

## THE EFFECT OF ROLE-PLAY TECHNIQUE TOWARDS STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY IN SMPN 1 PADANG PANJANG

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**Abstrak:** Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pengaruh strategi bermain peran terhadap penguasaan kosakata siswa di SMPN 1 Padang Panjang. Motivasi penelitian ini bermula dari beberapa permasalahan, antara lain nilai kosakata siswa yang berada di bawah standar, penggunaan strategi pengajaran konvensional oleh guru, dan kesulitan siswa dalam pengucapan dan pemahaman makna kosakata. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain quasi eksperimental dengan menggunakan pre-test dan post-test. Sampel terdiri dari 64 siswa yang dipilih melalui purposive sampling, dengan 32 orang pada kelompok eksperimen dan 32 orang pada kelompok kontrol. Data diolah menggunakan aplikasi SPSS 20. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa kelas eksperimen memperoleh nilai rata-rata sebesar 70,63, sedangkan kelas kontrol memperoleh nilai rata-rata sebesar 45,38. Analisis data menggunakan uji Mann-Whitney diperoleh nilai signifikansi (sig. 2-tailed) sebesar  $0,00 < 0,05$  sehingga menunjukkan adanya perbedaan yang signifikan antara kedua kelompok. Oleh karena itu, dapat disimpulkan bahwa penerapan teknik bermain peran efektif dalam meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** Teknik Bermain Peran, Penguasaan Kosakata, Desain Eksperimental Semu.

**Abstract:** The goal this study is to investigate the influence of role-playing strategy on vocabulary mastering among students at SMPN 1 Padang Panjang. The motivation for this research stems from several issues, including students' vocabulary scores being below the standard, the use of conventional teaching strategies by teachers, and students' difficulties with pronunciation and comprehension of vocabulary meanings. The study employs a quasi experimental design using pre-tests and post-tests. The sample consists of 64 students selected through purposive sampling, with 32 in the group participating in the experiment and 32 in a control group. Data was processed using the SPSS 20 application. The results indicate that the experimental class had an average score of 70.63, although the control class had an average of 45.38. Data analysis using the Mann-Whitney test revealed a significance value (sig. 2-tailed) of  $0.00 < 0.05$ , showing a significant difference between the two groups. Therefore, it can be accomplished that the implementation of the role-play technique is effective in improving students' vocabulary mastery.

**Keywords:** *Role-play technique, Vocabulary Mastery, Quasi-Experimental Design.*

## INTRODUCTION

English as a foreign language is an important subject in junior high schools. The main purpose is to give students the ability to understand English lessons. In English language, there are four language skills, there are speaking, reading, writing and listening. In addition, there are also components such as pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary cannot be separated from the four main skills.<sup>1</sup> Vocabulary is a fundamental component of communication acquisition and plays a crucial role in mastering English. It serves as the building block for effective communication, enabling students to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly and accurately.<sup>2</sup> A robust vocabulary not only facilitates interaction with peers and educators but also enhances students' reading comprehension, allowing them to engage with more complex texts such as textbooks, articles, and news reports. Consequently, vocabulary mastery is crucial for students aiming to use English proficiently as a second language.

Despite its importance, many students face significant challenges in acquiring vocabulary. According to Wallace (in Agustini), learning a foreign language fundamentally involves learning its vocabulary.<sup>3</sup> Vocabulary is defined as a system of words as well as a language component that plays an important role in a language.<sup>4</sup> The inability to find the right words can lead to frustration and hinder effective communication. Vocabulary mastery underpins other language skills including speaking, listening, reading, and writing making it imperative for educators to address this area in their teaching strategies.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Meri, E. P., Putri, H. P., Safitri, L., & Reflinda. (2022). The effect of fly swatter game on students vocabulary mastery at first grade students of SMPN 1 Inuman-Kuantan Singingi. *Journal of Educational Management and Strategy (JEMAST)*, 1(1), 46-56. <https://10.57255/jemast.v1i1.66>

<sup>2</sup> Basri, H., "Strategi Belajar Kosakata Bahasa Inggris (English Vocabulary) Mahasiswa Tbi Stain Pamekasan, Jurnal Nuansa, 2014

<sup>3</sup> Agustini, T., "Pengajaran Kosakata Bahasa Inggris Melalui Active Learning", Jurnal Naturalistic, 2016, page 62

<sup>4</sup> Irwandi, Gusti, & Albert., Teaching Vocabulary in Contextualization for Young Learners. ICOELT-6, 42, 2018

<sup>5</sup> Dewi, F. U., Setyaji, A., & Mulyani. "The Implementation of Vocabulary Mastery by Using Cambridge Online Dictionary to Enhance Students' Speaking Skill in Hortatory Exposition Text", Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Profesi Guru, 2023, page 860-870.

