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The effect of educational games on students' speaking skills

Selly Mareta[1], Samsul Arifin[1], Dwi Rosita Sari[1]
[1]Department of English Education, Universitas PGRI Madiun

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ABSTRACT

Speaking skills are essential for students in junior high school as they learn English as a second language. The ability to speak in English not only improves academic performance but also prepares students for future academic and professional endeavors. A supportive and deep learning environment and innovative teaching methodologies can help students overcome these obstacles and build confidence in their English ability over time, like an educational game. This research aims to determine the effect of student speaking skills in educational games such as guessing games. This research was conducted in one of the state junior high schools in Madiun. Two classes, namely control and experiment, consisting of 25 students, are compared. The control class is taught using an educational method, and the experimental class uses educational games called guessing games. The researcher used a random sampling technique and quantitative research to analyze the data with the t-test. The result of this research is that educational games' guessing games affect students who are taught with guessing games; the students who are taught with guessing games have a better score than those taught with conventional technique. The teacher should make an innovative learning process with guessing games to increase student speaking skills.

Corresponding Author:
Samsul Arifin,
Departement of English Education,
Universitas PGRI Madiun,
85 Setia Budi Street, Madiun, East Java 63118, Indonesia
Email: samsularifin@unipma.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

The role of teachers in teaching English speaking skills to junior high school students is very diverse and important in shaping the development of the language. According to (Mulyasa, 2007), the teacher acts as a facilitator, creating a supportive and encouraging classroom environment where students feel comfortable expressing themselves in English. Teacher guidance is essential in providing constructive feedback on pronunciation, intonation, and grammar, helping students improve their speaking skills. Utami (2018) ultimately states that the teacher's role is more than just imparting knowledge. This includes maintaining a supportive learning environment that empowers secondary school students to develop effective English-speaking skills. The ability to speak

English improves academic performance and prepares students for future academic and professional endeavors. On the other hand, students in junior high school have difficulty learning English speaking skills. Many factors contribute to learning English speaking skills. Factors that contribute to the challenges that junior high school students often face when learning English speaking skills. Students face fear and self-consciousness, fear of mistakes, and potential embarrassment during oral communication. The diversity of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and grammar rules add to the difficulty. In addition, the traditional method is also a factor in the difficulty

of learning English speaking skills because it focuses on written assessment in language classrooms and may need to place more emphasis on oral communication (Murti et al., 2022). Based on these challenges, a supportive and deep learning environment and innovative teaching methodologies can help students overcome these obstacles and build confidence in their English ability over time, like an educational game (Hayati, 2020).

Educational games play an important role in transforming the learning experience by infusing elements of fun, engagement, and interactivity into the academic environment. In contrast to traditional methods, educational games utilize play and competition to impart knowledge and skills in various subjects (Boyle, 2011). These games are designed to align with educational goals, fostering a dynamic and immersive environment where students can actively participate in the learning process.

Guessing games can significantly develop students' speaking skills (Wahyuni & Yulianti, 2016). These games create an interactive and fun environment that encourages participants to express themselves verbally. Whether guessing words, describing concepts, or playing games related to language, students are encouraged to use language actively, increasing vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. This research aims to determine the effect of student speaking skills in educational games such as guessing games.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research focuses on a state Junior High School in Madiun, where it was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of learning methods that can influence students' speaking skills. This research used quantitative descriptive research methods, a systematic approach proposed by Sugiyono (2019). Quantitative research is characterized by collecting numerical data or variables that can be analyzed statistically, thereby contributing to carefully exploring research objectives. The research methodology involved selecting the target two classes from eight classes available for seventh-grade students. One class was taught using the traditional method as a control class, and the other was taught using guessing games as an experimental class. Using random sampling techniques adds a layer of objectivity to the sample selection process, minimizing bias and increasing the generalizability of findings to a broader population. The pre-test served as a baseline measure, evaluating the initial speaking proficiency of both groups before any intervention. Next, a post-test was carried out to measure the speaking ability of the experimental class after implementing the educational game treatment. After the data collection stage, the researcher continued conducting analysis guided by the methodology outlined by Marleni (2018). The analysis process uses the T-test, which includes the normality, homogeneity, and hypothesis tests. This research focuses on whether there are significant differences in speaking proficiency between students who receive instruction through educational games and those who do not. The data analysis phase involves several important steps using SPSS 23, starting with normality testing to ensure that the data distribution adheres to standard statistical assumptions.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this research, the researcher tested the normality of samples. The score was gained from pre-test data of speaking skills from both experiment and control classes. The data was displayed as follows:

Table 1. Normality Testing

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Nilai Pre Test	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Kelas	Control	.155	25	.122	.930	25	.085
	Experimental	.163	25	.086	.943	25	.174

From Table 1 above, the researcher analyzes the data by observing the number of significant columns in the table. If the significance value is more than 0.05, the data is normal. Nevertheless, the data is abnormal if the significant value is less than 0.05. Thus, the number of significant values for the control class is 0.085, and for the experimental class, 0.174. This means the number of significant

values from both classes is more than 0.05. In other words, the distribution data from both classes is normal.

