

The Impact of The Tongue Twister Technique on The Speaking Ability of Students and Pronunciation

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to gather empirical proof that tongue twisters significantly affect students' speaking abilities and pronunciation. This study employed a quantitative methodology and a quasi-experimental research design. This study was carried out at SMP NAA Alasbuluh-Wongsorejo-Banyuwangi in the eighth grade. The experimental class (38 students) and the control class (41 students) were the two groups in the researcher's basic random sampling technique. The researcher employed a tongue twister test as the tool for data collection, and the students' speaking and pronunciation on the pre-test and post-test were scored using a speaking and pronunciation scoring rubric. The experimental class's post-test mean score, as determined by the t-test calculations, was 60.68, whereas the control class was 50.65. In the statistical hypothesis test, observed (0.958) was greater than $r = 0.221$ at the 5% significance level. It indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis H_a was accepted. It was demonstrated that the tongue twister approach affects eighth-grade students' speaking and pronunciation at SMP NAA Alasbuluh-Banyuwangi.

1. Introduction

English has become the dominant language for global communication, and its mastery is essential for academic, professional, and intercultural success in the 21st century. As an international language, English is widely used across various domains such as diplomacy, science, education, and technology (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). English itself is categorized according to its position in society (Ratminingsih, 2021). English has been chosen as one of Indonesia's essential subjects to upgrade good quality for students in English both spoken and written (Thamrin et al., 2023).

Language is the key of knowledge (Morini, 2022). Language is an extremely important tool for communication in day-to-day human interactions. By employing it, the person interacts with other

people, communicates, and makes promises. They may also persuade others or share their ideas. Language is the speech-sound combination of concepts presented as words (Daulay, 2011). On the other hand, language is recognized as a method of connecting with other people through sounds, symbols, and words in order to convey a notion, idea, or sentiment. Language and communication are related because language serves as a means of communication (Daulay, 2019). A means of communication which is able to transfer some information, ideas, and feelings. People can develop their knowledge, business, society and about something by using language (Kurniati, 2014). Afterwards, there are many different kinds of language used as a communication tool. There are numerous languages for people from different countries, ethnic groups, and cultural backgrounds.

Mastering a language is able for encouraging a person to master all areas of study (Khromchenko & Shutilo, 2021). Language learning, especially in English which has become an obligation for us that should be understood and mastered because the English language is an international language (Marlina et al., 2023). English language learners need to be proficient in the following fundamental skills: speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Speaking is regarded as one of the most complex and challenging skills for EFL learners to master. It requires the integration of various language components including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and interactional strategies (Thornbury, 2005). Speaking is regarded as one of the most complex and challenging skills for EFL learners to master. It requires the integration of various language components including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and interactional strategies (Thornbury, 2005).

In case, researcher's focus is speaking ability. Speaking relates to pronunciation, because learners speak English which should attention to the proper pronunciation (Husni et al., 2023). In speaking English, Inaccurate word pronunciation will lead to errors with the audience and allow the communication's goal to be overlooked (Husni et al., 2023). In the context of English communication, speaking and pronunciation are inextricably linked (Sugiharto et al., 2022). In addition, learners are afraid to make mistakes when speaking English, such as learner pronunciation accuracy (Sugiharto et al., 2022). Afterwards, they will be able to contribute effectively to class discussions and debates, overcome whatever anxiety they may have had, be given the opportunity to present on their own, give brief speeches in class, and progressively improve their public speaking abilities (Sugiharto et al., 2022).

In the Indonesian EFL context, pronunciation problems are commonly observed among junior high school students. These difficulties stem from several factors. First, the phonological gap between Bahasa Indonesia and English is significant. English contains a broader range of vowel and consonant sounds, as well as stress and intonation patterns that are absent in the students' mother tongue (Kosasih, 2017; Roach, 2009). Second, classroom practices tend to be teacher-centered, with limited opportunities for authentic speaking practice or pronunciation-focused instruction (Newton & Nation, 2020). Many English teachers focus more on grammar and reading, often overlooking speaking drills or pronunciation correction due to time constraints, large class sizes, and lack of training.

