



## Mastering Mufradat with The Concept Of Self-Regulation for Elementary School Students

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**Abstract**

*This study explores the application of self-regulation strategies in mastering Arabic vocabulary among elementary school students at MIS Darussalam Martapura. Self-regulated learning (SRL) involves students independently managing, monitoring, and evaluating their learning process. The research employs a qualitative approach with case study methods, including in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. The findings reveal that effective vocabulary mastery is supported by five key aspects of self-regulation: learning planning, cognitive strategies, motivation regulation, learning environment regulation, and evaluation and reflection. Students with clear learning plans and appropriate cognitive strategies tend to have better vocabulary retention. Intrinsic motivation and a supportive learning environment significantly enhance learning consistency. Regular evaluation and reflection help students adjust their strategies and improve learning outcomes. The study concludes that integrating these self-regulation aspects can significantly enhance students' vocabulary mastery and promote independent learning. Future research should focus on developing specific interventions to support self-regulation in diverse educational settings.*

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### Introduction

The learning of Arabic at MIS Darussalam Martapura plays a strategic role in shaping the linguistic competence of students from an early age, especially in the aspect of vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary is the main foundation for understanding and using Arabic effectively, both in speaking and writing. Without adequate vocabulary mastery, students will face difficulties in developing other language skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and understanding grammar (nahwu and sharaf). Unfortunately, the reality on the ground shows that many students at the elementary school level, including those at MIS Darussalam Martapura, face obstacles in optimally mastering vocabulary. This is often due to the conventional learning approach that is too focused on memorization. Such learning models tend to neglect students' individual learning styles and needs, thereby reducing their motivation to learn and the effectiveness of vocabulary acquisition.

To address the problem, it is necessary to adopt an approach that can stimulate students to be more active and independent in the learning process, one of which is through the concept of self-regulation. Self-regulated learning (SRL) is the ability of students to independently manage, monitor, and evaluate their own learning process by



applying strategies that suit their individual needs and learning styles (Zimmerman, 2002). Self-regulated learning (SRL) consists of three main phases: forethought (planning), performance (execution), and self-reflection. In the context of language learning, the SRL approach has been proven to enhance students' ability to remember and understand vocabulary through various techniques such as the use of flashcards, recording vocabulary in journals, and practicing vocabulary in real communication contexts. Research conducted by (Tseng et al., 2006) Studies have shown that motivation and independent learning strategies play a crucial role in the success of vocabulary acquisition in a foreign language. Similarly, the findings of (Pintrich, 2000) indicate that students with strong self-regulation skills tend to have higher academic achievement compared to those who do not develop this skill as effectively.

In the context of language learning A study by (Fatemipour & Najafgholikhan, 2015; Nejabati, 2015; Zhang, 2024) showed that the application of self-regulation strategies can improve vocabulary retention and student motivation. However, the application of SRL in Arabic vocabulary learning, especially at the elementary school level such as at MIS Darussalam Martapura, has rarely been deeply investigated. This indicates a gap in the literature that needs to be filled through more contextual research. This research aims to fill that gap by focusing on the analysis of the application of self-regulation in vocabulary mastery by students at MIS Darussalam Martapura. The main problem to be addressed is why students still have difficulty mastering vocabulary even though Arabic lessons have been taught in the elementary school curriculum, and how self-regulation strategies can be an effective alternative solution.

Specifically, this research aims to identify the various self-regulation strategies used by students in learning Arabic vocabulary, analyze the effectiveness of these strategies in improving vocabulary mastery, and explain the factors that influence the success of self-regulation implementation in learning. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this research will contribute to the development of more adaptive, participatory, and student characteristic - appropriate Arabic learning methods for elementary school students. The application of this self - regulation - based learning approach is not only expected to significantly improve students' vocabulary mastery, but also to promote the growth of independence and a sense of responsibility in learning, which are important for long - term education.

## **Literature Review**

### *Self-Regulation as a Learning Strategy in Mastering Arabic Vocabulary*

Mastering vocabulary is one of the main foundations in learning Arabic, which plays an important role in improving reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. To effectively master vocabulary, learning strategies are needed that enable students to not only understand but also remember and use vocabulary in various contexts (Qibtiyah & Walfajri, 2020; Schwartz & Asli, 2014). One relevant approach in this regard is Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) or self-regulated learning (Adler et al., 2025; Panadero, 2017). This approach allows students to independently plan, implement, and evaluate their



learning process. The concept of SRL not only emphasizes the cognitive aspect but also includes the affective dimension such as motivation, self-efficacy, and control over the learning process (Mercadal, 2021).

