SOCILEXIA
Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities

SOCILEXIA: Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities
Vol. 1, No. 4, 2026
E-ISSN: 3164-9610
punggawajournal.com/socilexia

Implementation of Direct Instruction on English Vocabulary Acquisition for the Eighth Graders of MTsS NW Dasan Tapen 2025/2026

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Article Info

Article history:
Received Sept 21th, 2026
Revised Oct 30th, 2026
Accepted Nov 7th, 2026

Keyword:
Direct Instruction; English Vocabulary Acquisition; Eighth Graders.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the implementation of Direct Instruction in teaching English vocabulary to eighth-grade students at MTsS NW Dasan Tapen. Specifically, it focused on three objectives: (1) describing how the English teacher applied the Direct Instruction model in vocabulary teaching, (2) identifying students' participation during vocabulary learning, and (3) exploring the challenges encountered by the teacher throughout the implementation. This research employed a descriptive qualitative design involving one English teacher and two eighth-grade students as participants. The data were gathered through classroom observations, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed that the teacher implemented Direct Instruction through several systematic stages, including reviewing previous lessons, introducing new vocabulary in manageable steps, providing demonstrations, conducting guided practice, checking students' understanding, assigning independent exercises, and closing the lesson. These activities supported students' vocabulary learning through clear explanations, repeated practice, and immediate feedback. Students also demonstrated active participation in question-and-answer activities, guided exercises, and independent tasks. Furthermore, the teacher's explanations and demonstrations helped students develop their vocabulary knowledge and confidence. Nevertheless, the implementation faced several challenges, particularly differences in students' vocabulary proficiency and limited instructional time. To overcome these difficulties, the teacher provided additional exercises, reviewed challenging materials, utilized engaging learning media, and encouraged students to participate actively. In conclusion, Direct Instruction supported English vocabulary learning by providing structured teaching activities and encouraging student participation. This model can therefore be considered a useful approach to vocabulary instruction at the junior high school level.

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INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential means of communication that enables people to exchange information, express ideas, and interact with others. Among the various languages used around the world, English has an important position in international communication, education, science, and technology. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language and forms part of the curriculum at the secondary school level, including Islamic junior high schools. Learning English requires students to develop several language competencies, one of which is vocabulary knowledge. Vocabulary plays a fundamental role because it helps learners understand information and communicate their thoughts in both spoken and written forms (Nation, 2013).

Vocabulary mastery is closely related to the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Students who have limited vocabulary may find it difficult to understand spoken texts,

comprehend reading materials, construct sentences, and communicate their ideas. Nation (2013) explains that vocabulary knowledge contributes significantly to language comprehension and successful communication. However, learning English vocabulary is not always easy for junior high school students. Some learners experience difficulties in remembering word meanings, pronouncing unfamiliar words, and using vocabulary appropriately in different contexts. These difficulties indicate the importance of providing learning activities that introduce vocabulary clearly and allow students to practice using new words. Schmitt (2010) emphasizes that vocabulary learning involves more than memorizing word meanings because learners also need to understand how words are used in communication.

One teaching approach that can be applied to support vocabulary learning is Direct Instruction (DI). This model emphasizes clear explanations, systematic presentation of learning materials, teacher demonstrations, guided practice, and feedback. Archer and Hughes (2011) explain that Direct Instruction provides explicit teaching through carefully organized steps, allowing teachers to introduce concepts and skills in a structured manner. In vocabulary teaching, this approach can help students recognize new words, understand their meanings, practice pronunciation, and use the words through activities guided by the teacher. Repeated practice and feedback also provide opportunities for students to strengthen their understanding of the vocabulary being learned.

Research on vocabulary instruction has highlighted the importance of explicit teaching and opportunities for repeated exposure to new words. Naeimi and Foo (2015), for example, examined the use of direct and indirect vocabulary learning strategies among English learners. Their study provides a basis for considering how direct vocabulary learning activities can support students in developing vocabulary knowledge. In addition, Schmitt (2010) discusses the importance of vocabulary learning strategies and the need for learners to encounter and use words repeatedly. These perspectives suggest that vocabulary instruction should not only introduce new words but also provide opportunities for students to understand, remember, and apply them.

At MTsS NW Dasan Tapen, the teaching of English vocabulary is an important part of helping eighth-grade students develop their English proficiency. Nevertheless, students may encounter difficulties when learning unfamiliar vocabulary, particularly in understanding meanings, remembering words, and pronouncing them correctly. These learning challenges require teachers to organize classroom activities that provide clear explanations, examples, practice, and opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding. Direct Instruction is relevant to this context because its structured stages allow teachers to guide students gradually, monitor their learning, and provide feedback when difficulties arise.

