



The Effectiveness of Verb Relay Race in Enhancing Tenth Grade Students' Mastery of Irregular Verbs at SMA N 1 Wiradesa

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ABSTRACT

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Many high school students face difficulties in mastering irregular verbs due to their inconsistent pattern and traditional method which was less engaging for the students. Traditional methods often rely on memorization and repetition, which tend to decrease the students' motivation and engagement. The aim of this research is to find out whether the Verb Relay Race can improve the students' mastery of irregular verbs. This research used a quasi-experimental method with pre-test and post-test in both experimental class, who received the Verb Relay Race method, and control class, who was received traditional method. The sample of this research was 61 students of class X.5 and X.7 at SMA N 1 Wiradesa. The research instrument was a fill-in-the-blank test consisting of 15 validated and reliable questions. Descriptive statistics and paired sample t-test were used to analyzed the data using SPSS. The result of the research showed that the experimental class gain score from the average score 48.5 to 74.7, showing a significance improvement in students' mastery of irregular verbs. Moreover, the students showed a positive attitude through the game in learning irregular verbs, stating that the method was more enjoyable and less stressful. These findings suggested that the Verb Relay Race is fun and effective method for enhancing grammar proficiency, especially irregular verbs in EFL classrooms.

Verb Relay Race, Irregular Verbs, Grammar Learning, Game-Based Learning

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INTRODUCTION

Mastery of irregular verbs is a fundamental aspect of language proficiency, encompassing the accurate recall, conjugation, and contextual use of these verbs in various communication settings. Mastering irregular verbs is an of important aspect in learning English grammar which can be challenging for many high school students. Many students in Indonesia face difficulties in memorizing and applying irregular verbs, which can be seen from the high percentage of errors in the past tense, even reaching more than 70% in research by Setyawan (2019). Irregular verbs are verbs that do not follow the standard rules of conjugation in the past tense and past participle

forms, requiring memorization of their unique forms (Azizovna, 2022). Consequently, students cannot rely on general rules to master them and must memorize each form individually. Furthermore, the commonly used learning methods remain traditional, such as providing list of irregular verbs to memorize and repetition. This method tends to lead in passive learning and low student motivation because it was monotonous, and do not involve interactive interaction between students and teacher. Additionally, these methods do not actively engage students, leading to a lack of interest and motivation. According to Upadani and Agustiana (2021), passive learning does not support critical thinking, which limits the students' ability to develop. This can make a gap between what students learning in classroom and their ability to use English effectively outside of school.

The problem is getting worse by the lack of engaging and interactive teaching methods in classroom. Traditional methods often fail in getting students' interest, makes them less enthusiastic about learning irregular verbs. When students are not engaged, their participation decreases, and they become less motivated to practice. Furthermore, low participation in class discussions and activities can make negative impact to students' confidence in speaking and writing in English. Due to these challenges, many students struggle with irregular verbs, affecting their language skills. Since English is essential for global communication, difficulties in mastering these verbs can become a significant barrier.

Given the importance of English proficiency in the current globalized era, this problem is much more pressing. According to EF English Proficiency Index (EPI) data in 2020, Indonesia ranked 74th out of 100 countries, which shows that the level of English proficiency in Indonesia is still relatively low. Compared to other Southeast Asian nations, Indonesia still ranks below average, occupying the 5th position out of 8 countries listed in the EPI ranking (Samudro & Amin, 2023). In this case, engaging and interactive teaching methods, such as Verb Relay Race game, might be an effective way to boost students' motivation and interest in learning.

Game-Based Learning proves to be a highly effective and engaging educational approach by integrating game elements such as competition, cooperation, and immediate feedback into learning activities. This method enhances student motivation and involvement, supporting their active participation in the learning process. The application of Game-Based Learning can be customized to fit particular educational goals, making it a versatile and effective method for involving student demographics across a range of ages and skills levels (Azman & Yunus, 2019). The use of games in the classroom enhances students' emotional connection to both the learning process and the material being taught. Games provide students with opportunities to receive immediate feedback and engage in active practice, which motivates them to participate more actively in class.

In line with the development in education, various innovative methods have been developed to improve the effectiveness of grammar learning, one of which was the game-based learning method. Research by Rifaldi, Qureshi, and Rosnija (2022) on game-based learning by using Irregular Verb Game for middle school students. The result showed that the game media was valid and effective as the product's effectiveness was validated by the teachers as much as 94.44%, indicating its effectiveness as a media in teaching irregular verbs. Another study about game-based learning in ESL class was also conducted by Ardi and Rianita (2022), showed significant improvement in students' motivation and mastery grammar through the using of game-based learning Kahoot.

