

The Effectiveness of Using Games Two Truths and a Lie In Increasing Students' Speaking Ability at SMP Labschool Untad Palu

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the effectiveness of using the "Two Truths and A Lie" game in improving the speaking skills of seventh-grade students at SMP Labschool Untad Palu. This research was motivated by the students' persistent challenges, including low motivation and speaking anxiety, often exacerbated by non-interactive teaching methods. Employing a quasi-experimental design with a *pre-test* and *post-test* control group, the study involved a sample of 45 students. Data analysis using SPSS confirmed that the *post-test* scores of the experimental group followed a normal distribution, justifying the use of parametric tests. The mean scores showed a substantial increase in the experimental group, rising from 9.09 to 15.95, significantly higher than the control group's increase (from 10.40 to 14.45). This difference was confirmed as statistically significant by the paired sample t-test, supporting the hypothesis. The findings conclusively demonstrate that the "Two Truths and A Lie" game is significantly effective in boosting students' confidence, improving fluency, and developing critical thinking skills, providing empirical insight into the value of incorporating fun and interactive teaching methods.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a key skill in foreign language learning, encompassing mastery of vocabulary, grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and the ability to engage in productive conversation [1], [2], [3], [4], [5]. However, in practice, many junior high school students still face obstacles in speaking English, both due to internal factors such as low motivation, fear of making mistakes, and limited vocabulary and grammar, as well as external factors such as monotonous teaching methods and a lack of active interaction in the classroom [6]. This condition lowers students' confidence and makes them reluctant to participate in oral communication [2], [7], [8], [9], [10]. Therefore, identifying and addressing these barriers

is crucial for improving the overall quality of English language learning and ensuring students' communicative competence.

As a problem-solving effort, teachers need to present learning strategies that are interesting, creative, and encourage active student participation. One strategy that is believed to be effective is the use of games in learning [11], [12], [13], [14], [15], as they can create a fun learning atmosphere, increase motivation, and naturally and interactively train language skills [16]. The game Two Truths and a Lie has been proven to train speaking skills, critical thinking, and strengthen student social interaction [17], [18], [19], [20]. In this regard, games are not only viewed as entertainment but also as tools to facilitate language acquisition through meaningful communication and authentic interaction among learners.

Based on this background, this study focuses on the application of the Two Truths and a Lie game to improve the speaking skills of seventh-grade students at Labschool Untad Palu Junior High School. The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of this game in improving students' fluency, accuracy, and confidence in speaking English. Theoretically, this study is based on the concept of game-based learning (GBL), which views games not merely as entertainment but as an educational medium capable of integrating aspects of motivation, engagement, and language skill mastery [21], [22]. Thus, games can be positioned as an alternative learning method that is more attractive than conventional approaches. This theoretical grounding highlights the potential of GBL as a pedagogical innovation that bridges the gap between language learning theory and classroom practice.

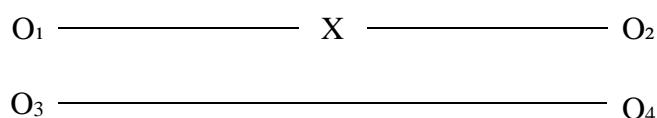
The results of this study are expected to benefit: (1) Teachers, in enriching interactive activity-based learning strategies; (2) Students, in improving speaking skills while building self-confidence; and (3) Other researchers, as empirical references for the development of innovative learning methods in the future. Furthermore, the findings are anticipated to provide practical implications for curriculum designers and policymakers in promoting learner-centered and engaging instructional models.

Based on the literature review and theoretical framework, this study hypothesizes that "The use of the Two Truths and a Lie game has a significant effect on improving the speaking skills of seventh-grade students at Labschool Untad Palu Junior High School." This hypothesis serves as the foundation for conducting a quasi-experimental study that compares the speaking performance of students exposed to game-based learning with that of those taught through conventional methods. To examine this hypothesis, the following section outlines the research design, participants, instruments, and procedures employed in this study.