Table 2. Homogeneity testing

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Pre Test	Equal variances assumed	1.150	.289	.296	48	.768	.800	2.700	-4.629	6.229
	Equal variances are not assumed.			.296	45.732	.768	.800	2.700	-4.636	6.236

Table 2 above shows the independent sample t-test result. The significance of the pre-test value from the control and experimental classes can be seen in the column, which is significant for Levene's test for equality of variances. The significant value from both classes is 0,289. Thus, it can be concluded that the pre-test data from both classes are homogeneous because it is more than $a=$ 0,05 (0,289 > 0,05).

The researcher describes the outcome. The data are collected from student's scores from experimental and control classes. The post-test scores are collected after the researcher gives the treatment for the experimental class with an educational game and a conventional method for the control class.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Control Class	25	40	75	1435	57.40	9.142	83.583
Experimental Class	25	60	100	1920	76.80	8.401	70.583
Valid N (listwise)	25						

The post-test data aim to determine each class's improvement to see the mean contrast between the control and the experiment classes. The subjects are the same as those in the pre-test class; they contain 25 students. The result of the post-test data shows that the higher score in the control class is 70, and the lowest score is 40. Thus, in the experimental class, the highest score is 85, and the lowest is 60. According to the data, it can be recognized that the mean, standard deviation, and variance scores of the experimental class are higher than those of the control class.

Table 4. Independent Sample T-Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Nilai Test	Post Equal variances assumed	.548	.463	-7.812	48	.000	-19.400	2.483	-24.393	-14.407
	Equal variances are not assumed.			-7.812	47.661	.000	-19.400	2.483	-24.394	-14.406

The analysis results in the post-test data using an independent sample t-test deliver that the post-test data are from the class taught using conventional methods and the class taught using educational games (guessing games). According to the result, the significance value of equal variances assumed is 0,000. The assumed significance value of equal variances is less than0,05 (0,000 < 0,05). Thus, according to the decision-making basis independent sample t-test, First is the null hypothesis (H_0); the null hypothesis means there is no statistically significant difference in student speaking skills taught by educational games and those taught by conventional teaching. Besides, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) means a statistically significant difference in student

speaking skills between those taught using educational games and those taught by conventional teaching. Based on the result table above, it can be concluded that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted.

The researcher found that teaching speaking skills using educational games significantly affects student speaking skills. It is supported by the ability of students to speak before and after getting treatment. The ability of students to speak can be seen based on the scores of the experimental class. Before the experimental class gets the treatment, the mean score of the class is 55.20. After the educational games are applied, the mean score of the experimental increases to 72.80. Besides, educational games also motivate the students to learn to speak. The students are more excited and enthusiastic because the learning process is wrapped in a game. It boosts their confidence because even though the students fail in the game, they try to learn more about how to win the game. These results support previous research that guessing games are the right choice to teach students English speaking skills (Wahuni & Yulianti, 2016). After using the guessing game, students compete with other students to improve their English speaking skills to win the guessing game in class. This also has a positive impact on students' self-confidence. Guessing games also motivate students to learn more (Meningsih & Madya, 2021). Students will feel confident and motivated to speak English in front of the class without worrying about possible English mistakes, fear of ridicule, or feeling inferior. In previous research, Yunita (2017) also found that guessing was the right choice to improve students' speaking skills. Guessing games can improve students' vocabulary knowledge and speaking fluency. To win the game, students must understand the new vocabulary used to guess things and learn the right pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and grammar. This research aligns with Irfa et al. (2023), who found that guessing games significantly increase student interest and make teaching and learning more enjoyable. Guessing games make students more involved in the learning process, and a fun learning atmosphere can help students have more fun and reduce fear. Guessing game activities also require students to collaborate with other students and feel more grateful in the teaching and learning process.

4. CONCLUSION

The students taught by the guessing game technique are more confident and motivated than those taught by the conventional technique. This means that students taught guessing games are more confident speaking in front of the class without feeling anxious. Also, the students are more motivated in the learning process because they learn more about pronouncing the word correctly and learning new vocabulary to win guessing games. Competition with other students has a positive impact because it is more constructive. Guessing games is the right choice to make the learning process more enjoyable and increase student interest in the learning process. After implementing guessing games, students enjoy the learning process more because they are not afraid to be judged if they make some error while speaking in English. It also increases student interest in the learning process; guessing games make students collaborate with other students and try to achieve good scores. Students feel seen and involved in the learning process.

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