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THE EFFECT OF TABOO GAMES ON ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY OF JUNIOR ZEN STUDENTS

by

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Abstract:

This study aims to determine whether the Taboo game affects and significantly affects students' English speaking ability in the beginner class at Yos Sudarso High School. The research employed a quasi-experimental design involving a population of 73 students from the beginner class of Yos Sudarso High School academic year 2023/2024. The study was conducted in an experimental class which consisted of 24 students. The research instrument was an oral test administered before and after the treatment to assess students' speaking ability. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 20. The results revealed that the significance level (2-tailed) < 0.05 , indicating that the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. This confirms that the use of Taboo games in teaching speaking is effective. Additionally, the independent t-test showed a significance level (2-tailed) of $0.000 < 0.05$, demonstrating that teaching speaking using the Taboo game has a positive effect on improving students' speaking ability. Therefore, the research concludes that the Taboo game has a significant and positive effect on students' speaking abilities in the beginner class of Yos Sudarso High School. The findings of this study imply that incorporating interactive activities like the Taboo game can enhance language learning outcomes, suggesting that educators should integrate similar games to improve students' speaking ability.

Keywords: taboo game; speaking ability; beginner students

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan apakah permainan Taboo memiliki pengaruh dan perbedaan yang signifikan terhadap kemampuan berbicara bahasa Inggris siswa di kelas pemula di SMA Yos Sudarso. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuasi-eksperimental, melibatkan populasi sebanyak 73 siswa dari kelas pemula SMA Yos Sudarso tahun ajaran 2023/2024. Penelitian ini dilakukan di kelas eksperimen yang terdiri dari 24 siswa. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan SPSS versi 20. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tingkat signifikansi (2-tailed) $< 0,05$, yang mengindikasikan bahwa hipotesis nol (H_0) ditolak dan hipotesis alternatif (H_a) diterima. Hal ini menegaskan bahwa penggunaan permainan Taboo dalam pengajaran berbicara efektif. Selain itu, uji t independen menunjukkan tingkat signifikansi (2-tailed) sebesar $0,000 < 0,05$, yang menunjukkan bahwa pengajaran berbicara menggunakan permainan Taboo memiliki efek positif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa. Oleh karena itu, penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa

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permainan Taboo memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan dan positif terhadap kemampuan berbicara siswa di kelas pemula SMA Yos Sudarso. Temuan penelitian ini menyiratkan bahwa menggabungkan aktivitas interaktif seperti permainan Taboo dapat meningkatkan hasil pembelajaran bahasa, menyarankan bahwa pendidik sebaiknya mengintegrasikan permainan serupa untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa.

Kata Kunci: *Taboo, Keterampilan Berbicara, Siswa Pemula*

INTRODUCTION

English language as the world language become very important to learn nowadays. The development of English as a world language is presently undeniable. English has been made the official language of around 61 countries on 6 continents (Tauchid & Fatoni, 2019). With over 350 million people speaking it as their first language and more than 430 million using it as a second language, English is widely spoken in most countries (Ilyosovna, 2020), making it an incredibly valuable language to learn. The significance of English language can be seen in nearly each viewpoint of our lives. English can also be a tool to achieve economic-trade goals (Jupri, 2023), relations between nations, social culture and education, as well as career development (Akther, 2022).

However, there are a lot of EFL students still have difficulty in learning English especially in speaking (Amalia & Arief, 2020) whereas it is considered as a very crucial skill (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). This is supported by Brown as cited in (Larosa et al., 2020) who said that the mastery of English speaking ability still considered as a difficult thing for many of EFL students. In line with that (Syafiq & Siagiyanto, 2019) also said that speaking is frequently regarded as the most challenging skill for students to master among the four language abilities. Whereas the ability to speak English plays a crucial role in international communication and relations (Hidayatullah & Haerazi, 2021). This problem arises due to various internal and external factors affecting the students, such as the lack of practice, low motivation, limited vocabulary (Ismailia, 2021), the habit of speaking in their native language instead of English, fear of making mistake (Rizkiya & Pratolo, 2023), and the boredom to the teaching methods employed by the teacher (Ana Sri Lestari & Sholichah, 2022). In a speaking test conducted with students at Yos Sudarso High School, the data revealed that low speaking scores remain prevalent among beginners. These challenges can be attributed to several factors mentioned earlier, including low interest in the subject due to monotonous teaching techniques, lack of review, limited vocabulary, and the habitual use of the local language, all of which negatively affect students' English-speaking abilities. This aligns with (Turmudi & Hajan, 2020) who noted that English language learners in Indonesia consistently face

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difficulties in communicating effectively in the target language, as their first language dominates daily interactions and English is primarily treated as a foreign language.