2. METHOD

This study uses a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test post-test control group model. This design was chosen because it allows researchers to test the effectiveness of the treatment, which is the use of the Two Truths and a Lie game in the experimental group, while comparing it with the control group that was taught using conventional methods

[23]. In the context of education, quasi-experimental designs are more realistic than true experimental designs because researchers cannot completely randomize class divisions or move students between groups. With a quasi-experimental design, class VII A was designated as the control group, while class VII D was designated as the experimental group, while maintaining the equivalence of population characteristics. This design provides a valid picture of the effect of learning methods on speaking skills, even though it does not eliminate external variables. The research procedure involved administering a pre-test (O_1, O_3), implementing the treatment (X) in the experimental group, and then conducting a post-test (O_2, O_4) to measure changes in students' speaking performance.



The research instrument was an oral presentation test that assessed pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension [24]. Content validity is ensured through the development of an assessment rubric based on speaking skills theory [25]. Additionally, statistical tests, such as Cronbach's Alpha or inter-rater score comparisons, can be used to demonstrate the instrument's consistency. To strengthen the reliability of the assessment, two independent raters were involved in scoring the speaking tests, and discrepancies were discussed to achieve consensus. Before conducting the research, the researchers requested official permission from the school principal and subject teachers. Students were provided with an explanation of the research objectives, procedures, and activities to be conducted. Student identities were not included in the research report. Student names were replaced with initials or codes, such as AFAD, NK, SVS, as shown in the results table. The published data consisted only of scores and analyses without mentioning personal identities. This maintained the confidentiality of the participants and minimized the risk of negative impacts on the students. Thus, ethical considerations were fully observed to protect participants' rights and ensure the integrity of the research process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to analyze the development of students' speaking skills at SMP Labschool Untad Palu. Data were collected using pre-tests and post-tests in two classes through direct interviews with students. Data analysis was performed using SPSS 30, incorporating results from statistical descriptions, normality tests, and paired tests. The step-by-step analysis ensured that the data were systematically processed to provide both descriptive and inferential insights.

3.1. The Result of Descriptive Statistics

After scoring the post-test, the mean score of the students' Pre-test can be seen in the following table. Descriptive statistics were calculated to provide an overview of the distribution of students' speaking scores in both experimental and control groups.

Table 1. Mean Score of Students Post-Test

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	23	9,00	23,00	15,8696	3,53302
Control	22	11,00	21,00	14,4545	2,72077

The results indicate that the experimental group obtained a higher mean score (15.87) compared to the control group (14.45), suggesting an improvement in students' speaking performance after the treatment.

3.2. Normality Test

Normality tests are used to evaluate whether a data set follows a normal distribution, which is often depicted as a bell-shaped curve. The main purpose of performing normality tests is to guide the selection of statistical methods. Parametric tests, which are widely used because of their power, assume that the data come from a population that follows a normal distribution. If this assumption is violated, the results may be misleading or invalid. This ensures the analysis remains reliable and accurate.

Based on the output from SPSS below, the significant values for the Post-Test experimental class are 0.160 for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and 0.762 for the Shapiro-Wilk test, respectively. Therefore, to ensure that the data follow the assumption of normality, the researcher used a basis for decision-making. Since both significance values were greater than 0.05, the data were considered normally distributed, which justified the use of parametric statistical tests in subsequent analysis.

Table 2. Result of Normality Test

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test	.248	22	.001	.887	22	.016
Post-Test	.158	22	.160	.972	22	.762

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

3.3 Result of Hypothesis Testing

In this case, the researcher applied a paired sample t-test (significance testing) to determine the significance of the difference between the students' mean scores in the Pre-test and Post-test. This test was employed to examine whether the observed improvements were statistically significant.

