

## Investigating Tactile Learning Impact on English Vocabulary in Drama

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki perolehan kosakata bahasa Inggris, topik yang diteliti dengan baik; namun, penelitian yang berfokus secara khusus pada Pembelajaran Taktil masih terbatas. Untuk mengisi kesenjangan ini, penelitian ini meneliti dampak pembelajaran taktil melalui kegiatan drama terhadap penguasaan kosakata siswa kelas delapan di SMPIT Khairunnas, Bengkulu. Tujuan utamanya adalah untuk menganalisis bagaimana elemen taktil dalam pembelajaran berbasis drama memengaruhi pengembangan kosakata bahasa Inggris siswa. Dengan menggunakan desain studi kasus kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, Diskusi Kelompok Terfokus (FGD), dan dokumentasi observasi. Empat puluh siswa berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran taktil yang terintegrasi ke dalam kegiatan drama secara signifikan meningkatkan perolehan kosakata siswa. FGD dan data observasi juga mengungkapkan bahwa siswa lebih terlibat dan termotivasi selama pelajaran bahasa Inggris yang melibatkan metode taktil. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pembelajaran taktil berbasis drama tidak hanya efektif dalam meningkatkan keterampilan kosakata tetapi juga menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang menyenangkan dan interaktif, yang mendukung hasil pembelajaran bahasa yang lebih baik.

**Kata kunci:** *Pembelajaran Taktil, Drama, Kosakata.*

### Abstract

This study investigates English vocabulary acquisition, a well-researched topic; however, studies focusing specifically on Tactile Learning are still limited. To fill this gap, the research examines the impact of tactile learning through drama activities on the vocabulary mastery of eighth-grade students at SMPIT Khairunnas, Bengkulu. The main objective is to analyze how tactile elements in drama-based learning influence students' English vocabulary development. Using a qualitative case study design, data were gathered through interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and observations documentation. Forty students participated in the study. The results show that tactile learning integrated into drama activities significantly enhances students' vocabulary acquisition. FGD and observation data also reveal that students were more engaged and motivated during English lessons involving tactile methods. This study concludes that tactile, drama-based learning is not only effective in improving vocabulary skills but also creates an enjoyable and interactive learning environment, supporting better language learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** *Tactile Learning, Drama, Vocabulary.*

### INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is a fundamental element and a crucial aspect of English language learning, especially for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners at the primary and secondary education levels. Mastery of vocabulary is essential for successful English language acquisition, as it supports students in speaking, reading comprehension, and effective writing (Ling & Abdul Aziz, 2022; Gavharoy, 2024; Rasulovala, 2023). Learners with limited vocabulary often face difficulties in understanding learning materials and expressing their ideas clearly (Ling & Abdul Aziz, 2022; Alhebshi & Gamlo, 2022). Therefore, sufficient vocabulary mastery plays a vital role in supporting overall success in English learning.

In addition to vocabulary mastery, active student participation is also a key factor in improving academic outcomes at various educational levels (Li & Xue, 2023). Optimal engagement involves behavioral, cognitive, and emotional aspects (Yang et al., 2023). Actively participating students tend to be more motivated, focused, and better at retaining information. Such engagement may include consistent attendance, attention during lessons, and emotional involvement with the material and learning environment. Research shows that cognitive engagement enables students to understand lessons deeply and apply them in broader contexts (Yang et al., 2023). Meaningful participation, such as contributing to discussions, also strengthens understanding and provides a richer learning experience. Active participation is particularly crucial for academic success in higher education (Yi et al., 2024), as engaged students typically achieve better results, demonstrate a positive learning attitude, and develop critical thinking skills. Thus, educators should create learning environments that encourage active student engagement to maximize learning outcomes.

Research on English vocabulary instruction has been a major focus in language education development over the past decades. Numerous studies have explored the most effective methods, strategies, and techniques for teaching vocabulary in classrooms. Findings reveal that students' attitudes toward vocabulary learning vary depending on their language backgrounds and learning styles (Nurillo, 2024; Almosa, 2024; Назарова & Иброхимова, 2024; Chundru & Manipatruni, 2024). Therefore, researchers recommend that educators tailor their vocabulary instruction strategies to accommodate the diverse characteristics of learners. Although many studies have addressed vocabulary acquisition and innovative strategies in English teaching, research specifically examining the impact of tactile learning in the context of drama activities remains scarce, especially among middle school learners. Most prior studies have focused on the use of technology, visual methods, or direct approaches to enhance vocabulary learning, without exploring how touch-based and physical activities can support deeper vocabulary retention and comprehension (Gulomovna & Solidjonov, 2023; Fauziningrum et al., 2023; Chundru & Manipatruni, 2024).