To address these challenges, it is crucial for teachers to adopt engaging teaching methods that capture students' interest (Menggo et al., 2022). One effective approach is incorporating language games into lessons. According to Brewster et al., (2002) as cited in (Razi et al., 2019) language games are primarily created and planned based on the needs and proficiency of the learner. There are some benefit that can be gained by applying language game including boost the students' confidence and encourage them to speak (Nuraen & Karyati, 2018). Additionally (Razi et al., 2019) also mentioned certain advantages that games offer when learning a language, specifically for speaking ability.

Numerous studies have explored the use of game in learning English. The first study by (Lumbangaol, 2021) found that the Taboo Word Game significantly improved students' vocabulary ability compared to conventional methods. Novinda & Haryadi (2020) showed that modern games were the most effective in enhancing students' speaking ability, followed by traditional games, with both being more effective than conventional learning. Pangastuti & Chadafi (2019) revealed that game-based teaching strategies had a positive impact on students' speaking skills, significantly outperforming the control group using traditional methods. All studies demonstrate that using games in learning can enhance students' language abilities. However, it is surprisingly noted that there is still very little research focusing specifically on the effects of the Taboo game on students' English speaking ability.

Looking at this opportunity, there is one potential solution that can be used to improve students english speaking ability by using Taboo game. Taboo game is a popular word-guessing game where players have to describe a word to their teammates without using certain "taboo" words or phrases (Siregar & Fithriani, 2023). These restricted words are listed on the game cards (Ni'maturrohmah, 2022). The game is typically played in teams that will create a fun learning which needed by the children (Madya & Meningsih, 2021) with each team consisting of a clue giver and a group of guessers. This game requires players to think creatively and use their vocabulary and language skills effectively. The gameplay of Taboo is fast-paced and dynamic, with teams taking turns as clue givers and guessers. This ensures that everyone gets a chance to participate actively and contribute to the excitement of the game (Nastiti, Graciela Wuri and Veniranda, 2021)

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Taboo is not only a game of vocabulary and language skills but also a test of communication abilities. This means that taboo games can grab students' attention, encourage student participation and practice all language skills (Dewi et al., 2016) Some educators believe that incorporating Taboo into language learning activities can help students improve their English speaking ability by providing them with a fun and engaging way to practice their language ability in a low-pressure environment. This game has been used before to improve students vocabulary by (Lumbangaol, 2021) and had very satisfying result. Here the researcher try to focus on the students speaking ability after playing taboo game. The purpose of this study are to find out the effectiveness of Taboo Game toward students English speaking ability in Beginner Class of Yos Sudarso High School Academic Year 2023/2024 and to find out the significant difference speaking ability of the students in the Beginner Class of Yos Sudarso High School Academic Year 2023/2024. This study aims to contribute both practically and empirically to the field of language education. Practically, it will provide teachers with insights into effective strategies that enhance students' speaking abilities, creating a more engaging and interactive learning environment that boosts motivation and participation in English classes. Empirically, the research will add to the existing literature on game-based learning, specifically regarding its impact on speaking skills, highlighting the benefits of the Taboo game such as vocabulary retention, fluency, and confidence in speaking.

This study added to the limited literature on the effects of the Taboo game on speaking ability, exploring several key questions which will guide the research process and shed light on the relationship between the variables. The research questions are as follows:

1. Is there any effectiveness of using Taboo Game in the speaking of students in the Beginner Class of Yos Sudarso High School Academic Year 2023/2024?
2. Is there any significant difference speaking ability of the students in the Beginner Class of Yos Sudarso High School Academic Year 2023/2024?