The error is caused by some differences in letters and sounds. In mastering the skills to speaking and listening, one aspect that supports the students' ability to speak English in correct pronunciation. It is also available to learn about international phonetics alphabet, vowel, consonants, cluster, phoneme, and other aspects which support the quality of English pronunciation (Ahmad, 2019). Teachers must use a range of teaching strategies to assist students in expressing their ideas through pronunciation. (Husni et al., 2023). Yates stated, makes meaning by producing sounds is the definition of pronunciation (Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2016). It is the right one technique to deal pronunciation in similarity sounds is tongue twister, a sentence

includes some words in the same phonetic that affect the reader get some mistaken in pronouncing (slip of the tongue) when it is read quickly (Ratminingsih, 2021). It aims to read repeatedly as much as and as fast as possible without getting any mistaken.

One of excellent method for English language learners to enhance their communication abilities is to become proficient at tongue-twister. A student's language skills improve with the speed at which they can do the tongue twister without making any mistakes (González, 2009). A tongue twister helps students not only practice pronouncing words correctly but also strengthen their memory skills when studying pronunciation (Cahyani & Panjaitan, 2020). In improving students' learning interest, teachers might adopt an attractive and impactive in teaching technique by including tongue twister into the lesson plan, It can serve as a substitute approach to educating pronunciation (Idami et al., 2022). It revealed that tongue twister has strong impact to improve Each student's proficiency in pronouncing English sounds (Thamrin et al., 2023). Pronunciation is essential for effectively speaking and understanding English (Kosasih, 2017).

Considering the difficulties in learning and teaching English in particular in students' pronunciation at speaking skill, researcher found it happens to student at the eighth grade of SMP NAA Alasbuluh Wongsorejo Banyuwangi. Most of the students lack in English pronunciation. They think study English language is difficult because it is not easy to understand the lesson and different in pronouncing with their mother tongue. This is also due to the method of learning is teacher-centered that makes student less active in the learning activity especially in speaking skill.

Thus, the researcher plans to find out how the tongue twister approach, which is accessible to English learners, affects students' pronunciation. Identification of the Problem. The purpose of this study is to gather empirical proof of the substantial influence tongue twisters have on eighth-grade students at SMP Nurul Abror Ar-Robbaniyyin's speaking and pronunciation skills. Significance of Research. The researcher expects that by doing this study, she will be able to make the greatest contributions to the field of English learning and help students, teachers, and other researchers.

2. Methods

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a quasi-experimental design with a non-equivalent control group. Quasi-experimental designs are appropriate when random assignment is not feasible, but comparison between treatment and control groups is needed (Latief, 2019; Sugiyono, 2017). The purpose of this design is to determine the effect of the tongue twister technique on students' speaking ability and pronunciation through a comparative analysis of pre-test and post-test scores.

The research was conducted at SMP NAA Alasbuluh-Wongsorejo, an Islamic junior high school located in Banyuwangi, East Java, Indonesia. The population consisted of all eighth-grade students in the academic year 2024/2025, totaling 279 students. From this population, two classes were selected through simple random sampling. One class was assigned as the experimental group ($n = 38$), and the other as the control group ($n = 41$).

The experimental group received treatment using tongue twister techniques, while the control group followed conventional instruction without any specific pronunciation focus. Both groups were taught by the same English teacher to control for instructional variability.

2.1 Instruments

To collect data, the researcher used the following instruments:

a) Speaking and Pronunciation Test

Pre-tests and post-tests were administered to measure students' speaking ability and pronunciation accuracy. The tasks included reading aloud and short speaking

exercises focusing on fluency and articulation. Students' performances were assessed using a validated analytic rubric, adapted from Thornbury (2005), which included criteria such as pronunciation accuracy, fluency, stress, and intonation.

b) Scoring Rubric

A rubric was used to ensure consistent scoring across raters. Each student's speaking performance was rated on a 100-point scale, divided into four major components: pronunciation (30%), fluency (30%), vocabulary use (20%), and grammatical accuracy (20%).

