



USING WEREWOLF GAME TO TEACH SPEAKING TO THE ELEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS' OF SMK MUHAMMADIYAH 2 PALEMBANG

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of the Werewolf Game as a pedagogical technique for improving the speaking proficiency of eleventh-grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang. The research examined whether integrating the Werewolf Game into classroom activities could produce measurable gains in learners' oral English performance. The primary aim was to assess the extent to which the game influenced students' speaking outcomes. A quantitative method with a true experimental design was employed, involving two groups: an experimental group and a control group. Students' speaking abilities were evaluated through pre-tests and post-tests, emphasizing key aspects such as pronunciation, lexical mastery, syntactic accuracy, and interactive competence. The data were subjected to normality and homogeneity testing, followed by independent samples t-tests. The results demonstrated a statistically significant enhancement in the speaking skills of students exposed to the Werewolf Game compared with those in the control group, as indicated by p-values of 0.008 and 0.014. These findings affirm that the Werewolf Game serves as an effective and engaging medium for developing oral communication skills. It promotes active involvement, boosts learners' confidence, and creates an enjoyable learning environment, thereby positioning it as a valuable instructional strategy for teaching speaking in English language classrooms.

Keywords: *Werewolf Game, Speaking Skills, English Language Teaching, Game-Based Learning, Experimental Research*

1. INTRODUCTION

At SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang, effective English communication skills are becoming increasingly essential as students prepare to enter the professional world. Brown (as cited in Firmansyah, 2019) asserts that speaking activities in instructional settings are designed to enable learners to convey ideas, articulate opinions, and engage in direct communication. Mastery of speaking skills constitutes a fundamental component of foreign language learning because English operates not only as a means of global communication but also as a gateway to international knowledge, cultural

exchange, and employment prospects. Despite this importance, many students encounter obstacles in developing oral proficiency, largely due to insufficient opportunities to practice in dynamic and supportive learning environments (Jaya et al., 2025; Mahesti et al., 2025; Saptiany & Prabowo, 2024).

Game-based learning methods such as the Werewolf Game and collaborative techniques have been shown to substantially enhance students' speaking performance. Uzer (2023) highlights that small-group discussions foster interactive learning spaces that enable students to exchange ideas,

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express opinions, and support peers without fear of criticism, thereby cultivating active engagement and a secure setting for practicing oral communication. Similarly, research by Uzer and Hidayad (2022) demonstrates that role-play activities augmented with multimedia resources improve learners' pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency, while simultaneously strengthening their confidence and motivation by allowing creative self-expression within simulated real-life scenarios.

The integration of games into language instruction consistently shows positive outcomes. Widiastuti (2022) affirms that educational games increase learners' motivation and contribute to a more interactive classroom climate. Likewise, Putri (2020) reports that interactive multimedia enhances speaking development among young learners by providing stimulating and communicative learning experiences. By incorporating the Werewolf Game into English teaching, educators offer students an enjoyable and supportive platform for practicing spoken communication. Such game-based interactions not only elevate students' speaking abilities but also reinforce confidence and essential social competencies (Ketelhut & Schifter, 2023; Israel-Fishelson & HersHKovitz, 2020; Agustiani et al., 2024). Thus, this study sought to evaluate the effectiveness of the Werewolf Game in improving the speaking proficiency of eleventh-grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang and to explore the broader role of games as pedagogical tools in English language instruction.

As an institution implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang faces the challenge of engaging students through more varied instructional media. Interviews with English teachers indicated that numerous students struggled to speak English due to the predominance of traditional resources such as textbooks, which often render learning monotonous.

Textbook-based instruction also poses difficulties for learners with weak pronunciation skills. Consequently, students require instructors who can serve as collaborators in enhancing their speaking performance. Games play a critical role in language education by stimulating interest, motivation, and emotional engagement, thereby making students more attentive and invested in the learning process (Wulandari, 2020; Rosyidah et al., 2023).

Previous studies reinforce the potential of such games. Research by Angelina (2024), titled *Using Werewolf Game to Improve Students' Speaking Skill at the Second Grade of SMPN 33 Padang*, found that the Werewolf Game positively influenced students' speaking competence. The game provided an engaging platform that strengthened verbal communication, public speaking, critical thinking, active listening, negotiation, persuasion, and vocabulary development. These skill sets collectively enrich language learning and foster effective communicative abilities.

