

The Effect of the Role-Playing Model on the Indonesian Language Learning Outcomes of Third-Grade Students at Elementary School

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v11i5.2811>

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the effect of the Role-Playing model on the Indonesian language learning outcomes of third-grade students at SD Negeri 064027 Medan in the 2025/2026 academic year. The study employed a quantitative approach using a Pre-Experimental Design with a One-Group Pretest-Post test design. The sample consisted of 26 students selected through a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using a learning achievement test, which were then analyzed through normality, correlation, and t-test analyses. The results showed that the students' mean score significantly increased from 58.3 on the pretest to 82.3 on the post-test after the treatment. The normality test indicated that the data were normally distributed ($0.111 \leq 0.173$). The correlation test showed a very strong relationship between variables ($r = 0.841 > 0.388$). Furthermore, the t-test result ($7.630 > 1.708$) at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ proved that the Role-Playing model had a significant positive effect on students' Indonesian language learning outcomes, specifically regarding the Animal Guessing topic.

Keywords: *Role Playing Model, Learning Outcomes, Indonesian Language, Elementary School*

Article History:

Received 20th June 2026

Accepted 02nd September 2026

Published 10th September 2026



INTRODUCTION

Education is a systematic process conducted to transfer knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to individuals to prepare them for life's challenges (Fauzan & Anshari, 2024). Through a well-structured educational process, students are expected not only to master academic competencies but also to acquire the social skills necessary to contribute effectively to society. One of the primary strategies to achieve quality education at the elementary level is by fostering an active, participatory, and student-centered learning environment. The characteristics of elementary school students, who are in a phase of rapid physical, mental, and emotional development, demand conducive stimulation from teachers to optimize their potential (Susanto, 2019). Therefore, learning in elementary schools must be delivered innovatively and meaningfully to ensure the essence of the material is effectively absorbed.

However, the reality in the field reveals a gap between these expectations and the actual conditions of the learning process. Based on initial observations at SD Negeri 064027 Medan, it was found that the third-grade teacher still dominated the classroom using conventional learning models. Such teacher-centered learning can limit students' opportunities to participate actively and interact during the learning process (Djameluddin, 2021). This teacher-centered approach led to student passivity, a lack of classroom interaction, and low learning motivation due to boredom. Samsudin (2020) explains that students' learning processes can be influenced by internal and external factors, including learning conditions and the learning environment provided by teachers. Although the teacher attempted to implement discussion methods, student engagement remained low due to

underutilized technology, monotonous evaluation models, and a lack of feedback. The use of appropriate learning models is important because innovative learning models can create more active, varied, and engaging classroom activities (Sutikno, 2019). Furthermore, the characteristics of elementary school students, particularly those in the lower grades, require learning activities that are concrete, interesting, and adapted to their developmental characteristics (Swihadayani, 2023). This limited adaptation to innovative teaching models ultimately hindered students' creativity and negatively impacted their learning outcomes, particularly in the Indonesian Language subject. Farhurohman (2017) emphasizes that Indonesian Language learning in elementary schools should provide meaningful learning experiences that support students' language development. Similarly, Ali (2020) highlights the importance of effective Indonesian Language learning in developing students' language abilities at the elementary level.

These low learning outcomes were further verified by the third-grade daily test data for the Indonesian Language subject, obtained from the homeroom teacher, Mrs. Sartika Rahmadhani, S.Pd. Out of 26 students, the achievement of the learning objective attainment criteria (KKTP) was heavily dominated by moderate-to-low categories. Remarkably, only 1 student (4%) achieved the excellent category within the 81–100 score interval. Meanwhile, the majority of the students fell into the good category, totaling 16 students (61%) within the 61–80 interval, and 9 students (35%) remained in the fair category within the 40–60 interval. This condition indicates that students' learning outcomes still require improvement, particularly because learning outcomes are closely related to the learning process and the factors supporting students' learning activities (Siregar, 2024). (Nurrita, 2018) also emphasizes that appropriate learning media and learning strategies can support the improvement of students' learning outcomes. In addition, (Casquilho et al., 2023) demonstrate that students' cognitive abilities, such as critical thinking, can contribute to differences in learning outcomes. Therefore, the predominance of students in the moderate-to-low achievement categories indicates the need for learning approaches that can actively involve students in the learning process. Karnia et al. (2023) found that the implementation of role-playing activities can increase student participation, while Naldi et al. (2024) reported that role-playing can help improve students' focus during learning. These findings strengthen the argument that increasing student involvement through more interactive learning models is necessary to improve learning outcomes.