The curriculum guidelines indicate that students at the junior high school level should master between 2000 to 3000 words to achieve a B1 proficiency level.<sup>6</sup> However, preliminary research conducted at SMPN 1 Padang Panjang revealed that many students struggle with vocabulary acquisition due to several factors: inadequate pronunciation skills, difficulties in understanding word meanings in context, and challenges in retaining new vocabulary. These problems are worsened by a dependence on traditional methods of instruction that frequently fail to engage pupils meaningfully.

Observations from classroom interactions indicate that traditional strategies such as rote memorization and textbook reliance do not effectively foster vocabulary mastery. Instead, they can lead to disengagement and lack of motivation among students. The results of vocabulary assessments further highlight these challenges, with many students scoring below the minimum learning threshold. The results of these variables are illustrated in the items listed below table:

**Table 1: The scores of the vocabulary test of class VII**

No	Number of test participants	Vocabulary mastery			*MLM
		Pronunciations	Meaning of word	Using of words in contextually	
1.	32 students of class VII A	76	79	57	75
2.	32 students of class VII B	74	46	63	75

*\*Minimum Learning Mastery*

**Source:** *English teacher at SMPN 1 Padang Panjang*

To address these issues, this study explores the effectiveness of the role-play technique as an innovative pedagogical approach aimed at enhancing vocabulary mastery among students at SMPN 1 Padang Panjang. By allowing students to connect vocabulary with their personal experiences and practice its usage in interactive scenarios, role-play may provide a more engaging and effective means of learning. This research seeks to

<sup>6</sup> Milton, J., & Alexiou, T., "Vocabulary Size and The Common European Framework of Referemccess for Languages", Journal in Vocabulary Studies in First and Second Language Acquisition, Palgrave Macmillan UK. 2009 [https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230242258\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230242258_12).

determine whether implementing this technique can lead to significant improvements in students' vocabulary scores compared to traditional instructional methods.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research investigation employs a type of quasi-experimental design to investigate the effect of the role-play technique on vocabulary mastery among students at SMPN 1 Padang Panjang. The research method consists of several key components, including the design of the study, population and sample selection, instruments used for data collection, techniques for data collection, and methods for data analysis.

### Design of the research

The research follows a quasi-experimental design involving two groups: an experimental group that receives the role-play treatment and a control group that continues with conventional teaching methods. The study incorporates a pre-test administered before the treatment to assess initial vocabulary mastery and a post-test conducted after the treatment to evaluate any changes in vocabulary scores.

### Population and sample

The total population for this research consisted of 224 seventh-grade students at SMPN 1 Padang Panjang. A purposive sampling technique was employed to choose participants, resulting in a sample size of 64 students.<sup>7</sup> This sample was divided into the following categories:

**Experimental Class:** 32 students who engaged in vocabulary learning through role-play activities.

**Control Class:** 32 students who received traditional instruction without role-play.

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<sup>7</sup> Sugiono, "Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Kuantitatif dan RnD", Bandung: Alfabeta, 2013

## Instrument of the research

The primary instrument for assessing vocabulary mastery is a vocabulary test, which includes both pretest and posttest designed to measure students' understanding of vocabulary, pronunciation, and contextual usage. The tests are structured to evaluate various aspects of vocabulary mastery, including word meanings and application in sentences.

### 1. Technique of data collection

Data collection involves administering pre-tests prior to the implementation of the role-play technique and post-tests following the treatment. The tests are conducted in a controlled environment to ensure consistency. Additionally, observations during role-play sessions will be documented to assess student engagement and participation.

### 2. Technique of data analysis

The data are to be analyzed applying the statistical application SPSS 20. Both descriptive statistics, which are to be used for data summarization, and inferential statistics are to be included in the analysis. The latter will take the form of the Mann-Whitney test, will be used to determine which there exist substantial differences in the vocabulary mastery scores of both the control and the experimental groups. The results will be interpreted in accordance with the significance level  $\alpha=0.05$ .<sup>8</sup>

The purposes of this research is to obtain understanding into the effectiveness of role-play as an innovative approach for enhancing vocabulary mastery among students at SMPN 1 Padang Panjang. The findings are expected to contribute valuable information for educators seeking effective techniques in language instruction. To this end, the study employs a structured methodology.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Research Finding

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<sup>8</sup> Gay, L. R., "Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications", New York: Pearson, 2012

The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the role-play technique on vocabulary mastery among seventh-grade students at SMPN 1 Padang Panjang. The study utilized a quasi-experimental design, involving a pre-test and post-test to calculate vocabulary mastery before and after the implementation of the role-play technique. To consider the significance of the findings, statistical research analysis was conducted using the Mann-Whitney test:

**a) The first hypothesis**

**Table 2: Mann-Whitney Pre and Post Experiment Class**

Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>	
	Exp_Class7G
Mann-Whitney U	294.000
Wilcoxon W	822.000
Z	-2.933
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.003

a. Grouping Variable: Type\_Test

The two-tailed significance was found to be 0.003, which is smaller than 0.05. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected. This indicates a significant effect of the role-play technique on students' vocabulary mastery.

