

**IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED LEARNING STRATEGIES
TO OVERCOME GRAMMAR, VOCABULARY, AND PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES
IN ENGLISH LEARNING IN SECONDARY SCHOOL**

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Abstract

This classroom action research aims to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of integrated learning strategies in overcoming grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation difficulties experienced by grade VII students of MTs Darul Hikmah. The problems of English learning in these institutions show significant difficulties in mastering the three fundamental components of language, with conventional approaches that separate language elements proving to be less effective in creating comprehensive understanding. The research method uses a classroom action research design with two cycles, involving 36 students from classes VII A and VII B as research subjects. The implementation of integrated learning strategies is carried out through a communicative approach that combines grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in meaningful and contextual learning activities. The data collection technique uses triangulation through direct observation, English language proficiency tests, and documentation of the learning process. The results showed a significant increase in students' English language skills from an average of 50.5 in the pre-cycle to 82.0 in the second cycle, with the level of learning completeness increasing from 19.4% to 80.6%. The vocabulary aspect showed the most noticeable improvement with an increase of 75.8%, followed by grammar and pronunciation which experienced substantial progress. The findings confirm the effectiveness of integrated learning strategies in creating positive synergies between language components, increasing students' motivation and active participation in communicative and meaningful English language learning.

Keywords: integrated learning; English language proficiency; classroom action research.

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INTRODUCTION

English learning at the junior high school level faces complex challenges that require a comprehensive approach in handling them. English as an international language has a strategic role in the era of globalization, but the reality on the ground shows various learning obstacles experienced by students. This condition is reflected in the initial observations at MTs Darul Hikmah, especially in grade VII students who show significant difficulties in mastering the fundamental components of English. Effective English language learning requires an integrated mastery of grammatical, lexical, and phonological aspects to achieve optimal communicative competence (Richards & Renandya, 2022). English learning problems at MTs Darul Hikmah show a pattern consistent with the common phenomenon in junior secondary education institutions

in Indonesia. Based on in-depth observations during the learning process, grade VII students experience substantial difficulties in the three main aspects of interrelated English language mastery. The first aspect is the mastery of grammar which is the structural foundation in English communication. Students show confusion in understanding basic sentence patterns, the use of tenses, and proper grammatical structures in the context of everyday communication. The complexity of the grammatical structure of English that is fundamentally different from Indonesian creates a significant gap in understanding (Batrisyia et al., 2025).

The second difficulty lies in mastering vocabulary which is a vital element in effective communication. Observations show that students have limitations in vocabulary, both in terms of quantity and quality of use. Limited vocabulary mastery has an impact on the ability to express and comprehend English texts, thereby hindering the process of meaningful communication. Recent research shows that vocabulary mastery has a positive correlation with overall ability in a second language (Molyaningrum, 2020). Third, the aspect of pronunciation is a challenge in learning English in the Indonesian context. The difference in the phonological system between Indonesian and English creates interference that affects the pronunciation accuracy of students. The complexity of English language learning problems requires a holistic approach that can simultaneously overcome all three aspects of difficulty. Conventional learning strategies that separate language components in separate learning units have proven to be less effective in creating comprehensive understanding. (Banegas, 2020) emphasizing that integrated language learning allows students to understand the relationship between language components so as to create a deeper and more applicable understanding. An integrated approach in English learning allows students to develop grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation skills simultaneously through meaningful and contextual learning activities.

The implementation of integrated learning strategies is a potential solution to overcome the difficulties of learning English experienced by grade VII students of MTs Darul Hikmah. This strategy is designed to create synergy between the components of language through a holistic and systematic approach. (Hussain, 2022) Explains that integrated learning allows students to experience language in a natural and meaningful context, thereby accelerating the process of internalizing language structure. Through this approach, students not only learn grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation as separate units, but experience all three aspects in authentic communicative situations.

