

The Use of Guessing Game to Improve Students' Speaking Skill

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article History: Received: December 10, 2023 Revised: January 3, 2024 Accepted: April 16, 2024</p> <p>Keywords: Guessing Game; English Teaching Learning; Speaking Skill;</p>	<p>This research investigates the effectiveness of using guessing games to enhance English language acquisition, particularly focusing on improving students' speaking skill. Many learners struggle with speaking English due to its perceived complexity, leading to gaps in their language skills. To address this issue, a quantitative approach was used, involving 64 seventh-grade students from SMPN 3 Ngronggot Nganjuk. Data collection included pre-test and post-test evaluations, and analysis was conducted using the paired T-test. The research findings show that the obtained t-value (9.208) exceeds the critical t-value (2.042), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H₀) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_a). This indicates a significant and positive impact of using guessing games on English speaking proficiency. These results suggest that educators can use guessing games as an interactive teaching tool to improve students' English speaking abilities.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Mastering the four essential skills reading, listening, writing, and speaking is crucial in learning English. Among these, speaking is particularly important and demands careful development. As Thornbury aptly noted, "Speaking is so integral to our daily lives that we often overlook its significance"¹. "This highlights the ability of speech to effectively convey thoughts and ideas to others. Therefore, achieving proficiency in speaking a foreign language requires dedicated practice. In Indonesia, English is a core part of the school curriculum, with students required to study it from elementary through senior high school.

Burns recognized that speaking in a foreign language presents a substantial challenge for most learners, as it involves more than merely grasping grammar and semantics². At SMPN 3 Ngronggot Nganjuk, second grade students faced similar challenges, struggling to pronounce English words correctly and often appearing confused when trying to express their thoughts. Many of these students lack enthusiasm and confidence in using English, especially during speaking activities. This lack of excitement and motivation significantly hampers their proficiency in speaking English.

Fulcher highlights that students frequently lose interest in studying English because of the repetitive nature of the materials and strategies used, coupled with the scarcity of opportunities for practical English application³. Therefore, teachers should implement effective strategies for teaching speaking that actively engage students and boost their motivation. Encouraging students to start discussions and offering ample speaking practice can enhance motivation and create opportunities for interactive activities. Mazidatus Zahro emphasizes that incorporating games into teaching speaking is crucial, as it fosters an enjoyable environment and boosts students' motivation, while also providing teachers in creating useful and meaningful contexts⁴.

A great game to use is the guessing game, where players compete individually or in teams to identify something. As Klippel⁵ notes "The essence of the guessing game is remarkably straightforward: one person has information that others try to uncover". Furthermore, Merriam Webster states that "a guessing game as one in which participants, either individually or in teams, strive to figure out something hinted at subtly, as in riddles or charades."⁶. According to Hadfield⁷ as cited in Ceyda Yalçin's book⁸, identifies two primary

¹ S. Thornbury. *How to Teach Speaking*. (London: Longman Press, 2007). 1

² Christine Burns, *Teaching Speaking: A Holistic Approach* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 37.

³ G. Fulcher, *Testing Second Language* (Britain : Pearson Education Limited, 2003), 51.

⁴ Mazidatus Zahro, Bambang Suharjito, dan Sudarsono, "The Effect of Guessing Game on The Eight Year Students' Vocabulary Achievement at SMPN 03 Balung Jember," *Pancaran*, vol. 2 no.3 (August 2013), p. 116. <https://jurnal.unej.ac.id/index.php/pancaran/article/download/707/525> (accessed on 5th December 2022).

⁵ Klippel, F. *Keep Talking. Communicative Fluency Activities for Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1994

⁶ Webster, Merriam. *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. United States of America: Merriam Webster Incorporated 2004.

⁷ Hadfield further uses 'linguistic' and 'communicative' classifications of games to refer to accuracy-focused in the former, while in the latter referring to fluency-focused 1999

⁸ Ceyda Yalçin. *Cutting-Edge Topics and Approaches in Education and Applied Linguistics*. (2018). ISBN(10): 1-5275-0804-8 ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-0804-0 Britania Raya: Cambridge Scholars Publishing ,p.169-171

classifications of games to enhance speaking skills: linguistic games and communicative games. Additionally, Hadfield further categorizes language games into various types, including guessing games, searching games, labeling games, role-playing games, board games, meeting games, getting to know games, sorting, ordering, or arranging games, and information mixing games.