METHOD

Design

The researcher used Quantitative Quasi-Experimental research because the availability of participants were limited and the number of population in the school was appropriate with

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the number of sample expected by researcher. It must be highlighted that Quasi experiments include assignment, but not random assignment of participants to groups (Zubair, 2023). Moreover, the researcher decided to choose quasi experimental design because the participants were organized well in the class. The goal was to compare and contrast the subjects between the control group and the experimental group, as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1.

The non-randomized control group, pretest-posttest design

| Class | Pre-test | Treatment | Post-test |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| C | O1 | - | O2 |
| E | O1 | X | O2 |

Notes :

E : Experiment Class

C : Control Class

O1: Pre-test

X : Taboo Game

- : Conventional Technique

O2 : Post-test

(Hardani et al., 2020)

Participant

The participant of this research was beginner class of Yos Sudarso High School in the academic year 2023/2024. There are three classes of this semester. The number of students in A class are 24 students, 24 students in B class and 25 students in C class . Therefore, the total of the population in this research were 73 students. The sample are Beginner A as control class and Beginner B students as experimental class.

Instrument

The researcher used an oral test as an instrument in this study, administered as both a pre-test to measure students' speaking ability before the treatment and a post-test to measure their ability afterward. The test took the form of a performance test with delayed scoring, where students' responses were recorded and then evaluated later. Before the test questions were administered, face validity was assessed by consulting two validators/experts, an English teacher and a speaking lecturer. Reliability testing was conducted using Inter-Rater Reliability (IRR) by Cohen's Kappa with SPSS. Once the test's reliability was confirmed, the pre-test

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was conducted before the treatment and the post-test afterward. The scores for both tests were based on a speaking test rubric that included criteria such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and task completion.

Data collecting technique

The researcher used an oral test to measure students speaking ability. The test taken in pre-test (before the treatment) and post-test (after the treatment). The researcher collected initial scores with a pre-test, where students had five minutes to select an animal picture, create an outline, and describe it orally for at least two minutes, recording and uploading their speeches to Google Drive. After the pre-test, a treatment aimed at improving speaking abilities was conducted, involving dividing the class into six groups to play the Taboo game using the TabuGo! application. In the post-test, the same activity was repeated with more varied pictures, including animals, vehicles, places, and professions. Students had two minutes to outline and then describe their chosen picture for at least five minutes before uploading their recordings. The researcher scored the speeches using a speaking assessment rubric.

Data analysis technique

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the results from the pre-test and post-test using a series of statistical tests, including normality, homogeneity, and hypothesis tests. The normality test was conducted to determine whether the data came from a normally distributed population, a crucial assumption in statistical analysis. Using the Shapiro-Wilk test in SPSS, the data was considered normally distributed if the significance value (Sig) was greater than 0.05, and non-normal if the value was less than 0.05. After computing the data, both the experimental and control groups had Sig. values above 0.05 for pre-test and post-test results (0.075, 0.137, 0.079, and 0.117, respectively), indicating that the data were normally distributed.

The homogeneity test was performed to check if the sample groups had the same variance. The researcher applied a One-Way ANOVA test, where data was considered homogeneous if the significance value was greater than 0.05 or if the observed value (Fo) was greater than the critical value (Ft). Conversely, the data was deemed non-homogeneous if the significance value was less than 0.05 or if (Fo) was less than (Ft). The test results showed that

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F (Fo) was 14.429, which was greater than the critical value (Ft) of 4.052, meaning the two groups were homogeneous. With both normality and homogeneity confirmed, the data were deemed suitable for further hypothesis testing. The hypothesis testing was conducted to assess the significance of the results and draw conclusions from the data analysis. The hypotheses are outlined as follows:

First Hypothesis:

1. **Alternative Hypothesis (Ha):** The Taboo Game has an effect on students' English speaking ability in the Beginner Class of Yos Sudarso High School. This hypothesis is accepted if the t -ratio $\leq t$ -table or if the significance value (Sig) ≤ 0.05 .
2. **Null Hypothesis (Ho):** The Taboo Game has no effect on students' English speaking ability in the Beginner Class of Yos Sudarso High School. This hypothesis is accepted if the t -ratio $> t$ -table or if the significance value (Sig) > 0.05 .

