



## Students' perception on the use of Undercover Game to enrich their vocabulary mastery at the Seventh-Grade of SMPN 10 Padang

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### Abstract

*This study aims to find out students' perceptions about using the Undercover Game to learn English vocabulary at SMPN 10 Padang. The research used a descriptive-qualitative method. The participants in this study were 30 seventh-grade students in the 2024/25 academic year who had been using the game for one semester. Data was collected through 1-4 scores Likert-scale questionnaires completed by 30 respondents and followed by interview with 6 respondents. The five indicators of effectiveness, advantages, disadvantages, motivation, and interest regarding the use of Undercover Game. The results showed that students' perceptions were mostly positive, with an average score of 3.028. It means they think game helped them understand word meanings, learn new vocabulary, feel more motivated, and enjoy the learning process. From the interviews conducted, almost all participants said that this game helped them learn English vocabulary. 3 out of 5 participants confirmed that this game made the learning process more exciting and helped them overcome boredom. Meanwhile, there are 2 participants felt the game did not help them or made them confused. The study suggests that the Undercover Game can be used as another way to teach English vocabulary, with better explanation the rules of the game before playing it.*

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### INTRODUCTION:

Vocabulary is one of the essential components of English learning. According to Rosyidi (2022) vocabulary is one of the core components of language proficiency and gives much of the basis for how well the person learns, speaks, listens, reads, and writes. Aside from other language components, vocabulary is one of the most crucial. According to Rosyidi (2022) Communicating will be impossible for those with a

limited vocabulary. A large vocabulary is a sign of someone's language ability. According to Anto & Anita (2023), a person will be able to communicate, express their idea by enriching vocabulary. A broad vocabulary contributes to almost every aspect of language, as contrasted to individuals with a limited vocabulary. English in the seventh grade of junior high school according to the Indonesian curriculum states that there are several materials that the seventh-grade students must learn. In the first material, students are able to use expressions of greeting, saying goodbye, and thanking along with their responses. In the second material, students are able to introduce themselves and others along with their response. In the third material students are able to mention about time, the name of the day and also the name of the month. In the fourth material is about things around us which is students are able to mention things around them for example in the classroom. The last is students are able to mention the things they like and dislike.

Game-Based learning as stated by Plass, Homer, and Kinzer (2015), is an instructional approach that uses games as a central component of the learning environment to support learning outcomes. Games can be used as a strategy for learning vocabulary. According to Ramadhaniarti (2016), games are effective tools that can be used in vocabulary classes. Many previous studies have already been conducted related to game-based learning for vocabulary. A study on Game-Based learning for vocabulary have been conducted by several researcher. First, Phumi-in (2022) did research about game-based learning for 3rd graders. According to Phumi-in (2022), the finding of this study shows that, Game-Based learning is a good approach for enhancing vocabulary retention for seventh grade students in Thailand educational context. Another study already conducted by Listyowati (2022), about teacher's perception about Game-Based learning shows that, Game-Based learning is an effective medium to teach vocabular for junior high school students because games help students obtain vocabulary in both direct and indirect ways, and that the vocabulary will stick with them for a long time because they learned it while participating in collaborating on activities.

From previous studies above, it can be concluded that the use of games has a good effect on vocabulary learning. Therefore, when the researcher carried his teaching practice at SMP 10 Padang, the researcher provided a solution to students by providing game-based learning using undercover games.

Undercover Game is a word guessing game in which player roles are kept in secret from another player even though the players have the same role. According to Rosyidi (2022), Undercover is a guessing game and all players must mention or describe their secret in one word. Before the game begins, the referee hands out a sheet of paper with a pre-written word on it to each player. Normal Players (everyone else) make up this game: Undercover (2 to 3 players): Gives a major word (e.g., Melon); Mr. White (1 to 2 players): Provides a blank piece of paper; and Undercover (2 to 3 players): provides a minor term associated with the major word (e.g., Watermelon).

Related to the Undercover Game, there had been a previous study that investigate the Undercover Games. Rosyidi (2022), did a research about the use of Undercover Game and another study by Cooper (2024) about the effect of Undercover Game. The purpose of this study is to investigate students' perceptions of how using this

game helps them learn English vocabulary. Their perception will be analysed in response to the implementation of the Undercover Game during the teaching practice. The researcher’s main focus will be to find students’ perception on using the Undercover Game for their vocabulary enrichment at SMP 10 Padang.