Zimmerman divides SRL into three main phases: the planning phase (forethought), the performance phase, and the reflection phase (self-reflection) (Zimmerman, 2002). In the planning phase, students set learning goals and determine the strategies they will use, such as memorizing a certain number of vocabulary words within a specific time frame. During the performance phase, they begin to implement the strategies while monitoring their effectiveness. Meanwhile, the reflection phase involves evaluating the learning outcomes and adjusting the strategies for future learning. In this way, students not only become more active and responsible but also develop sustainable and adaptive learning patterns that meet their individual needs.

Motivation is one of the key elements in SRL (Pintrich, 2000). stated that the success of self-regulation strategies highly depends on students' level of motivation, especially in relation to self-efficacy beliefs, goal orientation, and perceived control over learning outcomes. Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to persist in mastering vocabulary and not easily give up when encountering difficulties (Zainuddin et al., 2016). The same applies to students with clear goal orientation—they are more focused on using effective and efficient learning strategies. Supportive learning environments, teachers' involvement as facilitators, and the use of technology can also enhance motivation and the effectiveness of SRL in the context of Arabic vocabulary learning (Alvi & Gillies, 2020).

#### *Strengthening Self-Regulation in Vocabulary Learning*

To effectively implement self-regulation strategies in vocabulary learning, it is important to understand and integrate several relevant educational theories as a conceptual foundation. One of the main theories that supports SRL is constructivism, as developed by Piaget and Vygotsky. Constructivism emphasizes that learning is an active process in which students construct their own knowledge through interaction with the environment. Vygotsky introduced the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which indicates that students can achieve higher learning outcomes with support from teachers or peers (Vygotsky & Luria, 1978). In vocabulary learning, strategies such as group discussion, contextual question-and-answer, and scaffolding are very effective in supporting this constructive process. This theory aligns with the principles of SRL, where students are given the opportunity to explore and reflect on their learning independently, while still receiving guidance at critical stages.

In addition to constructivism, cognitive theory also plays a significant role in understanding the dimensions of vocabulary learning. Gu identified that vocabulary mastery encompasses three aspects: form, meaning, and use (Gu, 2022). Form includes pronunciation and spelling, meaning involves semantic understanding such as synonyms and antonyms, while use relates to context, collocations, and grammar. SRL enables

students to devise learning methods that target these three aspects in a balanced and structured manner.

Furthermore, the theory of metacognition developed by Flavell also underscores the importance of learning awareness (Bermillo & Aradilla, 2022). Metacognition encourages students to be aware of and control their thinking processes, from planning learning strategies to evaluating their outcomes. In the context of vocabulary learning, students with metacognitive skills tend to be more selective and reflective in choosing learning techniques, such as using flashcards, keeping vocabulary journals, or engaging in contextual practice (Diaz, 2015).

Equally important is the contribution of behaviorist theory in reinforcing vocabulary learning routines. Skinner, through his operant conditioning theory, emphasized the importance of reinforcement in shaping learning behavior (Skinner, 1957). In vocabulary learning, this principle can be applied through systematic repetition and the provision of positive feedback that encourages students to continue learning. Although behaviorism focuses more on the mechanistic aspects of learning, within the framework of SRL, behaviorist elements can be utilized to strengthen learning discipline and motivation.

### **Method**

This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore how self-regulation strategies are implemented in vocabulary learning for Elementary School/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students. A qualitative approach is chosen because it allows for an in-depth analysis of the experiences, strategies, and challenges that students face in independently managing their learning. The case study is used to gain a more detailed understanding of the phenomena occurring in the students' learning environment. Participants in this research are Elementary School/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students who actively study Arabic and have experience in independently managing their learning. Purposive sampling technique is used to select participants who have characteristics that align with the research focus. Data is collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis such as students' learning journals or reflection notes. The data obtained is analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, where patterns and main themes in self-regulation strategies are identified. This analysis includes coding, categorization, and interpretation of data to achieve a comprehensive understanding of how self-regulation contributes to vocabulary learning.