Furthermore, while drama has been proven effective in improving students' confidence and speaking skills, only a few studies have explored the role of tactile elements—such as props, movement, and physical exploration—in helping students understand and remember new vocabulary. This indicates a need to explore teaching approaches that integrate physical and sensory activities into English vocabulary learning. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by investigating the impact of tactile learning through drama activities on the English vocabulary mastery of Grade VIII students at SMPIT Khairunnas, Bengkulu.

## METHOD

This study employs a case study method with a qualitative approach to examine the impact of tactile learning in the context of drama on English vocabulary acquisition. According to Heale and Twycross (2018), a case study is an in-depth research strategy used to gain a comprehensive understanding of an individual or a specific group. In this context, SMPIT Khairunnas serves as the unit of analysis to explore the influence of tactile learning on students. Gerring (2004) emphasizes that case studies are designed to describe phenomena rather than establish causal relationships, while Flyvbjerg (2011) highlights the importance of considering contextual factors that affect the dynamics of learning, including the implementation of drama-based methods. The qualitative approach is used to explore the learning context and students' subjective experiences during tactile-based activities. Hignett and McDermott (2015), as well as Lim (2024), state that this approach is effective for revealing social and emotional aspects within the learning environment. Njie and Asimiran (2014) argue that this method is suitable for exploring complex phenomena such as students' active participation in learning, while Moriarty (2011) stresses the value of qualitative data in identifying patterns and interpreting meaning within social contexts. Through this approach, the research offers an in-depth understanding of the contribution of tactile learning through drama to vocabulary acquisition and student responses during English learning at SMPIT Khairunnas in Bengkulu.

The study was conducted at SMPIT Khairunnas in Bengkulu, targeting female eighth-grade students as the research population. The female students in grade VIII are divided into two classes: class 8C with 20 students and class 8D with another 20 students, resulting in a total population of 40 students. This study adopts a total sampling technique, in which all members of the population are included as research participants. The selection of this technique is based on the relatively small and homogeneous population, which allows for more accurate and comprehensive data. By involving all eighth-grade female students, the study aims to gain a thorough understanding of the influence of tactile learning in drama activities on English vocabulary mastery at SMPIT Khairunnas in Bengkulu.

In this study, the researcher used instruments such as Focus Group Discussion (FGD) interviews, and classroom observation. These instruments were designed to gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon being studied, and to explore the perspectives and experiences of the participants in detail. Each instrument was systematically structured to gather rich information regarding students' experiences during tactile learning, especially in relation to vocabulary acquisition and their responses to the learning process.

The data collection aimed to thoroughly answer the research questions using three main instruments: interviews, observation, and documentation. First, interviews were scheduled with students and the English teacher involved in the learning activities. The interviews were conducted in person to gain deeper insights into learning experiences and perceptions of tactile learning. Responses were recorded in detail and, when necessary, captured using an audio recorder. The instrument used was an interview guide for Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The data collected included students' perceptions of tactile learning, their learning experiences, and the teacher's opinion on the method's effectiveness. Second, direct observation was carried out during the drama rehearsal and performance. The researcher documented various aspects such as student engagement, vocabulary use in context, and student interaction. Observations were supported with visual documentation including photos and videos. The instrument used was an observation checklist. The data collected focused on vocabulary skills and student interactions during drama activities. Third, documentation involved collecting visual and written evidence of the learning activities, such as photos, video recordings, and notes throughout the process. Related documents supporting the implementation of tactile learning were also examined. Instruments used included learning archives, photo documentation, and video recordings. The data obtained served as concrete evidence of the tactile learning process, including drama rehearsals and relevant student work.