Based on the background of these problems, this classroom action research is focused on the formulation of the main problem: how can the implementation of integrated learning strategies overcome students' difficulties in learning English grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in grade VII of MTs Darul Hikmah? The formulation of this problem includes sub-problems that include the identification of specific difficulties in each language component, the design of integrated learning strategies that are appropriate to the characteristics of the students, and the evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of these strategies in improving students' English proficiency. The purpose of this study is to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of integrated learning strategies in overcoming grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation difficulties experienced by grade VII students of MTs Darul Hikmah. Specifically, this study aims to identify patterns of students' English learning difficulties, design and implement integrated learning strategies that suit students' needs, and analyze the improvement of students' English skills after the implementation of the strategy. Lightbown & Spada (2023) emphasize that action research in language learning should focus on practical solutions that can be applied in real-world contexts to create positive changes in learning processes and outcomes.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a Classroom Action Research design that aims to improve the English language learning process through the implementation of integrated learning strategies. The classroom action research design was chosen because it allows researchers to make continuous improvements to learning practices in the classroom while collecting empirical data on the effectiveness of the actions taken. The classroom action research model applied follows a spiral pattern consisting of four main stages in each cycle, namely planning, action execution, observation, and reflection. Each cycle is designed to address specific issues identified in the previous cycle, creating a systematic and continuous improvement process. The research subjects are grade VII students of MTs Darul Hikmah which consists of two classes, namely class VII A with a total of 19 students and class VII B with a total of 17 students, so that the total research subjects reach 36 students. The selection of these two classes is based on homogeneous characteristics in terms of academic abilities and socioeconomic backgrounds of students. Both classes show similar levels of difficulty in learning English, particularly in aspects of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. The similarity of these characteristics allowed researchers to consistently implement integrated learning strategies and compare the effectiveness of actions on both groups of students.

The research was carried out in two learning cycles consisting of four meetings each. The first cycle is focused on the implementation of integrated learning strategies with an emphasis on mastery of basic sentence structure, contextual vocabulary development, and guided pronunciation exercises. Each meeting in the first cycle is designed to integrate the three components of the language through meaningful and communicative learning activities. The second cycle is an improvement of the findings and reflections of the first cycle, with the addition of a variety of learning strategies and an increase in the complexity of the material according to the abilities of the students who have developed. The data collection technique in this study uses a triangulation approach which includes direct observation, English proficiency tests, and documentation of the learning process. Observations were carried out by researchers and collaborators to observe student activities during the learning process, record changes in learning behavior, and identify obstacles that arise in the implementation of integrated learning strategies. The test instrument was used to measure the improvement of students' abilities in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation aspects before and after the implementation of the action. Documentation in the form of field notes, photos of learning activities, and voice recordings of student pronunciation were used to complete the research data.

Data analysis was carried out qualitatively and quantitatively to provide a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of integrated learning strategies. Qualitative data from observations and field notes were analyzed using descriptive analysis techniques to identify patterns of changes in student learning behavior and obstacles to the implementation of learning strategies. Quantitative data from test results were analyzed using descriptive statistics to show students' improvement in every aspect of the English language. The criteria for the success of the research were determined based on the increase in the average student score of at least 70% of the initial score and the achievement of the target of learning completeness of at least 75% of the number of students in each class.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

Pre-Cycle

The pre-cycle stage is the initial condition for learning English before the implementation of integrated learning strategies in grade VII of MTs Darul Hikmah. Based on observations and diagnostic tests carried out in the first month of the even semester, various fundamental problems in students' English mastery were identified. Conventional learning that has been applied shows a separate approach between grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation components, so that students experience difficulties in integrating these three aspects in practical communication. The dominant lecture method in the learning process leads to low active student participation and lack of opportunities to practice using English contextually.

The results of the initial evaluation showed that the level of English proficiency of students was still below the minimum standards set. Students' grammatical abilities show significant weaknesses in understanding basic sentence structure, the use of auxiliary verbs, and the application of simple tense rules. The vocabulary aspect shows a marked limitation in everyday basic word mastery, with the majority of students only mastering less than 200 words in English. Students' pronunciation skills also show strong interference from the Indonesian language, especially in the pronunciation of vowel sounds and consonants that are not found in the Indonesian phonology system.