Similarly, Adhiyati (2019), in her work *Using Werewolf Games to Teach Speaking to High School Students*, underscores the importance of selecting appropriate teaching strategies and understanding their practical implementation. She stresses that teachers must be adequately prepared and equipped with relevant materials to facilitate the game successfully. Her findings suggest that the Werewolf Game is particularly suitable for teaching speaking functions such as giving advice, expressing hopes, and practicing conditional sentences.

Researcher observations at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang revealed that several eleventh-grade students struggled with English speaking, especially regarding pronunciation and vocabulary. Mispronunciation frequently led to misunderstandings and diminished confidence. Limited vocabulary further impeded their ability to express ideas fluently,

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negatively affecting their overall speaking performance. English teachers noted that the reliance on conventional textbooks often reduced students' interest and motivation to practice speaking. These issues prompted the researcher to investigate whether the Werewolf Game could serve as an effective method for improving students' speaking abilities. It is anticipated that this study will contribute to the advancement of game-based learning as a beneficial instructional model for enhancing the English-speaking skills of eleventh graders at the school. Through structured gameplay and interactive communication, the Werewolf Game has the potential to support meaningful and enjoyable development of oral proficiency.

This study examined the influence of the Werewolf Game on students' speaking ability within a clearly defined scope. The participants were restricted to eleventh-grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other grade levels or institutions. The investigation focused exclusively on speaking skills, particularly students' capacity to participate in interactive speaking tasks during the game, while other language components listening, reading, and writing were not addressed. The research also centered solely on the Werewolf Game and did not compare it with alternative teaching strategies or instructional media. The evaluation relied on observations of student performance and feedback collected following the game activities. Variables such as motivation or attitudinal shifts were outside the study's parameters.

Based on the preceding background, the research question was formulated as follows:

“Does the implementation of the Werewolf Game enhance the speaking skills of eleventh-grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang?”

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the use of the Werewolf Game could improve the English-speaking

abilities of eleventh-grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang.

This study is expected to yield several contributions. For students, it aims to create a more enjoyable learning environment that encourages relaxed and confident speaking practice. For teachers, the research provides an innovative instructional alternative that promotes active learner participation. For the school, the findings may inform improvements to the English program by incorporating more engaging teaching methods. Finally, for future researchers, this study may serve as a valuable reference for further exploration of game-based learning within language education, particularly regarding how the Werewolf Game can foster improved language proficiency.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking is the act of conveying feelings, thoughts, ideas, or concepts through articulated language. Brown describes speaking as a productive skill that integrates linguistic competence, cognitive organization, and the ability to convey messages effectively across diverse communicative settings. Harmer underscores speaking as a fundamental component of language acquisition, involving the production of sounds, the formation of sentences, and the delivery of meaning through both verbal and non-verbal cues. In parallel, Nunan emphasizes the centrality of conversation, opinion-sharing, and comprehension in speaking—elements closely tied to communicative competence. Richards likewise argues that engaging in spoken interaction requires learners to attend simultaneously to multiple communicative dimensions. Collectively, these perspectives demonstrate that speaking is a multidimensional skill

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requiring ongoing practice, balanced attention to fluency and accuracy, and real-time engagement with interlocutors.

Speaking manifests in various forms within the classroom context. Brown distinguishes two principal types of spoken discourse: monologues and dialogues. Monologues occur when a speaker delivers extended, uninterrupted speech such as in presentations or lectures. Dialogues, by contrast, involve reciprocal interaction among two or more speakers and comprise transactional exchanges, which focus on the transfer of information, and interactional exchanges, which function to sustain social relationships. Brown further categorizes speaking tasks into imitative, intensive, responsive, interactive, and extensive activities. Imitative tasks require learners to repeat words or phrases without comprehension, while intensive tasks emphasize controlled linguistic practice. Responsive activities involve short exchanges, interactive tasks consist of multi-turn conversations, and extensive speaking includes longer oral performances, such as speeches. These distinctions highlight the range of communicative purposes and structural patterns that speaking instruction must address.

The teaching of speaking, therefore, should develop learners' ability to express themselves effectively while adhering to social and cultural norms of communication. Richards notes that successful speaking instruction cultivates real-time communicative competence through a deliberate balance of fluency and accuracy. Harmer advocates for embedding speaking tasks in authentic contexts to create meaningful

communicative opportunities. Thornbury further argues that speaking is inherently interactive, requiring rapid cognitive processing and instantaneous feedback. Thus, teaching speaking extends beyond mere linguistic drills; it involves preparing learners to navigate real-life communication with confidence and adaptability.