She also emphasized in the book that games such as guessing games should be employed as a teaching method in education, highlighting their significant role in enhancing students' skills, particularly in speaking.

Furthermore, Wright asserts that games play a pivotal role in providing support and motivation for many learners, helping them to sustain engagement and effort. This highlights how games can inspire students to stay enthusiastic about their studies and efforts throughout the teaching and learning process, finding relaxation and enjoyment in the activities. Specifically in teaching speaking skills, guessing games are identified as a valuable strategy⁹. The fundamental principle of a guessing game is straightforward: one individual possesses information that another seeks to uncover. This concept forms the core of guessing and speculating games, where the objective is to determine specific information, such as a word, title, picture, body part, or object. Evidently, engaging in guessing games can enhance students' motivation to learn English and improve their speaking skills¹⁰.

Teaching speaking skills remains a formidable task for educators, even though it's part of the curriculum from early education stages. In Indonesia, where English is often seen as a foreign language, this challenge is particularly pronounced among senior high school students. As a result, teachers are compelled to devise effective strategies to enhance speaking proficiency. By incorporating guessing games into their teaching methods, educators strive to bolster their students' learning success, specifically aiming to improve their ability to speak confidently and fluently.

The researcher's findings highlight the critical role of teachers in motivating and guiding students to independently develop and enhance their speaking abilities. Emphasizing students' proficiency in speaking through descriptive texts is crucial. The Guessing Game Technique, customized to enhance English-speaking skills, aims to ignite motivation and encourage active student participation in their learning process. Additionally, educators can create a dynamic and enjoyable classroom atmosphere by using this technique, fostering students' comfort and enthusiasm as they engage deeply in learning the English language.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of teaching VII grade students' speaking abilities using guessing games compared to those taught without guessing games at SMP Negeri 3 Ngronggot Nganjuk during the academic year 2021/2022.

⁹ Wright, A., Batteridge, D., & Bucky, M. *Games for Language Learning: Third Edition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1

¹⁰ Sri Yuliani, "Teaching English by Using Guessing Game" *Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang*, vol. 1 no. 2 (2017), p. 124. <http://eprints.umk.ac.id/7007/24/The-2ndTEYLIN-compressed-201-209.pdf> (accessed on 8th December 2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a quantitative approach and utilized a quasi-experimental design involving seventh-grade students at SMPN 3 Ngronggot Nganjuk during the academic year 2021/2022. The sample comprised 64 students, divided equally into an experimental group and a control group, each consisting of 32 students. Data collection involved testing and documentation methods. The research followed a structured procedure that included administering a pre-test, implementing the treatment, and conducting a post-test. Data analysis was conducted using the T-test formula in SPSS after scoring the tests.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research was conducted in Class VII 1 and VII 3, commencing with a pre-test, followed by the treatment, and concluding with a post-test. The assessment utilized English descriptive texts to evaluate the students' proficiency in English speaking. The treatment phase aimed to monitor any enhancements or alterations in language acquisition. Following this, the test results from both the experimental and control classes were analyzed to determine the difference before and after the treatment intervention.

Table 4.10 The mean of score of experimental and control class

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
score	Experimental class	32	90.31	8.225	1.453
	Control class	32	65	13.199	2.333

According to the table, there is a noticeable disparity in average test scores. Specifically, the experimental group achieved an average score of 90.31, whereas the control group attained a score of 65, based on data from 64 seventh-grade students at SMPN 3 Ngronggot Nganjuk.

Table 4.11 The calculation of T-test

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Score	Equal variances assumed	7.642	.151	9.208	62	.000	25.313	2.749	19.817	30.808
	Equal variances not assumed			9.208	51.921	.000	25.313	2.749	19.796	30.829

Based on the T-test calculation provided, it is evident that the t-test yielded a value of 9.208 with 62 degrees of freedom. Comparatively, the significance value at a 5% level of significance for a T-table with 62 degrees of freedom is 2.042. These results indicate that the calculated T-test value (9.208) exceeds the critical T-table value (2.042), thereby leading to the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_a) and the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). This underscores a significant difference in Speaking Skill scores between students taught using the Guessing Game Technique and those who were not.

