a learning tool and a memory reinforcement device, supporting the students' ability to retain and retrieve vocabulary over time. The pattern emerging from the documentation indicates that students' retention improves when flashcards are used systematically alongside the Mimicry-Memorization method. Visual cues, paired practice, and repeated exposure to vocabulary create an interactive, supportive environment that strengthens memory recall. The evidence suggests a consistent link between the use of flashcards and enhanced retention, highlighting their effectiveness as a pedagogical tool in Arabic vocabulary learning.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that integrating the Mimicry-Memorization method with flashcards positively influences students' motivation, interactivity, and vocabulary retention in Arabic learning. Comparing these results with existing literature, it aligns with previous studies that highlight the effectiveness of the Mim-Mem method in improving students' engagement and memorization (Donald, 2025; White, 2021). However, this study extends the scope by focusing specifically on junior high school students and combining the method with visual media, which had not been sufficiently explored in earlier research. Unlike conventional memorization techniques, which often result in passive learning, the integration of flashcards facilitates active participation, peer collaboration, and immediate feedback, demonstrating a more holistic approach to language acquisition.

From a theoretical perspective, the study reinforces the principle that effective

vocabulary learning involves both cognitive and affective components (Al-Mallah, 2025; Haddad, 2025). Motivation, interactivity, and retention are interrelated elements that support language acquisition, and this research confirms that a method combining auditory imitation and visual stimuli can enhance all three simultaneously (Alazzaz, 2022; Zaki et al., 2024). The study's results provide evidence that learning strategies which engage multiple sensory channels can improve students' internalization of vocabulary, supporting theories of multimodal and constructivist learning. Furthermore, the findings suggest that student-centered methods, which allow learners to actively interact with content and peers, are more effective than teacher-centered, rote memorization approaches.

Practically, the results have direct implications for classroom practice. Teachers can implement the Mimicry-Memorization method with flashcards to create an interactive and motivating learning environment. The use of visual aids not only reinforces memory but also encourages collaboration, self-assessment, and repeated practice, which contributes to higher retention of vocabulary (Silviyanti et al., 2024; Syawal et al., 2024). Moreover, the method provides a structured yet enjoyable approach that addresses students' previous frustrations with conventional methods, improving both engagement and learning outcomes. Teachers are encouraged to design lessons that combine imitation, repetition, and visual media to sustain student interest and maximize retention (Nasir et al., 2025; Zarog, 2023).

The research also highlights the importance of designing learning activities that are contextually relevant and adaptable to students' developmental level. Junior high school students respond positively to collaborative and interactive tasks, which promote active learning and peer support (El-Khatib, 2025; Maulidia et al., 2021). By incorporating flashcards into the Mim-Mem method, the learning process becomes more dynamic and responsive to students' needs, which contrasts with earlier studies focusing solely on elementary students or on memorization without visual support (Amehdar, 2023; Raggett, 2023). This emphasizes the need for educators to tailor instructional strategies according to both the content and the learner characteristics to optimize effectiveness.

In conclusion, the study provides a comprehensive model for enhancing Arabic vocabulary learning by combining the Mimicry-Memorization method with flashcards. The findings indicate that this integration improves motivation, interactivity, and retention simultaneously, creating a richer and more effective learning experience. Theoretically, it contributes to understanding the role of multimodal strategies in language acquisition, while practically, it offers teachers a replicable and evidence-based approach to foster active learning and meaningful vocabulary mastery in junior high school contexts. This approach can serve as a reference for future innovations in language education and curriculum development.

CONCLUSION / الخلاصة

The findings of this study indicate that integrating the Mimicry-Memorization method with flashcards significantly enhances students' motivation, interactivity, and vocabulary retention in Arabic learning at the junior high school level. The most important lesson from this research is that a structured approach combining auditory imitation, repetitive practice, and visual stimuli can transform vocabulary learning from a passive, mechanical process into an engaging, meaningful experience. Students not only demonstrated increased enthusiasm and persistence but also actively collaborated with

peers, corrected each other, and utilized flashcards to reinforce memorization. This outcome highlights the pedagogical value of multimodal strategies, showing that motivation, cognitive engagement, and memory retention are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Implementing interactive methods that combine visual and verbal components provides learners with opportunities to internalize content more effectively, fostering a deeper understanding of vocabulary and improving long-term learning outcomes. Teachers can thus draw practical lessons about creating a motivating, learner-centered environment in language classrooms.

From a scholarly perspective, this study contributes to the field of Arabic language education by providing empirical evidence for the effectiveness of combining the Mimicry-Memorization method with visual media, specifically flashcards. The research strengthens theoretical understanding of multimodal and constructivist approaches to vocabulary acquisition, emphasizing the integration of cognitive, affective, and social learning dimensions. However, the study has some limitations. The research was conducted in a single madrasah with eighth-grade students, which may limit generalizability to other educational contexts or age groups. Additionally, the duration of the intervention and follow-up assessments was relatively short, leaving long-term retention effects less explored. For future research, it is recommended to replicate the study across diverse institutions, include larger sample sizes, and examine longitudinal impacts on vocabulary retention and language skills. Further investigations could also explore the integration of digital flashcards or other interactive technologies to enhance multimodal vocabulary learning.

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