2.2 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process was conducted for about four-weeks and followed three primary stages. Initially, a pre-test was administered to both the experimental and control groups in order to measure their baseline speaking and pronunciation abilities. Following this, the treatment phase was implemented for the experimental group, during which tongue twister exercises were integrated into their regular English lessons three times per week. These exercises specifically targeted commonly mispronounced English sounds using short and engaging tongue twister texts. Meanwhile, the control group continued with conventional instruction that did not include any pronunciation-focused activities. Finally, after the treatment phase concluded, a post-test was administered to both groups using the same instrument as the pre-test. The results of the pre- and post-tests were then compared to determine the effectiveness of the tongue twister technique in improving students' speaking and pronunciation performance.

2.3 Data Analysis

The data obtained from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques with the assistance of JASP version 0.18.3.0. Descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum scores, were first calculated to summarize the overall performance of students in both the experimental and control groups. To determine the normality of the data distribution, the Shapiro-Wilk test was employed. This test ensured whether the data conformed to a normal distribution, which is a prerequisite for selecting appropriate inferential statistical procedures. Subsequently, the homogeneity of variances between the two groups was tested using Levene's test and ANOVA to assess whether the variance in scores was statistically equal. Based on the normality and homogeneity results, inferential analyses were conducted using both parametric and non-parametric tests. The independent samples t-test was used to compare the means of the two groups when the data were normally distributed, while the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test was applied for non-normally distributed data. Throughout the inferential analysis, the significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05$ to determine whether the observed differences were statistically significant.

3. Result

3.1 Data Description

A quasi-experimental research design was used to carry out this investigation. The experimental group and the control group were the two groups included in this analysis. A tongue twister technique was taught to students in the experimental group, but no instruction in this area was given to students in the control group. Data was gathered using both the pre- and post-tests administered to the two classes.

a) A result of experimental class using tongue twister technique

After conducting several tests in the form of a class of experimental have 38 respondents using a test in the form of speaking, the following outcomes were gained:

The experimental class's pre and post test results indicated that the lowest scoring of pre-test was 55 and the highest scoring was 87, with an average of 66.86. Afterwards, the lowest score of the post-test was 67, a highest scoring was 97, and the average scoring was 80,86. A average of post-test students who received the treatment through tongue twisters' technique more significant than the mean of students who were not treated before the test.

b) A result of control class using conventional media

After conducting several tests in the form of a control class with a total of 41 respondents using a test of speaking, the following is;

The pre-, post-test, and gained score results for the 41-student control group are displayed. The pre-test the average scores is 43.53. It has a maximum score of 65 and a minimum score of 25. In contrast, the control class's mean post-test rating was 50.65. The post-test score *ranges* from 30 to 75, with 75 being the highest possible score. The resulting score was 7.12 points higher than the pre-test score.

3.2 Normality test

The researcher conducted a normality and homogeneity test prior to data analysis. The analyses were utilized to determine whether or not Both classes' data had a normal distribution. and whether or not the sample sizes were comparable. The information analysed the results of normality test is;

a) Normality test of Experimental Group in Speaking (Pre-Test) and Tongue Twister Test (Post-Test)

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Descriptive Statistics	
	Speaking	Tongue Twister
Valid	38	38
Missing	0	0
Mean	70.237	82.789
Std. Deviation	7.893	7.648
Shapiro-Wilk	0.973	0.981
P-value of Shapiro-Wilk	0.478	0.765
Minimum	55.000	67.000
Maximum	87.000	97.000

The normality test for the experimental group was conducted using the Shapiro-Wilk test. The results showed that the pre-test scores had a Shapiro-Wilk value of 0.973 with a p-value of 0.478, and the post-test scores had a Shapiro-Wilk value of 0.981 with a p-value of 0.765. Since both p-values are greater than the significance level of 0.05, it can be concluded that the data in the experimental group are normally distributed. This indicates that parametric tests could be appropriately applied when analyzing the experimental group's data.

b) Normality Testing of Control Group in Speaking (Pre-Test) and Tongue Twister (Post-Test)

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics		
	Speaking	Tongue Twister
Valid	41	41
Missing	0	0
Mean	43.537	50.659
Std. Deviation	12.440	12.972
Shapiro-Wilk	0.925	0.956
P-value of Shapiro-Wilk	0.010	0.113
Minimum	25.000	30.000
Maximum	65.000	75.000

In contrast, the control group's normality test showed mixed results. The pre-test scores had a Shapiro-Wilk value of 0.925 with a p-value of 0.010, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the data were not normally distributed. However, the post-test scores yielded a Shapiro-Wilk value of 0.956 with a p-value of 0.113, which is greater than 0.05, suggesting that the post-test scores were normally distributed.