**METHOD**

This research was descriptive-qualitative method. The study was conducted at SMPN 10 Padang with 30 purposively selected students from class VII.3 2024/2025 academic year, who had prior experience using the game. Data were collected through 1-4 Likert-scale questionnaire consist of 18 questions, validated by an English Department lecturer, and interviews with six representative students. The questionnaire measured five aspects which is effectiveness, advantages, disadvantages, motivation, and interest regarding the use of Undercover Game in teaching vocabulary and interviews provided deeper insights of students’ perspective about this game. The data collection process involved preparing and validating the instrument, obtaining school permission, distributing, and collecting the questionnaire, and conducting interviews. The questionnaire data were analysed descriptively using mean scores and a perception rating scale, while the interview data were analysed using Mills & Gay (2015), which the steps are reading or memorizing, describing classifying the transcript data.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1. The Effectiveness of Undercover Game**

No	Statement	SD (1)		D (2)		A (3)		SA (4)		Total Score		Mean	Category
		F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx		
1	The Undercover Game helps me learn the meaning of a word in English.	1	1	0	0	8	24	21	84	30	109	3,63	Very Positive
2	The Undercover Game helps me learn how to spell English words.	2	2	2	6	8	18	21	84	30	106	3,53	Very Positive
No	Negative Statement	SD (1)		D (2)		A (3)		SA (4)		Total Score		Mean	Category

	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx		
3												
The Undercover Game does not help me learn how to read a word in English.	0	0	1	2	14	42	15	60	30	104	3,46	Very Positive
Total Mean											3,56	Very Positive

The data in Table 4.1 shows that students gave a generally positive response toward the effectiveness of Game Undercover in learning English vocabulary. For the first statement, *The Undercover Game helps me learn the meaning of a word in English*. 21 students chose strongly agree, 8 chose agree, and only 1 chose strongly disagree. The total score for this statement was 109, and the mean was 3.63, categorized as Very Positive. The result indicates that most of students strongly agree that Undercover Game is effective in helping them learning the meaning of English word.

For the second statement, *The Undercover Game helps me learn how to spell English words*. 11 students chose strongly agree, 17 chose agree, 1 chose disagree, and 1 chose strongly disagree. The total score was 98, with a mean of 3.26, which is also considered a Very Positive category. From the score, it means that most of students agree that Undercover Game help them in learning how to spell a word.

In contrast, for the negative statement, *The Undercover Game does not help me learn how to read a word in English*. 10 students chose strongly disagree, 12 chose disagree, 7 chose agree, and 1 chose strongly agree. The total score was 94, and the mean was 3.13. Although this is a negative statement, the high number of students who disagreed shows that they believe the game does help in learning how to read words. This is interpreted as a Positive response which means that Undercover Game help students agree help them in understanding how to read a word in English.

Based on the results of this questionnaire, the total score was 3.00, which is in the category of a positive response. This shows that students gave good feedback about using the Undercover Game to learn English vocabulary. In other words, the game is quite effective in helping students learn new words because it gives them a fun and different way to study, not just through books.

The researcher also interviewed about their perception about the effectiveness of undercover game. The purpose of these interviews was to further explore whether this game is effective in helping students learn English vocabulary. From the interview results, most of students said that this game is effective in helping them in learning English Vocabulary. Student 2 said that because of this game, she did exercise English vocabulary exercise easily. *“because of this game, I can answer English exercise very easily”*

**Table 2. The Advantages of Undercover Game**

No	Statement	SD (1)		D (2)		A (3)		SA (4)		Total Score		Mean	Category
		F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx		
4	The Undercover Game increases my knowledge of English vocabulary	1	1	0	0	6	18	23	42	30	112	3,70	Very Positive
5	The Undercover Game makes me enthusiastic about learning English vocabulary.	2	2	1	2	6	18	21	84	30	106	3,53	Very Positive
6	The Undercover Game helps me learn English vocabulary	0	0	1	2	14	42	15	60	30	104	3,46	Very Positive
Total Mean											3,56	Very Positive	

The data shows that students had a very positive perception of using the Undercover Game to learn English vocabulary. *For the statement The Undercover Game increases my knowledge of English vocabulary.* 23 students strongly agreed, 6 agreed, and only 1 strongly disagreed. The total score was 112, with a mean of 3.70, which is categorized as very positive. The findings conclude that students perceived the Undercover Game as very effective in increasing their English vocabulary knowledge.