Table 3. Paired Samples Test of the Pre-test and Post-Test

		Paired Differences					Significance			
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
					Lower	Upper				
Pair 1	Pre-test Experimental - Pre-test Control	-1,31818	3,64347	,77679	-2,93361	,29724	-1,697	21	,052	,104
Pair 2	Post-Test Experimental - Post-Test Control	1,50000	4,84768	1,03353	-,64934	3,64934	1,451	21	,081	,161

Table 3 shows that the average score of the Pre-test is -1.31818, and the Post-test is 1.50000. The standard deviation of this study is 3.64347 for the Pre-test and 4.84768 for the Post-test. The standard error is 0.77679 for the Pre-test and 1.03353 for the Post-test. Based on the confidence interval, the lower difference in this study is -2.93361 for the Pre-test and -0.64934 for the Post-test, while the upper difference is 0.29724 for the Pre-test and 3.6493 for the Post-test. The results of the statistical analysis at a significance level of 0.05 with degrees of freedom (df) = N - 1, where N = 22 and df = 21. The probability value is less than alpha, as 0.161 is greater than 0.05. This means that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted, and the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected. Decision-making criteria:

- If the probabilities (sig.) > 0.05, then H_a is accepted
- If the probabilities (sig.) < 0.05, then H_a is rejected

The results showed a difference in students' speaking abilities before and after using the Two Truths and a Lie game. The researcher found that the game could help seventh-grade students at SMP Labschool Untad Palu improve their speaking abilities. Overall, the statistical findings support the initial hypothesis, confirming that the application of game-based learning had a positive effect on students' speaking performance. To further interpret these results and link them to existing literature, the following section presents the discussion.

3.4. Discussion

This study confirms that the application of Two Truths and a Lie as a game-based learning strategy has great potential to strengthen students' speaking skills, especially in terms of fluency, accuracy, and confidence. The primary objective of the study, which was to evaluate the effectiveness of this method in the context of seventh-grade junior high school, was achieved by demonstrating that simple yet interactive activities can bridge the gap between language learning theory and actual classroom practice. These findings align

with previous studies [17], [18] which emphasize that interactive games can lower students' anxiety, promote risk-taking in communication, and enhance vocabulary retention in a more natural learning environment.

The implication is that teachers are encouraged to be more daring in utilizing attractive approaches, such as games, as part of their pedagogical strategies. Thus, the learning process does not only focus on knowledge transfer but also on the development of communication skills that are more relevant to students' daily needs. For education policy, these results underscore the importance of integrating creative learning models into the curriculum, in line with the spirit of Merdeka Belajar (Freedom of Learning). Moreover, by embedding game-based learning into regular classroom activities, teachers can foster a learner-centered environment that motivates students and nurtures collaborative learning, which is particularly beneficial in language classrooms.

For future research, several important areas could be expanded: (1) investigating the long-term impact of this game on the development of communication skills across semesters or educational levels; (2) comparing the effectiveness of Two Truths and a Lie with other educational games, such as Role Play or Guessing Games; and (3) expanding the research population to more diverse school contexts so that the results can be generalized more broadly. The main contribution of this study lies in its empirical support for student-oriented game-based educational practices. These findings not only enrich the academic discourse on game-based learning but also provide a practical basis for teachers and policymakers to design more effective, enjoyable, and sustainable English language learning experiences. In conclusion, the evidence from this study strengthens the argument that innovative instructional strategies, when grounded in interactivity and student engagement, can significantly improve learners' communicative competence and better prepare them for real-life communication.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the use of the Two Truths and a Lie game is significantly effective in improving the speaking ability of seventh-grade students at SMP Labschool Untad Palu. The results demonstrated that students in the experimental group showed greater improvement in fluency, accuracy, and confidence compared to those taught through conventional methods. These findings highlight the role of game-based learning as an engaging and interactive strategy that not only enhances language skills but also builds motivation and reduces speaking anxiety.

From a pedagogical perspective, teachers are encouraged to integrate similar interactive activities into their teaching practices, as they can create a more dynamic and student-centered classroom atmosphere. At the policy level, this research supports the integration of creative learning approaches into the English curriculum, aligning with the goals of Merdeka Belajar.

Although the results are promising, further studies should investigate the long-term effects of game-based learning and explore its applications in various educational contexts. Future research comparing multiple types of educational games would also enrich the understanding of their relative effectiveness in supporting language learning.

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