The data analysis technique used in this research follows a qualitative approach. Qualitative analysis is a systematic process aimed at describing, classifying, and interpreting textual or visual data by organizing them into categories or codes (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This process is carried out through five main stages: (1) organizing and preparing the data, (2) reading through all the data, (3) coding the data, (4) developing themes from the codes, and (5) interpreting the meaning of the data in the context of the study. Through these stages, data gathered from interviews, observations, and documentation are analyzed to identify patterns in student engagement, vocabulary development, and the overall impact of implementing tactile learning in drama-based English instruction.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result of The Use of Drama to Enhance English Vocabulary Mastery

This section presents the results of student interviews regarding their experiences in learning vocabulary through drama activities. It includes their responses to vocabulary use, how they understand and remember new words, and their views on the role of drama in supporting English vocabulary acquisition.

No	Cycle	Questions/Answers
1	Q1	Can you describe your experience participating in drama-based learning that involved tactile techniques?
	C1	I felt very happy because I could learn through movement. The

		tactile techniques made it easier for me to understand the material.
	D1	I really enjoyed this learning experience because it was more interactive and enjoyable compared to traditional methods.
2	Q2	What did you feel during the learning process? Was there any difference in the way you learned compared to other teaching methods?
	C1	I felt more active and not bored. Learning this way was more enjoyable compared to just reading books.
	D1	I felt more enthusiastic because I could learn while moving and expressing myself, so I didn't feel pressured.
3	Q3	Do you feel that tactile learning in drama helps you improve your English vocabulary? If yes, how do you remember and use the new vocabulary you have learned?
	C1	Yes, it helps a lot! I can remember vocabulary by associating it with movements or expressions while acting.
	D1	Yes, I can remember vocabulary better because I use it in real-life contexts that are easier to relate to.
4	Q4	Can you give an example of new English vocabulary that you learned during the drama learning process?
	C1	Some new vocabulary I learned are "whisper," "stumble," and "cheer."
	D1	The new words I learned include "whisper," "grin," and "crawl," all of which I associate with physical movements.
5	Q5	How do you feel about your involvement in this drama activity? Do you feel more actively engaged compared to regular learning?
	C1	I feel more confident and brave to speak in front of my friends.
	D1	I am more confident to speak and more active in class because the atmosphere is less formal and more relaxed.
6	Q6	What makes you feel more engaged in learning English through drama? Have there been any changes in the way you interact with your classmates or teacher?
	C1	I discuss more often with my friends because we have to work together on the drama script.
	D1	I speak more often with my friends in English without feeling awkward because of the supportive classroom atmosphere.
7	Q7	In your opinion, what are the main benefits of using tactile learning in drama activities for English language learning?
	C1	The main benefit is improving vocabulary understanding in a more natural and enjoyable way.
	D1	The greatest benefit is boosting confidence in speaking because I feel more comfortable expressing my opinions.
8	Q8	Do you feel more confident in using English after participating in this drama learning? Please explain further.
	C1	Yes, now I am more confident speaking in English because I have become accustomed to speaking during drama activities.
	D1	Now I feel more confident when speaking English in class, and I can speak more fluently.
9	Q9	What are your impressions after participating in tactile learning through drama? Do you feel this learning method is effective in helping you understand vocabulary and communicate in English?

10	C1	This learning method is very effective; I can remember words more quickly because of the movement involved.
	D1	I really enjoy this method and feel that I understand new vocabulary faster because I immediately practice it in an enjoyable situation.
	Q10	What would you like to change or improve if tactile learning were applied in other classes?
	C1	I would like there to be more different scenarios so that I can learn more vocabulary.
	D1	I would like more time for practice so that I can speak more fluently and deepen my understanding of vocabulary.

Based on the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) results table, the tactile technique in drama is able to evoke emotional responses, encourage active thinking processes, and foster positive student behavior. This approach makes English learning more interactive, enjoyable, and effective in improving vocabulary mastery and self-confidence.

### Result of Student Participation In Learning Vocabulary

This section presents the observation results regarding students' behavior, interactions, responses, and engagement during drama learning, summarized in the table below.