In the second statement, *The Undercover Game makes me enthusiastic about learning English vocabulary.* 21 students strongly agreed, 6 agreed, 1 disagreed, and 2 strongly disagreed. The total score was 106, with a mean of 3.53. This means that most students felt more motivated and interested in learning vocabulary through the game.

For the third statement, *The Undercover Game helps me learn English vocabulary.* 15 students strongly agreed, 14 agreed, 1 disagreed, and no one strongly

disagreed. The total score was 104, with a mean of 3.46, which is also very positive. The results show that most students agreed that the Undercover Game was very helpful in learning English vocabulary.

From the results of the table above, a score of 3.56 was obtained, which falls into the "very positive" category. In other words, this game has advantages on the English learning process.

The researcher also interviewed students to obtain more detailed answers regarding the advantages of undercover games. From the interview results, all students said that these games have advantages. Student 2 said that she did not know that game can be used as media for learning English. *“Yes, it's useful, because I thought English could only be learned through books, but it turns out it can also be learned through games.”* (student 2). Student 3 said that this game increased her vocabulary knowledge. *“Yes, it really helps, mister, because this game increases my vocabulary.”*

**Table 3. The Disadvantages of Undercover Game**

No	Statement	SD (4)		D (3)		A (2)		SA (1)		Total Score		Mean	Category
		F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx		
7	The Undercover Game makes it difficult for me to learn English vocabulary.	15	60	13	39	0	0	2	2	30	101	3,36	Very Positive
8	The Undercover Game makes me feel bored during English learning.	5	5	21	42	3	9	2	8	30	107	3,56	Very Positive
9	The Undercover Game is not useful for learning English vocabulary.	18	72	9	27	1	2	2	2	30	103	3,43	Very positive
10	The Undercover Game makes me confused when learning English vocabulary.	15	60	30	2	4	3	3	30	30	97	3,23	Positive
Total Mean											3,39	Very Positive	

For the statement *The Undercover Game makes it difficult for me to learn English vocabulary*. 15 students chose strongly disagree, 13 chose disagree, and only 2 students gave agree responses. The total score was 101 with a mean of 3.36, which falls into the Very Positive category. This means most students did not feel that the game made learning difficult, but makes it easy for them to learn English vocabulary

In the second statement, *The Undercover Game makes me feel bored during English learning*. 18 students strongly disagreed, 11 disagreed, and only 1 student agreed. The total score was 107 and the mean was 3.56, showing that the game did not make students feel bored. This result shows that the Undercover Game was engaging and kept students interested in learning English vocabulary, making the learning process more enjoyable and interactive.

For the statement, *The Undercover Game is not useful for learning English vocabulary*. 18 students strongly disagreed, 9 disagreed, and only 3 students gave positive responses. The total score was 103 with a mean of 3.43, which also shows that most students believe the game is useful for learning vocabulary. This result shows that the Undercover Game provides clear benefits in the learning process, helping students understand and remember new words more effectively while making the lessons more engaging.

Finally, in the statement *The Undercover Game makes me confused when learning English vocabulary*. 15 students strongly disagreed, 10 disagreed, and only 5 students gave positive responses. The total score was 97 with a mean of 3.23, which is still considered positive. This indicates that most students did not feel confused while using the game and were able to follow the activities without difficulty. The result shows that the Undercover Game is generally clear and understandable, allowing students to focus on learning English vocabulary effectively.

From the results of the question above, a score of 3.39 was obtained, which falls into the "very positive" category which means that almost all students disagreed with the statement above. The students' felt that the game did not make learning English hard or confusing. They also felt that it was not boring and that it helped them learn new words. This shows that the game made them more interested and motivated in class.