### **Result and Discussion**

This research aims to understand how students in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah master Arabic vocabulary by applying the concept of self-regulation in their learning. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with students and teachers, as well as observations in both classroom and extracurricular settings to comprehend how student self-regulation impacts the effectiveness of vocabulary learning. Based on the data analysis, the self-regulation aspects in this study are categorized into five main elements:



(1) planning vocabulary learning, (2) cognitive strategies in memorizing vocabulary, (3) motivation regulation in maintaining learning consistency, (4) regulation of the learning environment, and (5) evaluation and reflection on vocabulary mastery development. Each of these aspects is interconnected and plays a crucial role in helping students enhance their Arabic vocabulary skills in a more systematic and independent manner.

#### Vocabulary Learning Planning

Planning is the initial step in self-regulation that determines how effectively students can master vocabulary. From the interviews, many students are aware of the importance of planning in learning, but not all have clear strategies for managing their study time and materials. Some more organized students have daily study schedules, where they determine the number of words they will learn each day. They also often set short-term and long-term goals, such as memorizing 10 words per day or mastering 300 words in a month.

In addition to this, students with good planning tend to be more consistent in their studies. They proportionally allocate their study time between memorizing, understanding word meanings in sentence contexts, and applying vocabulary in conversations. Some students mentioned that they are more effective at learning at certain times, such as in the morning before school or at night before going to bed. This indicates that planning study time in accordance with individual learning rhythms contributes to the success of vocabulary mastery.

Observations in the classroom show that students with clear study plans are more disciplined in following the learning process. They more frequently take notes on new words, ask the teacher when they encounter difficult words, and complete assignments more quickly compared to students who study without a plan. Conversely, students without planning tend to study sporadically, only memorizing when there are assignments or exams, which results in less than optimal learning outcomes. One strategy identified in the interviews is the use of learning journals. Some students record new words every day and evaluate how well they remember them at the end of the week. This method helps them see their learning progress concretely and provides additional motivation to continue improving their vocabulary mastery.

However, students also face obstacles in learning planning. Some students admit that it is difficult to maintain consistency due to the large number of assignments from other subjects or a lack of discipline in following the schedule they have made. Teachers observe that students with poor planning tend to lose motivation more easily and have difficulty understanding vocabulary in a broader context.

Nevertheless, some students who recognize the benefits of planning try to adjust their strategies with various methods, such as using technology-based learning applications or discussing with peers to remind each other of their learning targets. From these results, it can be concluded that learning planning is an important aspect of self-regulation, and students with clear plans tend to have better learning outcomes in vocabulary mastery.

*Cognitive Strategies in Memorizing Vocabulary*

In this study, it was found that the cognitive strategies employed by students vary, depending on their learning styles. One of the most commonly used strategies is the method of spaced repetition. Students who use this method typically memorize lists of new words repeatedly over a certain period, such as repeating the same words at intervals of one hour, one day, and one week to ensure stronger memory retention. In addition, some students rely on flashcards as an aid in memorizing vocabulary. Flashcards are used by writing the Arabic word on one side and its translation on the other. With this technique, students can practice independently or with a friend. The use of flashcards not only helps in memorizing new words but also increases the speed of recall when tested.

Another commonly used strategy is meaning association and visualization. Students who use this method link new vocabulary with images, colors, or specific situations that are relevant to the meaning of the word. For example, to memorize the word "qalam" (pen), a student might imagine a large pen with Arabic script written on it. This technique helps strengthen the connection between the word and its concept, thereby facilitating the process of remembering. Some students also use the technique of sentence construction to help understand the context in which vocabulary is used. In interviews, several students said that they find it easier to remember words when they use them in sentences rather than memorizing them in isolation. Teachers also observed that students who frequently use this technique have a better ability to understand and remember words compared to those who simply memorize them directly. However, not all cognitive strategies are effective for every student. Some students have difficulty determining the most suitable strategy for them, which results in less than optimal learning processes. Teachers recommend that students try various techniques and evaluate the effectiveness of each method in helping them memorize vocabulary.

From the observations, it was found that students who apply a variety of cognitive strategies are more flexible in dealing with difficulties in learning vocabulary. They are more active in exploring different techniques and do not easily give up when encountering difficult words. This indicates that the use of appropriate cognitive strategies greatly contributes to more efficient vocabulary mastery.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the selection of appropriate cognitive strategies significantly affects the effectiveness of vocabulary learning. Students who use techniques that match their learning style are better able to retain information in the long term and are more confident in applying vocabulary in everyday communication. Therefore, the development of self-regulation skills in the aspect of cognitive strategies is one of the key factors in the success of vocabulary learning in Elementary School.