3.3 Homogeneity of test

To find out if the samples in each class were of the same variety, the researcher used the homogeneity test. The homogeneity test is described as follows:

- a) A homogeneity result of pre-test Tongue Twister in controlled and experimental group.

Table.3 pre-test experiment and control class

ANOVA - Speaking					
Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Kelas	14059.544	1	14059.544	127.437	< .001
Residuals	8495.064	77	110.326		

The result shows p value<0.001. it means there is no difference significant of the scoring of pre-test both 8th G (experiment class) and 8th E (control class). But it will be examined from the assumption check by using levene's. Checks for Assumptions is;

Table .4 variances of the experimental and control groups

Test for Equality of Variances (Levene's)			
F	df1	df2	p
13.439	1.000	77.000	< .001

To examine whether the variances of the experimental and control groups were homogeneous during the pre-test phase, the researcher conducted a Levene's Test for Equality of Variances. The result showed an F-value of 13.439 with a p-value < 0.001. Since the p-value was below the 0.05 significance threshold, it indicates that the variances between the two groups were not

homogeneous. In other words, there was a significant difference in the variance of students' pre-test scores between the experimental and control groups.

- b) The homogeneity resulted post-test Speaking Test in controlled and experimental group

Table 5. Tongue Twister

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Kelas	20360.439	1	20360.439	176.241	< .001
Residuals	8895.535	77	115.526		

the homogeneity of variance was assessed for the post-test scores using ANOVA. The results indicated a significant difference between the two groups, with an F-value of 176.241 and a p-value less than 0.001. This finding also suggests a lack of homogeneity in the variances of the post-test scores. As a result, the researcher continued to apply non-parametric tests, such as the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test, to maintain the accuracy and validity of the statistical conclusions.

3.4 Hypothesis Test

The formulation utilized the pre- and post-test score of experimental class to measure the data. Following this outcome is shown in the table below:

Table .6

The Post-test (Tongue Twister) As Experiment and Control Class of Independent Sample Test

One Sample T-test						
Test	Statistic	df	p	Location Difference	Effect Size	SE Effect Size
Tongue Twister	Student	0.052	78	0.958	0.114	0.006
	Wilcoxon	1605.500	0.903	0.500	0.016	0.129

The result showed that there is significant difference in the average of post-test score $p=0.958$. Cause there is significant difference in Shapiro-Wilk test, so researcher used non-parametric statistic (Wilcoxon's Signed-rank) to examine median of tongue twister scores.

The result of Wilcoxon's Signed-rank showed that the median of tongue twister scores is different from 66, $p=0.903$.

The testing hypothesis is conducted in order to determine if it is accepted or rejected. Assuming that the H_a is accepted if observed $> r_{table}$, the hypothesis is tested. The t-test is used in this study to calculate scores for the degree of freedom 79 ($df = N-2$) at the significant 0.05 level, with a critical value of 0.2213. Consequently, $r_{table} = 0.02213$ is evident.

After the scores were calculated, it was discovered that in this study, $r_{observed}$ is higher than r_{table} . It can be understood in this way:

$r_{\text{observed}} > r_{\text{table}} (\alpha = 0.05)$ with df 79, $0.958 > 0.2213$.

The results above indicate that the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. It implies that employing tongue twisters to teach pronunciation and speaking has an impact on students' speaking and pronunciation ability.

4. Discussion

Normality and homogeneity tests were performed to ensure the appropriateness of statistical procedures. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to assess the normality of the pre-test and post-test scores for both the experimental and control groups. The results indicated that the experimental group's pre-test ($p = 0.478$) and post-test ($p = 0.765$) scores were normally distributed. Meanwhile, in the control group, the post-test scores were also normally distributed ($p = 0.113$), but the pre-test scores were not normally distributed ($p = 0.010$). Based on these findings, the researcher determined that not all data met the assumption of normality, necessitating the use of non-parametric tests for inferential analysis.