The independent sample t-test aims to assess whether the means of two separate groups, represented by independent samples, are statistically similar. Research findings indicate that students who received instruction through the Guessing Game Technique showed significant improvements in their speaking skills. This may be attributed to increased student engagement in speaking activities facilitated by the Guessing Game Technique, which encouraged them to actively practice and apply their speaking skills in daily interactions.

Based on previous research focused on improving students' speaking abilities, the researcher aims to identify a teaching technique that fosters enjoyable engagement and active participation among students. According to Ceyda Yalçın's theory in "Cutting-Edge Topics and Approaches in Education and Applied Linguistics," using games such as guessing games is recommended as an effective method in learning, particularly for enhancing speaking skills¹¹. It also supported by Sri Yuliani's theory which similarly describes guessing games as playful activities where students guess various information, encouraging speaking practice and boosting confidence in articulating thoughts. This approach not only enhances motivation in English learning but also significantly improves students' speaking abilities¹².

The study demonstrates a significant improvement in students' speaking skills following the integration of guessing games. Initial pre-test scores averaged 56.48, which increased to 65.09 in the post-test, highlighting a substantial difference in scores before and after the intervention. This enhancement indicates students' proficiency in articulating personal or others' past experiences in English effectively. Moreover, students reported decreased anxiety, improved concentration, and heightened enthusiasm for their learning activities.

Previous research utilizing guessing games has shown substantial enhancements in students' speaking abilities. Statistical analysis indicates that the calculated t-value (9.208) exceeds the critical t-value (2.042), underscoring a significant disparity in speaking proficiency between students exposed to guessing game interventions and those who were not, based on the quasi-experimental research design.

Using guessing games as an educational tactic can notably enhance students' eagerness to learn English, especially in refining their speaking abilities. This method encourages

¹¹ Ceyda Yalçın. *Cutting-Edge Topics and Approaches in Education and Applied Linguistics*. (2018). ISBN(10): 1-5275-0804-8 ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-0804-0 Britania Raya: Cambridge Scholars Publishing ,p.169-171

¹² Sri Yuliani, "Teaching English by Using Guessing Game" Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang, vol. 1 no. 2 (2017), p. 124. <http://eprints.umk.ac.id/7007/24/The-2ndTEYLIN-compressed-201-209.pdf> (accessed on 8th December 2022).

students to articulate English words, promoting active involvement and the sharing of their perspectives. Beyond fostering cognitive and educational growth, this approach assists teachers in reinforcing educational concepts and establishing a more interactive classroom environment. Consequently, incorporating these strategies not only enriches the enjoyment of learning but also cultivates a relaxed atmosphere for students, encouraging increased engagement and participation while equipping teachers with tools to create a supportive learning environment.

Based on the conducted research, a clear distinction emerged between students who were taught using the Guessing Game technique and those who were not. This indicates that students instructed with this technique attained higher scores in Speaking Skills, underscoring its effectiveness in the learning process. Ultimately, the implementation of the Guessing Game Technique significantly impacted students' proficiency in speaking.

CONCLUSION

The research clearly demonstrates that integrating guessing games significantly improves students' speaking skills, as evidenced by the substantial increase observed before and after implementing the guessing game approach in the seventh-grade class at SMPN 3 Ngronggot. The data indicate a notable difference in average scores between the pre-test and post-test phases. Guessing games are shown to be effective as a learning strategy, enhancing student engagement, relaxation, enjoyment of learning, and fostering a vibrant learning atmosphere. They are particularly beneficial for speaking practice, encouraging students to articulate their thoughts, thereby boosting confidence and expanding vocabulary. This study suggests several recommendations, including the broader adoption of guessing games outside traditional classroom settings and their integration into English language teaching strategies adaptable to various study materials. Additionally, future research should explore and refine the use of guessing games for ongoing educational improvement.

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