*Motivation Regulation in Maintaining Learning Consistency*

Motivation plays a crucial role in mastering Arabic vocabulary. From the interview results, it was found that students with intrinsic motivation are more consistent in their



studies compared to those who rely solely on extrinsic motivation. The intrinsic motivation identified in some students includes a personal interest in the Arabic language, an understanding of the importance of Arabic in worship, and aspirations to pursue higher education in Islamic institutions or abroad. Students with this intrinsic motivation tend to be more active in seeking learning methods that suit them and are less likely to experience burnout in their studies. Conversely, students who depend on extrinsic motivation, such as exam grade pressures or encouragement from parents and teachers, often struggle to maintain learning consistency. They tend to only make an effort to memorize vocabulary when approaching exams or when given assignments by teachers. Classroom observations indicate that these students with extrinsic motivation often lose focus after completing tasks, resulting in non-sustained learning.

One strategy employed by students with good motivation regulation is setting personal targets. Some students revealed that they write down their goals in notebooks or on digital applications to provide additional motivation for learning. For example, one student mentioned that he targets to master 500 words in one semester and rewards himself if he achieves this goal. This strategy helps them maintain their enthusiasm for learning in the long term.

Teachers also play a crucial role in maintaining student motivation. Based on interviews with several Arabic teachers, it was found that teachers who provide verbal or non-verbal recognition for student progress can significantly boost their motivation. Students who feel valued tend to be more confident in their learning and more enthusiastic about memorizing vocabulary. Moreover, teachers who implement interactive learning methods, such as quizzes or vocabulary games, also succeed in making students more eager to learn.

There are several obstacles identified in student motivation regulation. Some students admitted to experiencing a decline in their enthusiasm for learning due to pressure from other subjects that they prioritize more. In addition, a lack of a supportive environment at home, such as an uncondusive atmosphere or insufficient family support, also becomes a factor that hampers their motivation in learning vocabulary.

From the observations, students who can regulate their own motivation find it easier to maintain consistent learning habits. They do not rely solely on external incentives but also find ways to stay motivated despite challenges. Some students mentioned that they draw inspiration from stories of scholars or successful figures in mastering Arabic to strengthen their motivation.

It can be concluded that motivation regulation significantly determines students' success in mastering Arabic vocabulary. Students with intrinsic motivation are more likely to persevere through the long learning process, while those who rely only on external motivation are more susceptible to fluctuations in their enthusiasm for learning. Therefore, efforts to enhance motivation regulation, both from the students themselves and from the school and family environment, need to be considered to make vocabulary learning more effective and sustainable.

*Learning Environment Regulation*

A supportive learning environment has a significant impact on the effectiveness of students' vocabulary mastery. From interviews with students, it was found that those who have a comfortable and distraction-free learning environment tend to be more focused on memorizing vocabulary. Some students mentioned that they deliberately create a quiet study atmosphere at home by avoiding distractions such as social media or television. In addition, students who have active study groups also show better progress in memorizing vocabulary. Some students revealed that they learn more effectively when discussing and testing each other in small groups. Observations at school indicated that students who frequently interact with peers in learning Arabic are more confident in using the vocabulary they have learned compared to those who study individually.

The school environment also plays a role in influencing learning environment regulation. Some teachers provide students with the opportunity to study outside the classroom in a more relaxed atmosphere, such as in the library or on the school grounds, which makes students more comfortable in memorizing vocabulary. Teachers also observed that students with a flexible learning environment are quicker in absorbing new vocabulary. However, there are challenges in learning environment regulation, especially for students living in less conducive home environments. Some students complained that they find it difficult to focus on studying due to noisy home environments or because they have to help with household chores. In such cases, some students take the initiative to find alternative study places, such as studying at the mosque or the school library.

In addition to the physical environment, social support from the family also plays a role in regulating students' learning environment. Students who receive encouragement from their parents or siblings in learning Arabic are more motivated to keep trying. Conversely, students who feel unsupported often lose enthusiasm and struggle to maintain consistent study habits. Teachers also recognize that good learning environment regulation can help students focus better on understanding and memorizing vocabulary. Therefore, some teachers advise students to create comfortable study routines and seek environments that can enhance their concentration.

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that learning environment regulation is an important factor in the success of mastering Arabic vocabulary. Students who can effectively manage their learning environment tend to be more focused, more motivated, and quicker in memorizing vocabulary. Therefore, both students, teachers, and families should contribute to creating a supportive learning environment to optimize learning outcomes.