Second Hypothesis:

1. **Alternative Hypothesis (Ha):** There is a significant difference in students' English speaking ability when using the Taboo Game in the Beginner Class of Yos Sudarso High School. This hypothesis is accepted if the t -ratio $\leq t$ -table or if the significance value (Sig) ≤ 0.05 .
2. **Null Hypothesis (Ho):** There is no significant difference in students' English speaking ability when using the Taboo Game in the Beginner Class of Yos Sudarso High School. This hypothesis is accepted if the t -ratio $> t$ -table or if the significance value (Sig) > 0.05 .

The researcher used the Paired Sample t-test formula by using SPSS application to compute the results in order to verify the first hypothesis and Independent Sample t-test to verify the second hypothesis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Finding

In this chapter, the researcher explains the data collected during the research. To deal with the research questions, the data's findings and discussions are set up. The data will initially be subjected to descriptive statistical analysis, as demonstrated in the table below.

Table 2.

The score of mean difference of students' speaking ability

| <i>Groups</i> | <i>Number of Participant</i> | <i>Mean of Pre-Test Score</i> | <i>Mean of Post-Test Score</i> | <i>Mean Different</i> |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Experiment</i> | 24 | 59,46 | 71,79 | 12,33 |
| <i>Control</i> | 24 | 58,54 | 66,58 | 8,04 |

According to table 2's data description, there was a difference in mean between the experimental and control groups. From 24 students in each class, it can be seen that the mean of pre-test score in experimental group is higher than the control group, but does not have a significance difference (59,46 > 58,54). Then, in mean of post-test score in experiment group also higher than the control group (71,79 > 66,58). The experimental group's mean difference is greater than the control class (12,33 > 8,04). The previously mentioned statement indicates that the Taboo Game had a major impact on the speaking abilities of the students.

Moreover, regarding the first objective of this study, the following research question was formulated : Is there any effectiveness of using Taboo Game in the speaking of students in the Beginner Class of Yos Sudarso High School Academic Year 2023/2024?. The researcher used the paired sample t-test formula by using SPSS application version 20 to compute the results in order to verify whether there is an effect of using Taboo Game in the speaking ability of students. The following figure displays the summary of the entire computation:

Table 3. The result of paired sample t-test

| | | Paired Samples Test | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|--------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------|---------|---------|----|-----------------|
| | | Paired Differences | | | | | | | |
| | | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | | | |
| | | | | | Lower | Upper | | | |
| Pair 1 | Pre-Test Experiment - Post-Test Experiment | -12,333 | 4,104 | ,838 | -14,066 | -10,600 | -14,723 | 23 | ,000 |
| Pair 2 | Pre-Test Control - Post-Test Control | -8,042 | 3,127 | ,638 | -9,362 | -6,721 | -12,597 | 23 | ,000 |

The result of analysis as presented in table 3 indicates that significance value is (0,000), lower than 0.05. Theoretically, if sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. Therefore, it means that teaching speaking ability using Taboo Game in the beginner class of Yos Sudarso High School is effective.

Furthermore, in order to answer the second research question: Is there any significant difference speaking ability of the students in the Beginner Class of Yos Sudarso High School Academic Year 2023/2024? . The researcher used independent t-test to verify it. The following table displays the summary of the entire computation:

Table 4.
The result of independent sample 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 |
| Student's Learning Outcomes | Equal variances assumed | 1,230 | ,273 | 3,799 | 46 | ,000 | 5,208 | 1,371 | 2,448 | 7,968 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | 3,799 | 44,449 | ,000 | 5,208 | 1,371 | 2,446 | 7,971 |

The result of analysis as presented in table 4 indicates that significance value is (0,000), lower than 0.05. Theoretically, if sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. Therefore, it means that there is a significant difference by using Taboo Game in the speaking ability of beginner class at Yos Sudarso High School.