Although Direct Instruction offers a structured approach to teaching, its implementation needs to be examined within the actual classroom context. It is important to understand how teachers apply each instructional stage, how students participate in the learning activities, and what challenges arise during the teaching process. Such an examination can provide a clearer picture of how Direct Instruction is carried out in vocabulary lessons at an Islamic junior high school. A qualitative approach is appropriate for exploring these classroom processes because it allows the researcher to obtain information through observation, interviews, and documentation (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Based on these considerations, this study focuses on the implementation of Direct Instruction in teaching English vocabulary to eighth-grade students at MTsS NW Dasan Tapen. It aims to describe the teacher's implementation of the model, identify students' participation during vocabulary learning, and explore the challenges encountered by the teacher. By examining these aspects, the study is expected to provide a contextual understanding of the use of Direct Instruction in English vocabulary teaching.

RESEARCH METHODS

The data in this study were collected through classroom observation, interviews, and documentation to obtain information about the implementation of Direct Instruction in teaching English vocabulary to eighth-grade students at MTsS NW Dasan Tapen. Documentation was used to support the information gathered from observations and interviews, including photographs, audio recordings, field notes, interview transcripts, and other relevant research documents. The researcher acted as the main instrument in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data, supported by observation sheets, interview guidelines, and documentation tools. Observation sheets were used to record students'

activities and participation during the learning process, while interview guidelines helped the researcher explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and challenges related to the implementation of Direct Instruction.

The data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. During data reduction, the researcher selected, simplified, and organized information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation, focusing on the implementation of Direct Instruction, vocabulary learning activities, students' participation, and challenges encountered during the teaching process. The reduced data were then presented systematically through descriptions, tables, and thematic categories to identify similarities, differences, and relevant patterns. In the final stage, the researcher interpreted the findings, compared information from different data sources, and verified the conclusions to ensure that they addressed the research objectives.

To maintain the trustworthiness of the research findings, the researcher applied four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was established through triangulation by comparing information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation, as well as confirming participants' responses and interpretations. Transferability was supported by providing detailed descriptions of the research setting, participants, and learning activities so that readers could understand the context of the study. Dependability was maintained by documenting the research procedures, data collection activities, and analysis process systematically. Meanwhile, confirmability was ensured by grounding the findings in observation notes, interview transcripts, and documentation rather than the researcher's personal assumptions. These procedures were applied to maintain the accuracy and trustworthiness of the findings concerning the implementation of Direct Instruction in English vocabulary teaching at MTsS NW Dasan Tapen.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. RESULTS

1. Implementation of Direct Instruction On English Vocabulary Teaching

Based on the results of classroom observations, interviews with the English teacher, and documentation of the lesson module, it was found that the teacher implemented the Direct Instruction model in teaching English vocabulary to the eight-grade students of MTsS NW Dasan Tapen. In general, the teaching process followed the main stages of Direct Instruction, namely reviewing previous learning, presenting new material in small steps, modeling, guided practice, checking students' understanding, independent practice, and lesson closure.

At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher started by reviewing the vocabulary that had been taught in the previous meeting. Mr. Reziq Ridho, QH., S.S asked several simple questions about the meanings and pronunciations of previously learned vocabulary to determine how well the students remembered the material.

Based on the interview, Mr. Reziq Ridho, QH., S.S explained that reviewing previous learning was intended to activate students' prior knowledge before introducing new material. As she stated:

> *"I always review the vocabulary that students learned in the previous lesson so that they do not easily forget it and are better prepared to learn new material."*

After the review, the teacher introduced new vocabulary gradually. Each vocabulary item was explained individually, including its meaning, pronunciation, and use in a simple sentence, allowing students to understand each word before moving on to the next one.

Mr. Reziq Ridho, QH., S.S explained that the material was presented step by step to prevent students from becoming confused.

> *"If I introduce too many vocabulary items at once, students usually become confused. Therefore, I explain them one by one so that they can understand more easily."*

During the modeling stage, the teacher demonstrated the correct pronunciation of each vocabulary item and asked the students to repeat it together and individually. The teacher then provided guided practice through reading activities, vocabulary repetition, and answering simple questions related to the lesson.

To check students' understanding, the teacher asked several oral questions to individual students. Whenever students had difficulty understanding the material, the teacher provided additional explanations and examples.

Mr. Reziq Ridho, QH., S.S emphasized that this activity was important to ensure that all students understood the lesson before completing independent exercises.

"I usually ask several students directly because I want to know whether they really understand the lesson or not."