Table 1. Pre-Cycle English Proficiency Evaluation Results

Ability Aspect	Class VII A (19 students)	Class VII B (17 students)	Combined Average	Completion Percentage
Grammar	54.2	52.8	53.5	22.2%
Vocabulary	48.7	46.3	47.5	16.7%
Pronunciation	51.3	49.8	50.6	19.4%
Overall Average	51.4	49.6	50.5	19.4%

The data in Table 1 show the conditions of English language learning that require immediate intervention. The overall average score of 50.5 is still far from the minimum completeness criterion of 75, with the level of learning completeness only reaching 19.4% of the total students. This condition is the basis for designing an integrated learning strategy that can overcome holistic problems in English language learning.

Cycle I

The implementation of the first cycle was carried out over four meetings with a focus on implementing integrated learning strategies that combine grammatical, vocabulary, and pronunciation components in meaningful learning activities. A communicative approach is a key cornerstone of any learning activity, with an emphasis on the use of English in the context of real-life situations relevant to students' lives. The strategies implemented include task-based learning, educational language games, and collaborative activities that allow students to practice using all three aspects of language simultaneously.

The learning process in the first cycle showed a significant increase in student participation compared to the pre-cycle conditions. Students began to show the courage to use English in simple communication, although there were still doubts in the use of complex grammatical structures. Integrated learning activities allow students to understand the interconnectedness between aspects of language, resulting in a more comprehensive increase in understanding. However, some obstacles are still found, especially in terms of learning time management and students' adaptation to the new methods applied.

Table 2. Results of Evaluation of English Language Proficiency Cycle I

Ability Aspect	Class VII A (19 students)	Class VII B (17 students)	Combined Average	Completion Percentage
Grammar	68.4	66.2	67.3	44.4%
Vocabulary	71.2	69.8	70.5	52.8%
Pronunciation	69.7	67.3	68.5	47.2%
Overall Average	69.8	67.8	68.8	48.1%

The results of the first cycle evaluation shown in Table 2 show encouraging improvements in all aspects of students' English language skills. The overall average increase from 50.5 to 68.8 demonstrates the effectiveness of integrated learning strategies in improving students' English proficiency. However, the learning completion rate of 48.1% still does not reach the target of at least 75%, so improvements are needed in the next cycle.

Cycle II

The second cycle is designed based on reflection and evaluation from the first cycle, with a focus on refining integrated learning strategies and increasing the intensity of communicative exercises. The improvements made include optimizing the allocation of learning time, adding a variety of learning activities, and increasing scaffolding to help students who are still experiencing difficulties. Learning strategies are enriched by the use of more interactive audiovisual media, more comprehensive role-playing, and collaborative projects that challenge students to apply English language skills in more complex contexts.

The implementation of the second cycle showed a very significant increase in student engagement and learning motivation. Students show higher confidence in using English, both in interactions with peers and with teachers. Students' ability to integrate aspects of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation shows noticeable progress, with a reduction in the systematic errors that were previously common. The learning process becomes more dynamic and communicative, with students actively participating in a variety of learning activities designed in an integrated manner.

Table 3. Results of Evaluation of English Language Proficiency Cycle II

Ability Aspect	Class VII A (19 students)	Class VII B (17 students)	Combined Average	Completion Percentage
Grammar	81.3	79.7	80.5	77.8%
Vocabulary	84.6	82.4	83.5	83.3%
Pronunciation	82.9	80.8	81.9	80.6%
Overall Average	82.9	81.0	82.0	80.6%

The data from the second cycle evaluation presented in Table 3 show very satisfactory achievements in the implementation of integrated learning strategies. The overall average increase to 82.0 with a learning completion rate of 80.6% has exceeded the minimum target set. This success shows that integrated learning strategies are effective in overcoming students' difficulties in learning English grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in a holistic and sustainable manner.