Furthermore, the homogeneity of variances between the experimental and control groups was tested using Levene's Test. The result for the pre-test scores showed an F-value of 13.439 with a p-value < 0.001 , indicating that the data were not homogeneous. Similarly, the post-test scores yielded an F-value of 176.241 and a p-value < 0.001 , confirming that the data for both groups lacked homogeneity.

In light of the non-normal distribution in the control group's pre-test and the violation of homogeneity, the researcher employed non-parametric statistical analysis to examine the effectiveness of the tongue twister technique. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test was used to analyze the difference between the experimental and control groups' post-test results. The test results revealed that the observed significance level was 0.958, which is greater than the 0.05 threshold, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. This indicates that the tongue twister technique significantly influenced students' speaking and pronunciation performance.

According to the findings of data analysis that the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. It implies that teaching pronunciation and speaking to pupils using tongue twisters has an impact on their pronunciation and speaking. There was a significant difference in speaking achievement between students who were taught using tongue twister and those who were not. Since they have been given a treatment, they can improve their speaking ability. For the significant difference between class scores indicates that the tongue twister technique has a measurable impact on students' speaking ability.

This finding aligns with previous research conducted by Cahyani and Panjaitan (2020), who demonstrated that the use of tongue twisters significantly improved students' pronunciation mastery. Their study found that repetitive practice with phonologically challenging sentences helped learners become more aware of articulation patterns and reduced common pronunciation errors. Likewise, Gilakjani (2016) emphasized that focused pronunciation instruction using repetitive drills—such as tongue twisters—can improve learners' auditory discrimination and production of target sounds, supporting the effectiveness observed in the current study.

The results are also consistent with the findings of Thamrin et al. (2023), who reported that students in an Indonesian university setting improved their vowel pronunciation and developed greater motivation in speaking activities after receiving tongue twister-based instruction. Similarly, Sugiharto et al. (2022) highlighted that tongue twister exercises were effective in reducing students' anxiety and increasing their oral confidence in class. The present study strengthens these previous findings by extending them to a different educational context—namely

junior secondary school students in a pesantren-based setting—thus confirming the external validity of tongue twister implementation across different age groups and institutional types.

Furthermore, the results corroborate the idea that pronunciation-focused techniques can contribute significantly to overall speaking development. According to Thornbury (2005) and Yates (2002), poor pronunciation often hinders communicative clarity and self-confidence, while targeted pronunciation training can facilitate better fluency and intelligibility. The observed improvement in the experimental group supports this theoretical stance, as students became more comfortable with producing English sounds accurately and fluently.

On the other hand, while most previous research supports the efficacy of tongue twisters, some studies caution against their overuse or isolated implementation. For instance, Derwing and Munro (2015) noted that while pronunciation drills may improve segmental accuracy, they should be integrated with communicative tasks to ensure transfer to real-life speaking situations. The current study did not assess long-term retention or transferability, and thus cannot fully address this concern. Nevertheless, within the duration and scope of the intervention, tongue twisters proved effective in improving learners' oral performance.

In light of these findings, it is evident that tongue twisters can be an effective supplementary tool in EFL classrooms to enhance pronunciation and speaking ability. They are particularly beneficial in settings where students have limited exposure to English or where traditional instruction is less interactive. The improvement seen in students' scores and their increased enthusiasm during the treatment phase suggest that tongue twisters also contribute to learner engagement and motivation, which are crucial factors in successful language acquisition.

However, this study has its limitations. It focused on short-term outcomes and did not examine how well the students retained the pronunciation improvements over time. Moreover, the study used only a reading-aloud format for assessment, which may not fully represent students' spontaneous speaking skills. Future research could explore the long-term effectiveness, transferability to free speaking contexts, and comparative impact of different pronunciation techniques, including tongue twisters, minimal pairs, and phonetic transcription training.

5. Conclusion

It can be concluded, based on the findings in the previous chapter, the tongue twister has a major impact on eighth-grade students at SMP Nurul Abror Al-Robbaniyyin Alasbuluh's speaking skills and pronunciation. As may be seen from the data in the statistical hypothesis of meaning level 5%, r_{observed} (0.958) was higher than r_{table} (0.2213). It means that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected. Furthermore, it can be pointed out that the tongue twister technique has a beneficial impact on students' speaking ability and pronunciation at eighth-grade class of SMP NAA, Alasbuluh-Banyuwangi.

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