During the independent practice stage, students were instructed to complete exercises from the textbook and worksheets individually. The teacher walked around the classroom to monitor students' work and provided assistance whenever necessary.

At the end of the lesson, the teacher and students summarized the material that had been learned, reviewed the important vocabulary items, and the teacher assigned homework as additional practice to reinforce students' vocabulary mastery.

2. Students' Participation in English Vocabulary Acquisition

Based on the interviews with two eight-grade students of MTsS NW Dasan Tapen, namely Razak Hanuri and Ismi Wirda, it was found that the implementation of the Direct Instruction model provided a positive learning experience in English vocabulary learning. Both students stated that the step-by-step presentation of the material and the teacher's examples helped them understand and remember new vocabulary more easily.

Razak Hanuri explained that vocabulary learning became easier because the teacher first explained the material, then provided examples and practice activities. According to him, whenever there was material that he did not understand, the teacher immediately gave further explanations and guidance, enabling him to understand the vocabulary more effectively. As he stated:

"The teacher explained the material first, then provided examples and practice. If there was something I did not understand, the teacher immediately gave explanations and guidance, making it easier for me to understand the vocabulary." (Razak Hanuri, Interview, 2026).

Similarly, Ismi Wirda stated that the teacher presented the material gradually, provided examples of vocabulary use, and guided students whenever they encountered difficulties. Afterward, the teacher conducted an evaluation to assess the students' understanding.

"Usually, the teacher explains the material first, then gives examples followed by practice. If I do not understand, the teacher provides guidance and explains it again until I understand." (Ismi Wirda, Interview, 2026).

Regarding classroom participation, both students demonstrated active involvement throughout the learning process. Razak Hanuri mentioned that the question-and-answer session was the most helpful activity in improving his vocabulary mastery.

"The most helpful part was when the teacher asked questions and the students answered them directly." (Razak Hanuri, Interview, 2026).

Likewise, Ismi Wirda explained that the teacher's examples and direct question-and-answer activities made it easier for her to understand and remember new vocabulary.

"The most helpful part was when the teacher gave examples and invited us to participate in direct question-and-answer activities." (Ismi Wirda, Interview, 2026).

Despite these positive experiences, both students reported several difficulties in learning English vocabulary. Razak Hanuri admitted that he sometimes experienced difficulties when the teacher did not explain the pronunciation of vocabulary items in detail.

"The difficulty I experienced was when the teacher introduced vocabulary without explaining clearly how to read and pronounce the words." (Razak Hanuri, Interview, 2026).

Meanwhile, Ismi Wirda stated that her main difficulty was pronouncing unfamiliar English words correctly.

"The difficulty I experienced was when there were vocabulary words that were difficult to read or pronounce." (Ismi Wirda, Interview, 2026).

As a solution, both students suggested that the teacher should review previously learned vocabulary more frequently, provide more detailed explanations of pronunciation, and give additional practice activities to help students retain the vocabulary more effectively.

Overall, the interview findings indicate that the implementation of the Direct Instruction model enhanced students' participation in English vocabulary learning. The gradual presentation of the material, direct modeling, question-and-answer activities, and repeated practice enabled students to understand and remember vocabulary more effectively, although some challenges related to pronunciation and differences in students' learning abilities remained.

3. Challenges Faced by the Teacher in Implementing Direct Instruction

Based on the interview with the English teacher, several challenges were identified in implementing the Direct Instruction model in teaching English vocabulary.

The first challenge was the difference in students' vocabulary abilities. The teacher explained that not all students had the same level of vocabulary mastery; therefore, some students required more time to understand the learning material.

> *"One of the challenges I often face is that students have different levels of ability, so some of them need more time to understand the vocabulary." (Reziq Ridho, QH., S.S, Interview, 2026).*

The second challenge was the limited instructional time. The teacher stated that the available class time was often insufficient to complete all stages of the Direct Instruction model effectively.

> *"Limited instructional time is also one of the challenges." (Reziq Ridho, QH., S.S, Interview, 2026).*

To overcome these challenges, the teacher employed several strategies, including providing additional practice, reviewing difficult materials, using pictures and other interesting instructional media, and motivating students to participate more actively in the learning process.

> *"I provide additional practice, review difficult materials, use pictures or interesting teaching media, and motivate students to be more active during the learning process." (Reziq Ridho, QH., S.S, Interview, 2026).*

Furthermore, the teacher believed that the Direct Instruction model was highly effective for teaching English vocabulary, particularly for eight-grade students who still required systematic guidance. However, the teacher suggested that the model should be combined with engaging classroom activities such as games, discussions, or group work to make learning more enjoyable and to increase students' motivation.