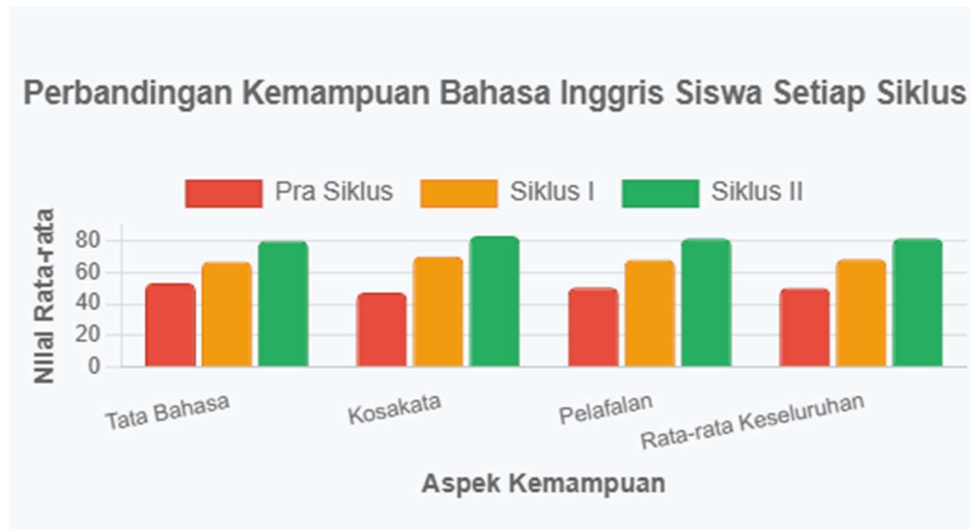


Figure 1. Comparison of Improvement of English Proficiency of Pre-Cycle, Cycle I and Cycle II Students

Figure 1 shows a consistent and significant improvement trend in all aspects of the English language skills of grade VII students of MTs Darul Hikmah after the implementation of the integrated learning strategy. The data visualization confirmed the effectiveness of a holistic approach in English learning that combines aspects of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation simultaneously. The most striking improvement was seen in the vocabulary aspect, where the average score increased from 47.5 in the pre-cycle to 83.5 in the second cycle, showing an increase of 36 points or equivalent to 75.8% from the initial condition. The grammatical and pronunciation aspects also show substantial improvements with almost parallel patterns of improvement. Students' grammar skills have increased from 53.5 to 80.5, while pronunciation skills have increased from 50.6 to 81.9. The consistency of improvement in these three aspects of language shows that the integrated learning strategy has succeeded in creating positive synergy between language components, where mastery of one aspect supports the improvement of other aspects. This is in accordance with language learning theory which emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach in the development of students' communicative competence. The overall average of students' English language proficiency shows steady and continuous progress from each research cycle. The increase from 50.5 in the pre-cycle to 68.8 in the first cycle, and then reaching 82.0 in the second cycle, demonstrates that integrated learning strategies are not only effective in the short term, but also provide a sustained positive impact. This success shows that a learning approach that integrates various language components in meaningful and communicative activities is able to overcome the difficulties of learning English in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

Discussion

The results of the study show that the implementation of integrated learning strategies has proven to be effective in overcoming the difficulties of grade VII students of MTs Darul Hikmah in learning English grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. A significant improvement from pre-cycle to second cycle conditions indicates that a holistic approach to language learning has a substantial positive impact on students' English language proficiency. These findings are in line with research (D. A. Putri & Nursiniah, 2024) which states that the incorporation of elements from different learning methods can improve overall English language teaching, as well as support flexibility in language teaching by using a wide range of available methods to achieve learning objectives. The increase in students' grammar skills from an average of 53.5 in the pre-cycle to 80.5 in the second cycle demonstrates the effectiveness of

integrated learning strategies in helping students understand the grammatical structure of the English language. An approach that integrates grammar learning with a communicative context allows students to understand grammatical functions in real-life situations, rather than simply memorizing abstract rules. These results support the findings (A. Putri, 2024) which explains that learning methods that focus on structure and meaning through focused exercises are effective in strengthening understanding of language structures. The integrated learning strategies applied in this study allow students to experience the use of grammar in the context of meaningful communication, so that their understanding of the structure of language becomes more profound and applicative.