**b) The second hypothesis**

**Table 3: Mann-Whitney Post Control and Post Exp**

Test Statistics<sup>a</sup>

	Post_Test
Mann-Whitney U	193.500
Wilcoxon W	721.500
Z	-4.288
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

a. Grouping Variable: Kelas

The two-tailed significance values was 0.00, which is smaller than 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant distinction in vocabulary mastery between students who were conducted using the role-play technique and those who existed taught in a conventional manner. This leads to the acceptance of  $H_a$  and the rejection of  $H_0$ .

**c) The third hypothesis**

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics Exp and Ctrl Class**

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PRE_EXP7G	32	16	96	54.81	21.061
POST_EXP7G	32	24	92	70.63	20.563

PRE_CNTRL7F	32	24	84	55.88	17.106
POST_CNTRL7F	32	16	88	45.38	15.628
Valid N (listwise)	32				

The mean post-test score for the experimental group was 70.63, which was higher than the control group mean score of 45.38. As a result, the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected, whereas the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted.

## 2. Discussion

This research investigated the affect of the role-play technique on students' vocabulary mastery among seventh graders at SMPN 1 Padang Panjang. Founded on the data analysis, it was found that role-play significantly improved students' vocabulary acquisition. The mean score of the experimental class, which used role-play techniques, increased from 54.81 in the pretest to 70.63 in the posttest. In contrast, the control class, which used traditional methods, showed a minimal change, with the mean score decreasing slightly from 55.88 in the pretest to 45.38 in the posttest. This substantial improvement in the experimental class underscores the significance of the role-play technique for vocabulary learning.

The benefits of the role-play technique can be attributed to several factors. First, role-play allows students to actively engage with vocabulary in a meaningful context, making it easier for them to retain new words.<sup>9</sup> Role-play techniques connect vocabulary with past experiences, encouraging students to practice and demonstrate words in front of

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<sup>9</sup> Herrel, A. L., & Jordan, M., "Active Learning Strategies for Improving Reading Compthension", Ohio: Merrill Prentice Hill, 2002



the class, thus strengthening memory through repeated use in relevant contexts.<sup>10</sup> By physically acting out vocabulary and associating it with experiences, students are likely to improve in vocabulary recall and practical use.

Furthermore, role-play fosters an interactive and supportive learning environment. Students not only improve vocabulary retention but also gain confidence through performance, helping them practice both pronunciation and contextual usage. This social component of role-play aligns with social learning theories, suggesting that learning occurs more effectively through active interaction.<sup>11</sup> The Mann-Whitney U test results further confirmed the significance of the role-play method, with a p-value of 0.003 for the experimental class and 0.000 when comparing the post-test results of the experimental and control groups, both well below the 0.05 significance threshold.

The study's findings align with prior research showing the advantages of role-play in language acquisition (e.g., Alabsi, 2016; Yavaşlar & Demirci, 2018), suggesting that this method can help students overcome common vocabulary related challenges, such as pronunciation difficulties and usage in context.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, this technique may be especially beneficial in English vocabulary instruction, supporting both comprehension and production skills.<sup>13</sup>

In conclusion, this study's results demonstrate that role-play is an influential tool for enhancing vocabulary mastery in young English learners. The improved scores in the experimental group provide evidence that role-play can be an effective technique for vocabulary instruction, potentially improving both language retention and learner engagement.

## CONCLUSION

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<sup>10</sup> Herrel, A. L., & Jordan, M., "50 Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners", Fresno: California State University, 2002

<sup>11</sup> Kolb, D.A., ). "Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development", Pearson Education, 2015

<sup>12</sup> Alabsi, T. A., "The Effectiveness of Role-Play Strategy in Teaching Vocabulary", Jurnal Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2016, page 227 <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0602.02>.

<sup>13</sup> Yavaslar, E., & Demirci, C. "Vocabulary Role Play: An Active Learning Strategy for Vocabulary Teaching", European Journal of Education Studies, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1210579>.

The research concluded that the role-play technique significantly improves students' vocabulary mastery in SMPN 1 Padang Panjang. Through quantitative analysis, students in the experimental group (who received role-play-based teaching) showed considerable improvement in vocabulary mastery compared to those in the control group, with mean scores rising notably post-treatment. The findings affirm that role-play offers an effective approach for enhancing vocabulary skills, especially in the context of pronunciation, word meaning, and contextual usage.

Based on the study results, it is recommended that English teachers integrate role-play techniques into vocabulary teaching. This approach encourages active student participation, improves retention, and builds confidence. Future research could explore other communicative techniques to support vocabulary acquisition and assess their impacts across different language skills.

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