> *"The Direct Instruction model is very effective for teaching vocabulary, especially for eight-grade students who still need step-by-step guidance. However, it should be combined with interesting activities such as games, discussions, or group work so that students do not become bored." (Reziq Ridho, QH., S.S, Interview, 2026).*

Based on the interview findings, it can be concluded that the Direct Instruction model is considered effective in improving students' English vocabulary mastery because it provides a structured, systematic, and gradual learning process that helps students understand the material more easily. Nevertheless, to make the learning process more engaging and to enhance students' motivation, the implementation of this model should be integrated with interactive learning activities such as educational games, classroom discussions, and group work. Consequently, the objectives of English vocabulary instruction can be achieved more effectively while also promoting greater student participation and engagement throughout the learning process.

B. Discussion

1. Implementation of Direct Instruction on English Vocabulary Teaching

The findings revealed that the English teacher at MTsS NW Dasan Tapen implemented the Direct Instruction model systematically in teaching English vocabulary. The implementation began with reviewing previously learned vocabulary, followed by presenting new vocabulary in small steps, modeling correct pronunciation and usage, conducting guided practice, checking students' understanding, providing independent practice, and concluding the lesson with a review and homework. These findings indicate that the teacher implemented all essential stages of Direct Instruction during the vocabulary lessons (Rupley, Blair, & Nichols, 2009).

The implementation of Direct Instruction in this study is consistent with Rosenshine's (2012) principles of explicit instruction. Rosenshine emphasizes that effective teaching should begin by reviewing previous learning to activate students' prior knowledge before introducing new material. The findings showed that the teacher always reviewed vocabulary from previous lessons to strengthen students' memory before introducing new vocabulary. This practice helped students connect prior knowledge with newly learned vocabulary and prepared them to receive the next lesson more effectively.

In addition, the teacher presented new vocabulary gradually by introducing one word at a time, explaining its meaning, demonstrating its pronunciation, and using it in a simple sentence. This teaching strategy prevented students from becoming overwhelmed by excessive information. The gradual

presentation of learning material also enabled students to focus on one vocabulary item before proceeding to another, thereby increasing their comprehension (Tahir et al., 2021).

The modeling stage also played an important role in the learning process. By demonstrating the correct pronunciation and asking students to repeat it collectively and individually, the teacher provided a clear example of how each vocabulary item should be pronounced and used. This finding supports Archer and Hughes (2011), who argue that modeling is one of the most essential components of explicit instruction because students learn more effectively when they first observe a correct example before practicing independently.

Furthermore, guided practice and continuous checking for understanding ensured that students received immediate feedback whenever they made mistakes. During classroom observations, the teacher frequently asked oral questions and provided additional explanations whenever students had difficulty answering. Immediate feedback allowed students to correct their mistakes directly, reducing misconceptions before they became permanent learning habits.

The teacher also implemented independent practice after ensuring that students had understood the material. Students completed exercises individually while the teacher monitored their work and provided assistance when necessary. This stage encouraged students to apply the vocabulary independently while still receiving supervision from the teacher.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the implementation of Direct Instruction at MTsS NW Dasan Tapen was consistent with the theories proposed by Rosenshine (2012) and Archer and Hughes (2011). The teacher successfully implemented each stage of Direct Instruction in a structured and systematic manner. Such implementation created a learning environment in which students could gradually build their vocabulary knowledge through explanation, demonstration, guided practice, feedback, and independent learning.

2. Students' Participation in English Vocabulary Acquisition

The findings showed that students responded positively to the implementation of Direct Instruction. Both interviewed students stated that the teacher's step-by-step explanation, examples, guided practice, and direct feedback helped them understand and remember English vocabulary more effectively. Students also actively participated during question-and-answer sessions and classroom practice(Hensem Alambana et al, 2026).

These findings are consistent with Schmitt's (2008) theory of intentional vocabulary learning, which explains that vocabulary is acquired more effectively when students receive explicit instruction accompanied by repeated practice. In this study, vocabulary was not learned incidentally but intentionally through direct explanation, teacher demonstrations, and structured classroom activities. Such learning conditions enabled students to focus on understanding the meanings, pronunciations, and uses of new vocabulary.

Similarly, Nation (2001) emphasizes that vocabulary mastery develops through repeated exposure and continuous practice. The findings showed that the teacher consistently reviewed previously learned vocabulary, encouraged students to repeat vocabulary items several times, and provided both guided and independent exercises. These repeated learning activities strengthened students' retention and enabled them to remember vocabulary for a longer period.