Although various game-based approaches have been researched, the effectiveness of the Verb Relay Race game has not been extensively examined, so this research emerged to fill this gap by using quasi-experimental method (pre-test and post-test). A Verb Relay Race is an engaging team activity which aims to facilitate students' learning and mastery of irregular verbs and their past forms. For this activity, students are organized into a few teams and take turns in completing a text or sentences by putting the irregular verbs in the past form into the correct gaps in a competitive and fun atmosphere. According to the findings of Nurhana and Latief (2021), the relay race method can improve students' speaking skills because it involves active participation and interaction in the classroom. However, although this game is played in teams, each student is individually responsible for completing their part, which involves filling in the blank column on the board without relying on assistance from their teammates (Richards, Barbisan, & Sandy, 2009 as cited in Simarmata & Indriani, 2016).

The aim of this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of Verb Relay Race in improving high school students' mastery of irregular verbs. This research had high significance because it provides an alternative learning method that is interactive and engaging method, that has the potential to strengthen the implementation of fun active learning approach in the classroom. The novelty of this research lay in the systematic application of the Verb Relay Race game in the classroom learning process, which was supported by empirical evidence regarding its effect on enhancing the students' mastery of irregular verbs.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research took place in SMA N 1 Wiradesa using quantitative method with quasi-experimental design. As mentioned by Nunan (1992), a quasi-experimental design is a type of research that consist of control group and experimental group, with treatment administered before the post-test. The flow diagram of quasi-experimental shown in figure 1.

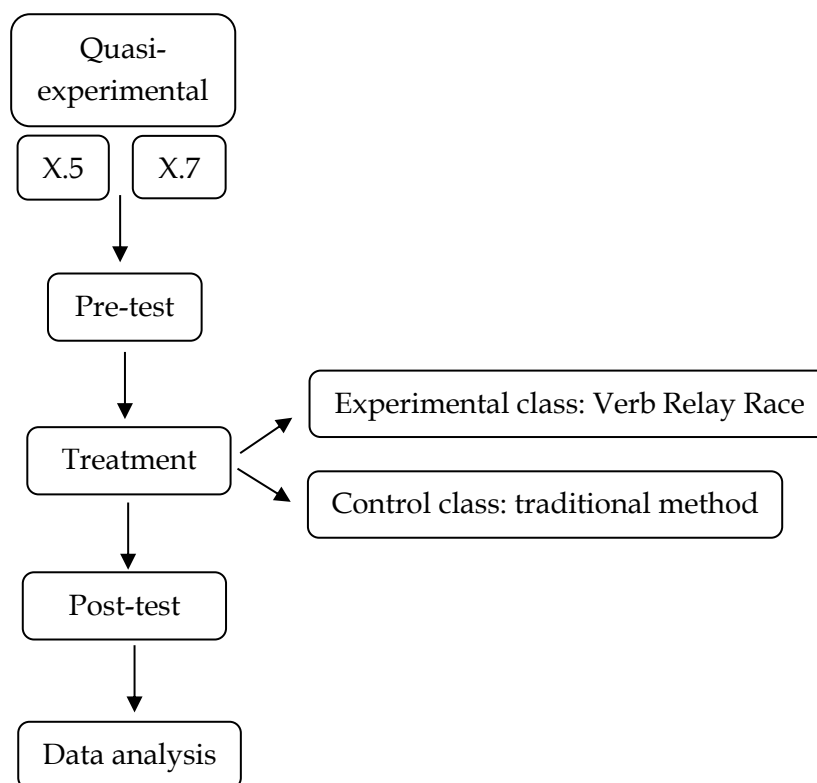


Figure 1. Flow Diagram

The population in this research were students of class tenth of SMA N 1 Wiradesa in the 2024/2025 academic year. Sampling was carried out by purposive sampling. The selected samples were class X.5 as the experimental group consisting of 34 students, and class X.7 as the control group consisting of 27 students.

The instrument of this research was fill-in-the-blank irregular verbs mastery test consisting of 15 questions. This test was used to measure students' abilities before and after treatment, both in the experimental class and control class. This instrument has been validated and tested for reliability using SPSS 25 program.

The data obtained were analyzed quantitatively. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to determine the average value, standard deviation, and distribution of pre-test and post-test values. Furthermore, inferential statistical analysis was carried out using the t-test (independent sample t-test) to compare the average learning outcomes between the experimental group and the control group. The prerequisite tests for normality and homogeneity were also carried out before the t-test to ensure the validity of the analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This research was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the treatment given to the experimental class compared to the control class. By comparing the result of pre-test and post-test between the two classes, the researcher could find out whether the method applied in the experimental class was more effective in improving students' mastery of irregular verbs compared to the method applied in control class. The descriptive statistic of the pre-test and post-test can be seen in the Table 1.