The vocabulary aspect showed the most notable improvement, from an average of 47.5 in the pre-cycle to 83.5 in the second cycle. This success can be attributed to the contextual approach used in integrated learning strategies, where vocabulary is not learned in isolation but in the context of meaningful communication. These findings are in line with research (Adam & Magfirah, 2022) who identified that effective vocabulary learning strategies involve the use of memory and cognitive strategies, as well as conscious contact with the target language through a variety of media. In this study, students experienced intensive contact with English vocabulary through various integrated activities involving real communicative situations, so that the process of internalizing vocabulary became more effective and sustainable. The increase in pronunciation ability from an average of 50.6 to 81.9 shows that integrated learning strategies have succeeded in overcoming phonological interference which is a major challenge in English learning in Indonesia. An approach that integrates pronunciation exercises with communicative activities allows students to practice pronunciation in a meaningful context, rather than just a separate mechanical exercise. These results support the findings (Mass, 2024) who explains that the use of English songs as a teaching technique can improve students' pronunciation and make learning more fun and engaging. Although this study did not specifically use songs, the same principles were applied through fun and meaningful communicative activities that allowed students to practice pronunciation in a conducive setting.

The success of integrated learning strategies in improving all three aspects of language skills simultaneously demonstrates the importance of a holistic approach in language learning. (Amalia et al., 2024) emphasized that learning methods can be effective if teachers pay attention to the goals they want to achieve and implement methods according to students' English learning needs. In this study, integrated learning strategies are specifically designed to address the needs of students who experience difficulties in all three aspects of language at the same time, so that a holistic approach is the right solution to overcome these problems. The increase in learning completeness from 19.4% in the pre-cycle to 80.6% in the second cycle shows that integrated learning strategies are not only effective in improving students' average grades, but also successfully help more students achieve the set standards of completeness. These results are in line with the findings (Sumarni, 2021) which showed an increase in student learning outcomes from 63.9% in the pre-cycle to 97.2% in the second cycle through the implementation of teachers' communication strategies in English learning. The similarity of these improvement patterns indicates that approaches that focus on communication and integration of language components have high effectiveness in English language learning.

The implementation of integrated learning strategies also shows a positive impact on student motivation and involvement in the learning process. (Iswari, 2024) explains that song-based learning can improve students' vocabulary and make learning English more engaging. Although this study uses a different approach, the principle of making learning more engaging and meaningful is the key to success in increasing student motivation. The integrated learning activities applied in this study create a dynamic and communicative learning atmosphere, so that students become more active and motivated to participate in the learning process. The success of this study also shows the importance of adapting learning methods to the context

and needs of students. (Kharimah et al., 2023) emphasizes that curriculum implementation in English language learning should prioritize project-based learning that focuses not only on knowledge mastery but also character, literacy, skills, and technology. The integrated learning strategies applied in this study are in line with this principle, where students not only learn the language components separately but integrate them in communicative activities that are meaningful and relevant to their real lives.

The findings of this study make an important contribution to the development of English learning methods at the junior high school level. Integrated learning strategies have been proven to overcome students' difficulties in learning grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation effectively and sustainably. This approach not only improves the mastery of the language components individually, but also helps students understand the interconnectedness between the language components in real communication, thus creating a more comprehensive and applicable understanding in English language learning.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The implementation of integrated learning strategies in grade VII of MTS Darul Hikmah showed significant effectiveness in overcoming students' difficulties in mastering English grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. This classroom action research proves that a holistic approach that integrates all three components of language in meaningful communicative activities is able to comprehensively improve students' abilities, with the overall average increasing from 50.5 in the pre-cycle to 82.0 in the second cycle. The most striking improvement occurred in the vocabulary aspect with an increase of 36 points (75.8%), followed by grammar and pronunciation, each of which experienced a substantial improvement to reach the minimum level of completeness. The level of learning completeness has made remarkable progress from 19.4% to 80.6%, indicating that integrated learning strategies are not only effective for high-achieving students, but are also able to elevate the abilities of students with low mastery levels through a contextual and meaningful communicative approach.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended for English education practitioners to implement integrated learning strategies as the main alternative in overcoming students' difficulties in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation aspects in a holistic and sustainable manner. English teachers need to develop competencies in designing learning activities that integrate all three components of language through a meaningful communicative approach, by utilizing interactive audiovisual media, comprehensive role-playing, and collaborative projects that challenge students to apply language skills in an authentic context. Educational institutions are advised to provide integrated learning support facilities in the form of adequate language laboratories, digital libraries with English multimedia content, and continuous training for teachers in implementing innovative learning strategies oriented towards developing students' communicative competencies.

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