*Evaluation and Reflection on Vocabulary Mastery Development*

Evaluation and reflection are crucial stages in self-regulation that allow students to assess how well they have mastered vocabulary. Interview results indicate that students who actively evaluate their progress have a better ability to memorize and



understand vocabulary compared to those who do not conduct regular evaluations. One evaluation method used by students is self-testing by writing down the vocabulary they have memorized without looking at their notes. Some students also try to use the words in daily conversations to see if they truly understand the meaning and proper usage in context.

Observations show that students who engage in regular reflection are more confident in using vocabulary in speaking and writing activities. They can more easily identify words that are still difficult to remember and seek additional strategies to improve their weaknesses. Teachers also play a role in helping students evaluate their progress by providing regular quizzes or exercises. Some students stated that they are more motivated to study when they know there will be tests or assessments that help them see the progress they have made. From the results of this study, it can be concluded that reflection and evaluation are very important in self-regulation. Students who actively assess their progress are more likely to achieve the targets they have set in mastering Arabic vocabulary.

### **Discussion**

The success of students in mastering Arabic vocabulary with the concept of self-regulation heavily depends on the interconnection of the five main aspects: learning planning, cognitive strategies, motivation regulation, learning environment regulation, and evaluation and reflection on learning development. These five aspects form a continuous system, where one element supports and strengthens the other. If one aspect does not function well, then the student's learning process becomes less effective and can hinder their achievement in independently mastering vocabulary. The initial stage of self-regulation begins with learning planning, where students with a structured plan tend to be more capable of managing their study time and materials. Those who set clear learning targets will find it easier to determine the appropriate strategies for memorizing vocabulary. Conversely, students without planning tend to study sporadically, without a clear direction, thus yielding suboptimal results. A good study plan provides a solid foundation for students to implement cognitive strategies that suit their learning style.

After having a clear plan, students need to choose the most effective cognitive strategies for memorizing and understanding vocabulary. These strategies can include spaced repetition, the use of flashcards, visual association, or sentence construction to understand words in context. The selection of these strategies is closely related to self-regulation in maintaining learning motivation. Students with strong motivation regulation will be more disciplined in applying the cognitive strategies they choose and more resilient in facing challenges during the learning process. Learning motivation will not last long if it is not supported by a conducive learning environment. Students who have a supportive learning environment, both at home and at school, are better able to maintain focus and consistency in learning vocabulary. Study groups, support from friends and family, and a comfortable learning space are external factors that help

students maintain their study routines. If their learning environment is full of distractions or lacks social support, students tend to find it more difficult to maintain their motivation and study discipline.

The final step in self-regulation is evaluation and reflection, which are key to measuring the effectiveness of strategies and student learning progress. Students who regularly evaluate their development can adjust their strategies and learning plans if they are not yet optimal. Through reflection, they can identify weaknesses in the learning process and find ways to overcome them, whether by changing strategies, adjusting their study schedule, or seeking support from teachers and peers.

The interconnection of these five aspects of self-regulation illustrates how students in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah strive to independently master vocabulary. Students who can regulate themselves in all these aspects tend to have better vocabulary mastery and are more confident in using it in their daily lives. Conversely, if one aspect is weak, such as lack of motivation or an unsupportive learning environment, their learning effectiveness decreases. Therefore, to achieve optimal results, there needs to be a balance between planning, cognitive strategies, motivation regulation, learning environment regulation, and evaluation and reflection. By implementing the concept of self-regulation comprehensively, students are not only able to memorize vocabulary but also understand and use it better in daily communication.

### **Conclusion**

The success of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students in mastering Arabic vocabulary heavily depends on the integration of the five main aspects of self-regulation: learning planning, cognitive strategies, motivation regulation, learning environment regulation, and evaluation and reflection. Students with good learning plans tend to be more organized in determining appropriate cognitive strategies, making the process of memorizing and understanding vocabulary more effective. Strong motivation regulation enables students to remain consistent in their studies, even when facing challenges and obstacles. External factors such as the learning environment also play a crucial role in supporting the sustainability of the students' learning process, both through social support and a conducive learning atmosphere. Additionally, evaluation and reflection serve as tools for students to assess their progress, adjust their learning strategies, and address weaknesses in vocabulary mastery. Thus, optimal implementation of self-regulation not only enhances students' ability to memorize and understand vocabulary but also fosters a more independent, sustainable, and effective learning pattern in the long term.

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