Table 1.
Descriptive Statistics of Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Descriptive Statistics	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental
N	27	34	27	34
Range	40	60	33	60
Minimum	33	13	47	40
Maximum	73	73	80	100
Mean	58.04	47.97	66.37	74.76
Std. Deviation	8.524	15.236	9.500	15.216

Based on the table above, the mean score of experimental class (47.97) was lower than control class (58.04). However, after received the treatment, mean score of experimental class increased significantly to 74.76, meanwhile control class only improved to 66.37. This showed that there was a higher increase learning outcomes in the experimental through the Verb Relay Race. To see the improvement more clearly, a gain score analysis was carried out as shown in Table 2.

Table 2.
Gained Score of Pre-test and Post-test

Pre-test mean		Post-test mean		Gained score	
Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental
58.04	47.97	66.37	74.76	8.33	26.79

Table 2 showed that experimental class gained 26.79 points, much greater than the control class which only gained 8.33 points. This indicated that the Verb Relay Race had positive impact in increasing learning outcomes.

Next, to find out whether the difference between the two classes was statistically significant, an independent t-test was conducted on the post-test scores. The results were shown in Table 3.

Table 3.
Result of t-test Post-test Value
between Experimental Class and Control Class

	Post-test	
	Control	Experimental
Mean	66.37	74.76
N	27	34
Std. Deviation	9.500	15.216
t-value	2.633	
df	59	
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.011	

The result analysis showed that the post-test mean score in experimental class was higher than the control class. The t-value of 2.633 with a degree of freedom (df) of 59 produced a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.011. Since the significance value was less than 0.05, it can be concluded that there was a statistically significant difference between the two classes. Thus, the treatment given to the experimental class, Verb Relay Race, has proven effective in improving students' mastery of irregular verbs.

Discussion

The finding of a significant difference between the experiment and control classes' scores indicated that the Verb Relay Race had a measurable effect on students' mastery of irregular verbs. This was a positive and encouraging result, indicating that the Verb Relay Race can be a useful teaching tool for enhancing students' knowledge and usage of irregular verbs. It showed that combining games, particularly those that require cooperation and movement into learning vocabulary, especially for irregular verbs, was effective.

This finding aligned with a study by (Nephawe & Lambani, 2021) which stated that the use of active and fun strategies in learning irregular verbs, such as games, played an important role in helping students understand irregular verbs form more effective. The research found that students who used collaborative practice strategy had better comprehension than students who only memorize traditionally. Additionally, students showed cooperative behavior, excitement, and enthusiastic engagement during the Verb Relay Race. The finding of Rachman et al., (2015), found that using word games in vocabulary classes enhanced students' vocabulary mastery and promoted positive classroom environment, are confirmed by this observation.

The study which also discussed about irregular verbs using game-based learning had been conducted by Duriyah (2023). The study demonstrated that the use of a Word Search Game Puzzle significantly improved mastery of the simple past tense in the form of irregular verbs among 12th-grade science students at MAN 1 Bantul. The study revealed that through game-based approaches, students have better understanding the

concept of irregular verbs, with an increase in their average scores from 64.2 to 95.7. The students also became more active and motivated in their learning.

However, it must be acknowledged that there might be another factor that influence students learning outcomes, such as personal motivation level, friend support, or even class environment. The implication of this research was that English teacher should be consider in using innovative teaching method like Verb Relay Race in teaching learning process, especially in material that require memorization like irregular verbs. This method was not only fun, but also proved to increase students learning outcomes. The limitations of this research included the scope of the sample which was only limited to one school, and the implementation time was quite short, so it could not show the long-term effects of using this method. Therefore, it is recommended for further researchers to conduct further research with a wider scope and a longer time period in order to obtain more comprehensive and generalizable results.

The implications of these findings are very relevant for English teacher at the high school level, especially in choosing suitable learning methods for grammar materials. The Verb Relay Race method can be an effective alternative to improve students learning outcomes and overcome boredom in repetitive grammar learning. Thus, this research contributes to more active and meaningful English learning practices, while strengthening the importance of innovative approaches in improving the quality of education in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This research showed that the Verb Relay Race method was effective in improving mastery of irregular verbs in tenth grade students at SMA N 1 Wiradesa. This was proven by the increase in post-test results of students in the experimental class compared to the control class. This method has been proven to be able to create a fun learning atmosphere and actively involve students, making it easier for them to remember and use irregular verb forms.

These findings confirmed the important of applying active interactive in learning English, especially grammar to increasing students' motivation and memory. By using this method, teachers can avoid passive learning and encourage more meaningful and participatory learning experience. The results of this research also contributed to the development of game-based learning method in foreign language acquisition and demonstrate the practical benefits of game-based learning methods in English language teaching.

However, this research has limitations, namely the scope is still limited to one school and certain materials. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the object and time of implementation so that the results are more representative. Overall,

Verb Relay Race is a method that worthy of being applied in English learning to improve mastery of irregular verbs effectively and enjoyably.

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