The Result from Classroom Observation				
Variable	No. Soal	Indikator Observasi	C	D
Student Engagement	1	Students actively participate in drama activities (for example, acting, speaking, performing).	YES	YES
	4	Students interact with their classmates within the context of drama.	YES	YES
	5	Students show strong emotional involvement with the characters they portray.	YES	YES
	6	Students discuss the roles or vocabulary used in the drama with their classmates	YES	YES
	7	Students apply physical movements appropriate to the drama context to support the dialogue.	YES	YES
	8	Students are able to adjust their facial expressions and body language according to the situations in the drama.	YES	YES
	9	Students actively participate in decision-making during drama activities (for example, choosing characters or scenes).	YES	YES
	2	Students use English vocabulary clearly during the performance.	YES	YES
	3	Students demonstrate understanding of the vocabulary learned in drama through dialogue	YES	YES
Vocabulary	10	Students show an improvement in vocabulary use through increasingly complex dialogues over time.	YES	YES

Based on the observation, eighth-grade students at SMPIT Kota Bengkulu showed significant improvement in vocabulary mastery, speaking fluency, and self-confidence through drama activities. They began using vocabulary spontaneously, dared to improvise, and actively communicated, demonstrating the effectiveness of the tactile approach in English language learning.



## Discussion

This study aims to analyze the impact of tactile learning through drama activities on the English vocabulary acquisition of eighth-grade students at SMPIT Khairunnas Kota Bengkulu. Unlike previous studies that largely relied on digital media, this research emphasizes direct, physical, and contextual learning experiences through drama-based activities.

Qualitative findings from classroom observations support this approach. Most students demonstrated the ability to use vocabulary in role-play contexts accurately and naturally, without heavily depending on the script. Observations also indicated that the more frequently students participated in rehearsals, the more spontaneously they used relevant vocabulary in appropriate situations.

Interviews conducted through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) also revealed students' perceptions of their vocabulary improvement. Students reported that they found it easier to remember new words when used in drama activities compared to traditional rote memorization. Many expressed that they understood not only the meaning of the words but also the context in which they were used. Furthermore, students stated that their confidence in speaking increased as they became more accustomed to using words verbally during practice.

Therefore, tactile learning through drama has proven to enhance not only the quantity of vocabulary acquired but also the quality of its use in authentic situations. Role-playing and dialogue in drama encouraged students to apply vocabulary in social contexts rather than merely memorizing words in isolation.

The implications of these findings highlight the importance of designing vocabulary instruction that goes beyond visual and textual elements to include physical experiences and social interaction. This approach allows students to internalize word meanings more effectively and apply them actively in real communication.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that tactile learning through drama activities positively impacts the improvement of English vocabulary mastery among eighth-grade students at SMPIT Khairunnas Kota Bengkulu. Through this approach, students are not only able to recall and use vocabulary more effectively but also develop a contextual understanding of word meanings through direct experience and expression in the roles they perform. Data from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) indicate that students responded positively to this method. They felt more motivated, confident, and comfortable using English. Physical activities, movements, and the use of verbal expression in drama made the learning process more lively, enjoyable, and less monotonous. Learning became more meaningful as students were actively involved in practicing vocabulary in both real-life and imaginative contexts.

Therefore, the tactile drama-based learning approach is effective not only in enhancing students' linguistic abilities but also in creating a learning atmosphere that supports their emotional and social development. This approach is highly relevant for language instruction, particularly in promoting more natural and in-depth vocabulary acquisition. And Recommendations Based on the Research Findings:

1. For English Teachers : Teachers are encouraged to regularly integrate tactile learning methods through drama into the teaching and learning process. This approach has proven effective in improving contextual vocabulary mastery and increasing students' confidence in using spoken English. Teachers may also adapt drama activities to align with other lesson materials, helping students understand and retain vocabulary more easily.
2. For School : Schools are expected to support the implementation of creative learning methods such as tactile-based drama, both by providing necessary facilities (e.g., open spaces, simple costumes, props) and through teacher training programs that enable educators to design innovative and interactive lessons.
3. For Future Researchers: This research can be expanded by involving a longer learning duration and a broader participant scope, as well as observing its impact on other language skills such as writing and reading. Additionally, future studies could compare this approach with

other learning methods to evaluate the relative advantages of tactile approaches in foreign language learning contexts.

4. For Students: Students are encouraged to actively participate in drama activities as a learning medium, as these activities help them not only learn vocabulary but also develop teamwork, express ideas, and build confidence in using English in a natural and meaningful way

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