The researcher interviewed students to obtain more in-depth answers about this game, which can make students bored with learning, feel that the game is not useful, and also confused by it. The interviews revealed that the game was useful for them. Almost all students said that this game helped them understand English vocabulary. Student 4 said that the game made him happy in the learning process, because he felt that he can experience learning and playing at the same time. "*This game makes me happy, because I learn while playing*". (student 4)

**Table 4. Students Motivation on the use of Undercover Game**

No	Statement	SD (4)		D (3)		A (2)		SA (1)		Total		Mean	Category
		F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx		
11	The Undercover												

	Game can increase my motivation in learning English vocabulary.	1	1	2	4	9	27	18	72	30	104	3.46	Very Positive
12	The Undercover Game makes me more enthusiastic about learning English vocabulary	3	3	0	0	7	21	20	80	30	104	3.46	Very Positive
13	I prefer learning English by using the Undercover Game rather than traditional methods.	3	3	0	0	11	33	16	64	30	100	3.33	Very Positive
14	Using the Undercover Game in learning English makes me feel more involved and active in the learning process.	2	2	1	2	12	36	15	60	30	100	3.33	Very Positive
Total Mean											3,39	Very Positive	

The first statement about *The Undercover Game can increase my motivation in learning English vocabulary*. 18 students strongly agreed, 9 agreed, 2 disagreed, and 1 strongly disagreed. The total score was 104, and the mean was 3.46, which shows that the game successfully increased student motivation.

For the second statement, *The Undercover Game makes me more enthusiastic about learning English vocabulary*. 20 students strongly agreed, 7 agreed, and only 3 strongly disagreed. The total score was also 104, with a mean of 3.46, indicating that most students felt more enthusiastic when using the game.

The third statement, *I prefer learning English by using the Undercover Game rather than traditional methods*, got a mean score of 3.33. This means students liked learning through the game more than through usual classroom methods like textbook study. They felt that learning with a game was more enjoyable and easier to understand.

Lastly, in the *statement Using the Undercover Game in learning English makes me feel more involved and active in the learning process*. 15 students strongly agreed, 12 agreed, 1 disagreed, and 2 strongly disagreed. The total score was also 100, with a mean of 3.33, indicating that the game helped students feel more engaged and active in the learning process.

From the results, an average score of 3.39 was obtained, which falls into the "very positive" category. In this case, students agreed that the Undercover Gamed can increase their motivation, make them more enthusiastic, and encourage them to be actively involved in the learning process. This means that the game increases students' motivation in the process of learning English.

The researcher also interviewed students about whether this game could increase their motivation to learn. The results of the interviews showed that the students shared the same perspective that this game increased their motivation. Student 3 said that this game makes her active in the class. Student 3 said *"this game keeps me active because it's fun to learn and makes me keep raising my hand"*. Student gave statement that he preferred to learn English vocabulary with undercover game. *"I prefer learning through this game mister"* (Student 2)

**Table 5. Students' Interest on the use of Undercover Game**

No	Positive Statement	SD (4)		D (3)		A (2)		SA (1)		Total Score		Mean	Category
		F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx		
		15	The Undercover Game can attract my interest because it helps me understand English vocabulary very well	1	1	4	8	6	18	19	76		
16	The Undercover Game makes learning English vocabulary more fun and interesting	2	2	1	2	5	15	22	88	30	107	3.56	Very Positive
17	The Undercover Game attracts my interest in learning English vocabulary	2	2	1	2	9	27	18	72	30	103	3.43	Very Positive

because I can learn while playing.

No	Negative Statement	SD (1)		D (2)		A (3)		SA (4)		Total Score		Mean	Category
		F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx	F	Fx		
18	The Undercover Game does not make learning English vocabulary more fun and interesting	11	44	11	33	3	6	5	5	30	88	2,93	Positive
Total Mean												3,33	Very Positive

For the statement *The Undercover Game can attract my interest because it helps me understand English vocabulary very well*. 19 students strongly agreed, 6 agreed, 4 disagreed, and 1 strongly disagreed. The total score was 103, and the mean was 3.43, which is categorized as Very Positive. This indicates that students felt the game was effective in helping them understand vocabulary better while also increasing their interest in learning.

In the second statement, *The Undercover Game makes learning English vocabulary more fun and interesting*. 22 students strongly agreed, 5 agreed, 1 disagreed, and 2 strongly disagreed. The total score was 107, with a mean of 3.56. Therefore, it can be concluded that the game successfully created a more enjoyable and attractive learning atmosphere for the students.

For the third statement, *The Undercover Game attracts my interest in learning English vocabulary because I can learn while playing*. 18 students strongly agreed, 9 agreed, 1 disagreed, and 2 strongly disagreed. The total score was 103, and the mean was 3.43, also classified as Very Positive. This means that the combination of learning and playing encouraged students' interest and made them more motivated to learn vocabulary.