As a solution to these challenges, it is essential to implement a learning model that transforms students into active subjects, one of which is the role-playing model. The role-playing model is a method of presenting learning materials through demonstrations or real-life simulations, where social behaviors are acted out by students assigned to specific roles (Istarani, 2021). Through this model, students are given the opportunity to participate directly in real-world situations, which not only deepens their theoretical understanding of the material but also sharpens their empathy, communication skills, critical thinking, and group collaboration. This contextual and real-world learning experience is expected to boost students' motivation, thereby leading to a linear improvement in overall learning outcomes.

Several prior studies have proven the effectiveness of this model in elementary school education. Based on the background and the urgency of improving learning quality, the researcher is interested in conducting an experimental study. This study aims to empirically examine "The Effect of the Role Playing Model on the Indonesian Language Learning Outcomes of Third-Grade Students at SD Negeri 064027 Medan in the 2025/2026 Academic Year." The results of this study are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions for teachers in implementing innovative learning models in elementary schools.

The choice of the Role Playing model in this study is based on its direct relevance to the four core language skills in elementary education: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Language learning in primary schools requires an interactive medium where students can synthesize vocabulary and practice communicative competence in real-time. Theoretically, the Role Playing model establishes a 'learning by doing' environment where social behaviors, expressions, and conceptual definitions are physically acted out by students. (A., 2017)

emphasizes that this model allows children to project themselves into various characters, thereby sharpening interpersonal understanding, confidence, and critical reflection during peer interactions. Furthermore, (Chadijah, 2023) supports that role-playing fosters organic collaboration and active inquiry, helping young learners unpack complex linguistic structures through interactive discussion groups. By shifting the classroom dynamic from passive absorption to active performance, this model directly serves the communicative objectives of the lower-grade Indonesian language curriculum.

While previous studies have widely demonstrated the general benefits of the role-playing model in elementary education, there is still a lack of empirical focus on its specific application to multimodal topics like animal description games ('Tebak Hewan') for lower-grade students. Most existing research tends to examine reading comprehension or generic social studies, leaving a gap in understanding how immersive role-playing sharpens real-time communication skills and vocabulary synthesis in a third-grade Indonesian language context. Therefore, this study fills the gap by providing localized empirical data from SD Negeri 064027 Medan, contributing practical insights on how structured simulations can transform passive teacher-centered classrooms into active, high-yield learning spaces.

METHOD

Respondents

This study involved a sample group of third-grade students at SD Negeri 064027 Medan in the 2025/2026 academic year. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique with a total of 26 students.

Instruments

The instrument used was an Indonesian language learning achievement test consisting of 30 multiple-choice questions on the Animal Guessing topic, administered during the pretest and posttest.

Procedures

The research design used in this study was a Pre-Experimental Design with a One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design. This design was purposefully selected because this study aimed to evaluate the initial baseline capability of a single, specific class group before introducing a new pedagogical intervention. Since the primary objective was to observe the direct shift in mean learning outcomes within the existing classroom ecosystem without the logistical constraint of altering school scheduling or forming an external control group, this design provides a focused, high-yield baseline for measuring immediate treatment impact under controlled classroom conditions.

The intervention was carried out over two main meetings during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. Each session lasted for 2 x 35 minutes (70 minutes per session). In the first meeting, the teacher introduced the scenario, divided the class into cooperative teams ('The Zoo Teams'), and conducted a brief orientation regarding physical traits and animal descriptions. In the second meeting, the actual role-playing performance ('The Performance') was executed. Selected students actively simulated animal movements and delivered oral clues while the remaining peers acted as 'detectives' trying to guess the hidden animal. The session concluded with group reflections, teacher feedback, and evaluation."

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted quantitatively using validity tests, normality tests, correlation tests, and t-tests to test the research hypotheses

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis of Student Learning Outcomes

The pre-test measurement was conducted prior to the implementation of the role-playing model to identify students' initial abilities. Descriptive statistical results indicated a mean pre-test score of 58.3. Following the treatment, the mean post-test score increased to 82.3. This score improvement serves as an initial indication of the model's effectiveness before conducting further inferential statistical testing.