Discussion

As discussed in relation to the first research question, the findings of this study indicate a significant improvement in the speaking abilities of the students who participated in the Taboo Game compared to those who followed conventional methods. The experimental group's pre-test score was 59.46, while the control group's was 58.54. Following the implementation of the Taboo Game treatment, the post-test score for the experimental group rose significantly to 71.79, whereas the control group's post-test score only slightly improved to 66.58. This aligns with the hypothesis that teaching speaking using the Taboo Game in the beginner class at Yos Sudarso High School is effective, as evidenced by the significance value (0.000), which was lower than 0.05, thereby confirming that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted.

Similarly, regarding the second research question, the results reveal that there is a significant difference in the speaking abilities of students taught using the Taboo Game compared to those taught through conventional methods. The post-test results demonstrated that the experimental group, which used the Taboo Game, outperformed the control group. The significance value of 0.000 from the analysis also supports this finding, confirming that the Taboo Game has a more profound effect on enhancing speaking skills. These findings align with previous studies such as those by (Lumbangaol, 2021) which showed the effectiveness of the Taboo Game in improving vocabulary ability, and (Novinda & Haryadi, 2020) which demonstrated the success of modern games in improving speaking abilities. However, this study extends the research by focusing specifically on the impact of the Taboo Game on speaking ability rather than vocabulary acquisition or other language skills.

Additionally, the findings of this study can be linked to existing theories regarding the importance of English as a global language. As highlighted by (Tauchid & Fatoni, 2019), English is an essential tool for communication, with over 350 million native speakers and more than 430 million people using it as a second language. However, despite its global significance, many EFL learners struggle with speaking, which is considered one of the most challenging language skills to master (Amalia & Arief., 2020; Leong & Ahmadi., 2017). This challenge is particularly evident in Indonesia, where English is treated as a foreign language, and students face numerous obstacles, such as limited vocabulary, lack of practice, and fear of making mistakes (Ismailia, 2021 ; Rizkiya & Pratolo., 2023).

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To address these challenges, educators are encouraged to adopt engaging and interactive teaching methods. The use of games, such as the Taboo Game, has been proven to boost student motivation, create a more enjoyable learning environment, and improve language skills (Brewster et al., 2002; Razi et al., 2019). Taboo, specifically, requires students to think creatively and use their vocabulary effectively while engaging in social interaction, which fosters better communication skills (Rezqi et al., 2022). The positive impact of the Taboo Game on speaking abilities aligns with the findings of (Pangastuti & Chadafi, 2019), who also observed a significant improvement in students' speaking performance through game-based learning.

In conclusion, the results of this study underscore the effectiveness of the Taboo Game in enhancing students' speaking abilities. By comparing the pre- and post-test results, it is evident that the game not only improves language proficiency but also creates a more dynamic and engaging classroom environment. The significance of these findings supports the conclusion that incorporating language games, particularly the Taboo Game, can help students overcome the common challenges associated with learning English speaking skills and motivate them to participate more actively in the learning process.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research findings indicate that the Taboo Game effectively enhances students' speaking abilities, leading to significant improvements in their performance compared to traditional teaching methods. The experimental group's substantial post-test score increase suggests that the game fosters better social interaction, enthusiasm, and classroom engagement. This supports the theory that interactive and enjoyable activities can significantly improve communication skills.

The consistent positive impact of gamification in language learning, as observed in this study, reaffirms the Taboo Game's role as a beneficial educational tool. Achieving fluency in English speaking is consistently a challenging task for EFL learners; however, it can be mitigated through the adoption of diverse learning strategies (Wulandari et al., 2023). Language game such as Taboo game is one that can be used to enhance the students speaking ability. The significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores demonstrates that

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incorporating the Taboo Game into the curriculum can help students improve their speaking abilities, making the classroom atmosphere more enjoyable and engaging.

Limitation

This research has taken seriously by the researcher in the beginner class of Yos Sudarso High School academic year 2023/2024. However, there are still come shortcoming such as the use of SPSS for data processing is now very outdated, so there is a possibility that different results may be obtained if a newer application is used.

Implication

The research findings can serve as a guide for English teachers in selecting effective media for teaching and learning processes aimed at improving students' speaking abilities. These findings can also be a reference for teachers to engage their students more actively in the classroom, making the material enjoyable through appropriate and effective media. It is hoped that principals, department heads, and other educational stakeholders will support teachers in using engaging media, such as games, to create interactive and enjoyable classroom activities.

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