However, in the negative statement *The Undercover Game does not make learning English vocabulary more fun and interesting*. 11 students strongly disagreed, 11 disagreed, while 3 agreed and 5 strongly agreed. The total score was 88, and the mean was 2.93, categorized as Positive. This shows that even though a few students agreed with the negative statement, the majority disagreed, proving that most students still considered the game enjoyable and engaging.

From the results of the question above, an average score of 3.33 was obtained, which falls into the "very positive" category. This means that students perceive the

game as able to capture their interest in learning English vocabulary. This score indicates that the Undercover Game successfully attracts students' attention.

The researcher interviewed students as representatives to find out if the game really caught their attention. Most students said that the game did catch their attention and made learning more fun. Student 3 said that this game is very exciting because, they can learn while playing game. *"We learn while playing this game too."*

From the results of the above research, it can be concluded that almost all students have a positive perspective on undercover games but, there were two students who had a negative perspective on this game. To find out more details, the researcher interviewed one of these students. From the interview, the reason why the student had a negative perspective was discovered. The student said that this game did not help him in learning English vocabulary. The student also felt confused by the flow of the game, which made him unable to focus. The student said, *"Yes, I'm confused about the game"*. Finally, the student found the game is boring because it was repetitive, which made him feel bored. The student said, *"The game is boring because the way you play it is always the same."*

### **Discussion**

From the data analysis and findings, it was found that the students have positive perception toward the use of Undercover Game. The result from this study revealed a positive perception with an average score 3,028. This indicate that undercover game is helping students in learning English vocabulary.

The first indicator discusses the effectiveness of the Undercover game. In this aspect, it explains that this game is effective in helping students learn the meaning of words and how to spell in English. The result shows that almost all students gave positive responses regarding the effectiveness of the game. The students gave feedback that this game helped them learn the meaning of words in English. According to Cooper (2024), the Undercover game can improve students' vocabulary acquisition thanks to learning experiences through media.

The second indicator is the advantages of undercover games. This table explains whether undercover games can help students increase their vocabulary, encourage them to learn, and help them learn English vocabulary. The results of research on students show that this game gave advantage to the students. This is in line with the results of research on Undercover Games to increase vocabulary conducted by Pertiwi (2024), which states that undercover games enable students to acquire new vocabulary.

In the third indicator, this aspect explains whether this game makes it difficult for students to learn English vocabulary, makes them bored during the learning process, confuses them during the learning process, and finally, whether this game is not useful at all for students. regarding the disadvantages of Undercover, almost all students answered that they disagreed, which means that it can be concluded that students benefit from playing this game. Games can be one of the options that teachers can use to teach English. Jassim and Dzakiria (2019) also mentioned on a positive note that using games can entertain learners to acquire their lesson in a more relaxed way and teaching vocabulary with games could make them understand the vocabulary more quickly than that without games.

In the fourth indicator, explains whether this game can increase students' motivation in learning English vocabulary, make students enthusiastic in the learning process, and make students enjoy and actively participate in the learning process. The results obtained show that students responded positively that this game increased their motivation to learn. These results are in line with research conducted by Said (2025), which shows that Undercover Game successfully increased students' motivation to learn due to their active participation and collaborative learning process. According to Adrefiza (2022) This approach makes learning English more interesting and interactive, encouraging students to be more active in their learning process. Regarding student motivation, gamification has proven effective in increasing enthusiasm, involvement, and competitive spirit.

In the last indicator, it explains whether undercover games can attract students' interest in understanding English vocabulary, making the process of learning English vocabulary more interesting and enjoyable. Almost all students responded that this game attracts students' interest in learning English. As said by safura (2022), most students are enthusiastic about learning English through games because it allows them to express themselves and communicate directly with their peers. Hence, the use of games in the classroom is thought to be more effective in terms of attracting students to learn vocabulary.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the data collected from 30 students through questionnaires and interviews, the results showed that most students had a positive perception of using the Undercover Game in learning English vocabulary, with the analysis of effectiveness, advantages, disadvantages, students' motivation, and students' interest producing an average score of 3.028, categorized as "Positive." However, despite the overall positive perception, some students expressed negative views, stating that the game was confusing and did not improve their English vocabulary. In conclusion, this study indicates that the Undercover Game has a positive impact on students' vocabulary mastery, with many students finding the use of games in the learning process helpful, and it can be considered a viable option for teaching English vocabulary to students.

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