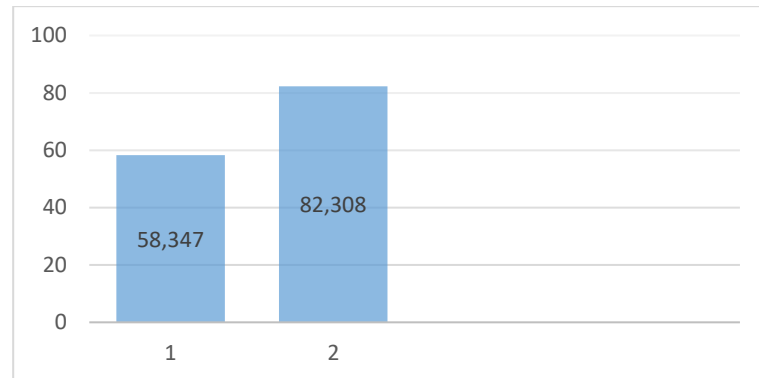


Figure 1. Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Average Scores

Data Analysis Prerequisite Test

A prerequisite test, a normality test, was conducted to ensure that all research variable data were normally distributed, as a primary requirement for using parametric statistics. This test used the Lilliefors method by observing the largest absolute difference (L_0) in each data group. The data tested included pre-test scores, post-test scores, and the total score from the questionnaire. The decision-making criteria were based on a comparison of the calculated Lilliefors (L_0) and the Lilliefors Table (L_{tabel}) values at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, with a total of 26 students ($N = 26$). If the (L_0) value is less than (L_{tabel}) ($L_0 < 0.173$), the data are considered normally distributed. The summary results of the Lilliefors test are presented in full in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Summary Results of Lilliefors Normality Test (N=26) Excel

Variabel Data	Jumlah Sampel (N)	Lilliefors Hitung (L_0)	Lilliefors Tabel (L_{tabel})	Keterangan
Pretest Score	26	0,113	0,173	Normally Distributed
Posttest Score	26	0,111	0,173	Normally Distributed
Questionnaire Score	26	0,164	0,173	Normally Distributed

Based on Table 1. above, the results of the normality test using the Lilliefors method show that all data groups have a Lilliefors Calculation value (L_0) that is smaller than the Lilliefors Table critical value (L_{tabel}) at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ for a sample size of 26 respondents ($L_{tabel} = 0.173$). In detail, the *pre-test* value data produces a Lilliefors Calculation value L_0 of 0.113 ($0.113 < 0.173$). For the *post-test* value data, the Lilliefors Calculation value (L_0) is 0.111 ($0.111 < 0.173$). Meanwhile, the questionnaire score data produces a Lilliefors Calculation value (L_0) of 0.164 ($0.164 < 0.173$). Because the Lilliefors Count values of the three types of data meet the testing criteria, namely ($L_0 < L_{tabel}$), the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that the pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire scores in this study are normally distributed. This normally distributed data condition fulfills the prerequisite requirements for continuing hypothesis testing using parametric statistical analysis.

Correlation Coefficient Analysis of Research Variables



After the data were confirmed to be normally distributed in the previous prerequisite tests, the analysis continued with a Pearson Product Moment correlation test to determine the closeness of the relationship between the research variables. The correlation coefficient test is used to determine whether or not there is an influence between the independent variable (X) and the dependent variable (Y). The requirement for the correlation coefficient test is to see if $r_{\text{calculated}} \geq r_{\text{table}}$ using the product moment correlation formula using SPSS version 25, as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Correlation Results

Correlations		Model Role playing (X)	Hasil Belajar Siswa (Y)
Model Role playing (X)	Pearson Correlation	1	0.841**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	26	26
Hasil Belajar Siswa (Y)	Pearson Correlation	0.841**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	26	26

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the results of calculations carried out using SPSS, the results of the correlation coefficient $r_{xy} = 0.841$ were obtained with the number of respondents (n) = 26 students, so that $r_{\text{table}} = 0.388$ was obtained. Based on the results of the Pearson correlation test, a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of $0.000 < 0.05$ was obtained and the r_{count} value was $0.841 > r_{\text{table}} 0.388$. Thus, the decision of the statistical test is that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. This indicates that there is a significant relationship or influence between the implementation of the role-playing model and student learning outcomes.