The interview data also revealed that students became more confident in participating during classroom activities. The teacher's encouragement to answer questions orally, repeat vocabulary, and complete practice exercises increased students' willingness to participate in the learning process. This finding suggests that Direct Instruction not only supports vocabulary acquisition but also encourages students' classroom participation and confidence (Pengjin Wang dan Gaowei Chen, 2026).

Although the implementation of Direct Instruction produced positive learning outcomes, several students still experienced difficulties in pronouncing unfamiliar English vocabulary. This finding indicates that pronunciation remains one of the most challenging aspects of vocabulary learning for junior high school students. Therefore, additional pronunciation drills and repeated oral practice are still necessary to improve students' speaking accuracy (Parlindungan Pardede, 2018).

Another important finding is that teacher guidance significantly influenced students' learning experiences. Both interviewees stated that they found vocabulary learning easier whenever the teacher provided detailed explanations and immediate assistance. This indicates that teacher support remains an essential factor in successful vocabulary instruction, particularly for students with limited vocabulary knowledge (Bo Wang et al, 2025).

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Direct Instruction positively influenced students' vocabulary acquisition by creating an organized learning process, encouraging active participation, providing immediate feedback, and strengthening students' confidence in learning English vocabulary.

3. Challenges in Implementing Direct Instruction

The findings identified several challenges experienced by the teacher during the implementation of Direct Instruction. These included differences in students' vocabulary abilities, limited instructional time, and maintaining students' motivation throughout the lesson. To address these challenges, the teacher provided additional practice, reviewed difficult materials, used pictures and interesting teaching media, and continuously encouraged students to participate actively.

Differences in students' learning abilities were identified as the greatest challenge. Some students understood new vocabulary quickly, while others required repeated explanations and additional guidance before they could master the material. This situation required the teacher to adjust the pace of instruction according to students' learning needs.

This finding is consistent with Smale-Jacobse et al. (2019), who reported that differences in students' academic abilities require teachers to adjust their instructional approaches and provide appropriate support according to students' learning needs.

Limited instructional time was another significant challenge. The teacher explained that completing all stages of Direct Instruction within a single lesson was sometimes difficult because vocabulary explanation, pronunciation practice, guided activities, feedback, and independent practice all required sufficient time. Consequently, some learning activities had to be continued during the following lesson or reinforced through homework assignments.

This finding is supported by Vaughn and Fletcher (2021), who emphasized the importance of explicit and systematic instruction in supporting students' learning. When instructional time is limited, teachers need to manage learning activities effectively to ensure that students receive sufficient explanations and practice.

Despite these challenges, the teacher demonstrated several effective strategies to maintain the quality of instruction. Additional exercises, repeated explanations, interesting visual media, and motivational support helped students remain engaged throughout the lesson. Furthermore, the teacher believed that Direct Instruction would become even more effective if it were combined with interactive learning activities such as games, discussions, and group work.

This opinion is in line with Yaghmour and Obaidat (2022), who found that Direct Instruction can support students' learning when teaching is delivered through clear explanations, systematic guidance, and structured activities. While Direct Instruction emphasizes explicit teacher guidance, interactive activities provide opportunities for students to practice vocabulary in meaningful and enjoyable contexts.

Overall, the findings indicate that although several challenges were encountered during implementation, they did not significantly hinder the effectiveness of Direct Instruction. Instead, the teacher's ability to adapt instructional strategies enabled students to remain actively engaged in learning. Consequently, the implementation of Direct Instruction successfully supported students' English vocabulary acquisition while creating a structured and supportive classroom learning environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of Direct Instruction in teaching English vocabulary at the eighth grade of MTsS NW Dasan Tapen was conducted systematically through several essential stages, including reviewing previous material, introducing new vocabulary gradually, modeling pronunciation and usage, conducting guided practice, checking students' understanding, providing independent practice, and assigning homework. The implementation of these stages created a structured learning process that supported students in understanding and acquiring English vocabulary.

Students' participation during the learning process was generally positive. They actively participated in teacher explanations, question-and-answer sessions, guided practice, and independent exercises. The students also stated that step-by-step explanations, clear examples, and immediate feedback helped them understand and remember new vocabulary. Although some students still experienced difficulties with pronunciation, repeated practice and teacher guidance helped improve their vocabulary development and confidence.

However, the implementation of Direct Instruction also presented several challenges, particularly differences in students' vocabulary abilities and limited instructional time. The teacher addressed these challenges by providing additional exercises, reviewing difficult materials, using pictures and interesting learning media, and motivating students to participate actively. The teacher also considered combining Direct Instruction with interactive activities, such as games, discussions, and group work, to create a more engaging vocabulary learning environment.

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