The Influence of the Role-Playing Model on Learning Outcomes

Once the data is declared to be normally distributed and the samples are derived from a homogeneous population, hypothesis testing can then be conducted using the "t-test." The t-test is utilized to determine whether the role-playing learning model has a significant influence on learning outcomes. The proposed hypotheses are as follows:

Ha: There is a positive and significant influence of the Role-Playing Model on Third-Grade Indonesian Language Learning Outcomes at SD Negeri 064027 Medan in the 2025/2026 Academic Year.

Ho: There is no positive and significant influence of the Role-Playing Model on Third-Grade Indonesian Language Learning Outcomes at SD Negeri 064027 Medan in the 2025/2026 Academic Year.

Hypothesis testing using the t-test is done by comparing $t_{\text{count}} \geq t_{\text{table}}$, if $t_{\text{count}} \geq t_{\text{table}}$ then the hypothesis is accepted if $t_{\text{count}} \leq t_{\text{table}}$ then the hypothesis is rejected. The following will be tested using the t-test, namely:

$$\begin{aligned}
 t &= \frac{r \sqrt{n-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}} \\
 t &= \frac{0.841 \sqrt{26-2}}{\sqrt{1-(0.841)^2}} \\
 t &= \frac{0.8415 \sqrt{24}}{\sqrt{1-0.708}} \\
 t &= \frac{(0.841) (4.899)}{\sqrt{0.292}} \\
 t &= \frac{4.120}{0.540} \\
 t &= 7.630
 \end{aligned}$$

Below we will present a table of the results of hypothesis testing with the help of the SPSS version 25 program.

Table 3. Hypothesis Test (t-Test)

Model	Coefficients ^a		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	39.109	5.704			6.856	.000
Model Role playing (X)	.604	.079	0.841		7.630	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Hasil Belajar Siswa (Y)

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the calculation results obtained a t_{count} value of 7.630 and a t_{table} of 1.708 so that $t_{\text{count}} \geq t_{\text{table}}$, then H_a is accepted, which means that the implementation of the role-playing model (X) has a positive and significant influence on student learning outcomes (Y).

Practically, the substantial leap in the mean score from 58.3 to 82.3 signifies a critical transition in student understanding. Before the intervention, the majority of the third-grade students fell into the low-to-moderate category because the conventional lecture format failed to stimulate their vocabulary retention and confidence. The shift to a post-test score of 82.3 demonstrates that simulating the 'Animal Guessing' topic allowed students to anchor abstract animal descriptions (such as physical traits, habitat, and diets) into active visual and physical memory. This statistical turnaround proves that active performance eliminates student passivity and directly accelerates linguistic comprehension.

The findings of this research show a strong alignment with previous studies regarding the efficacy of active learning. Specifically, these results mirror the study by Yusnarti & Suryaningsih (2021), which also reported a highly significant t-test result $t_{\text{count}} = 10.181 > t_{\text{table}} = 1.677$ when implementing the role-playing model in elementary classrooms. Similarly, the substantial increase in the students' post-test average score (82.3) corresponds with Hartati (2023), who recorded an increase in elementary student learning outcomes from (55.20) to (84.13) using a similar simulation design. The primary similarity lies in the model's ability to trigger high engagement through 'learning by doing'. However, this study offers a distinct difference by demonstrating that the role-playing model is highly effective even for highly specific language sub-topics such as animal physical descriptions, proving that the model successfully bridges abstract vocabulary with cognitive recognition in lower-grade students.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the implementation of the Role-Playing model yields a transformative impact on primary language education. Instead of relying on passive, memory-heavy lectures, the simulation format encourages lower-grade students to organically master descriptive vocabulary through physical and vocal expressions. In terms of educational implications, the success of this model suggests that elementary school teachers should systematically transition away from conventional, passive lectures toward immersive and collaborative pedagogies. School administrators should encourage the adoption of role-playing models as a flexible, low-cost method to enhance oral and literacy competencies. The empirical evidence confirms that active peer-to-peer engagement fosters a significant shift in learning mastery, social collaboration, and mutual respect within the classroom. Ultimately, this pedagogical approach proves to be a highly effective, modern alternative for elementary school teachers seeking to optimize language outcomes through an immersive and cheerful learning ecosystem.

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