According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2019), spoken language fulfills multiple functions such as informing, persuading, requesting, and entertaining each of which should be reflected in instructional tasks. He further classifies speaking functions into interaction (social bonding), transaction (message-focused communication), and performance (public speaking). These functions offer varied avenues for cultivating learners' communicative competence within classroom practice.

The incorporation of games in language teaching has been widely acknowledged as an effective means of enhancing learner engagement. Vahdat notes that games lower anxiety levels and foster language use in a relaxed environment. Cambridge views games as natural, creative platforms for interaction, while Gee highlights their value in contextualizing language use and encouraging problem-solving. Rixon adds that games enable learners to overcome fear and hesitation, facilitating playful experimentation with language. Hadfield concludes that games support the development of fluency and confidence through spontaneous language production. Collectively, these viewpoints suggest that games offer substantial pedagogical advantages in the language classroom.

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The Werewolf Game, in particular, offers distinct benefits for the development of speaking skills. It promotes verbal expression, critical reasoning, collaboration, and creativity. Implementing the game typically involves three phases: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. In the preparation phase, teachers explain the rules, prepare role cards, and introduce key vocabulary. During implementation, students assume roles such as Werewolf, Seer, Guardian, or Villager and participate in discussions, accusations, and voting, providing rich opportunities for practicing fluency, argumentative skills, and social communication. The evaluation phase includes reflection, discussion, and feedback, allowing teachers to assess learners' fluency, accuracy, vocabulary use, and overall participation.

Migdal classifies the Werewolf Game as a communicative game, a discussion task, and a form of role-play all of which are conducive to speaking development. The game, also known as Mafia or Detective Game, has applications in communication studies and psychology. Xiong explains that the game requires players to engage in deductive reasoning and interactive decision-making, becoming more complex as the number of participants increases. The roles include a Moderator who guides the narrative, Werewolves who eliminate others, a Seer who identifies threats, a Guardian who protects players, and Villagers who collaborate to reveal the Werewolves. Gameplay alternates between night which involves secret role actions and day, during which open discussion and voting

occur. This structure encourages reasoned argumentation, persuasive communication, strategic thinking, and spontaneous speech production. The game concludes either when all Werewolves are eliminated or when they outnumber the villagers.

Earlier studies have documented the effectiveness of the Werewolf Game in language learning contexts. Adhiyati's study with high school students demonstrated that the game can successfully support the development of speaking skills. Angelina's pre-experimental study at SMPN 33 Padang revealed notable gains in students' speaking performance after participation in the game. Similarly, Naila's research at SMA Islam Sultan Agung 1 Semarang showed significant improvements between pre-test and post-test speaking scores. Although these studies share methodological similarities, the present research employs a true experimental design and focuses on vocational high school learners, thus offering fresh insights into the game's instructional potential across different educational settings.

The conceptual framework of this study is grounded in the connection between students' speaking challenges and the potential benefits of the Werewolf Game. Communication is an essential human activity, and speaking is its most immediate form. Many students at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang experience difficulty speaking English due to uninspiring instructional approaches and limited opportunities for practice. Like playing an instrument or driving a car, speaking requires continual practice, yet students often lack sustained

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engagement in traditional classes. By integrating the Werewolf Game, learners can participate in interactive, communicative tasks in a fun and supportive environment, which may improve their confidence, fluency, and motivation. This conceptual framework thus posits that a game-based, interactive approach can address key speaking challenges faced by students.

The study is guided by a hypothesis framework consisting of both a null and alternative hypothesis. The null hypothesis asserts that the Werewolf Game has no effect on the speaking ability of eleventh-grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang. Conversely, the alternative hypothesis posits that the use of the Werewolf Game leads to measurable improvements in students' speaking skills. This hypothesis structure provides the analytical foundation for evaluating the effectiveness of the game-based instructional approach.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Method and Purpose

This study adopted a quantitative experimental design to assess the effectiveness of the Werewolf Game in enhancing vocational high school students' English-speaking proficiency. The investigation focused on whether the game could produce measurable improvements in pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence construction, and interaction (Sugiyono, 2021; Neuman, 2019).

3.2 Variables of the Study

- Independent Variable: Implementation of the Werewolf Game as an instructional technique.
- Dependent Variable:

Students' speaking ability, assessed through pronunciation, vocabulary range, structural accuracy, and interactive competence. These indicators were selected because speaking is widely regarded as one of the most demanding language skills.

3.3 Research Site and Duration

The study was carried out at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang, located on Jalan A. Yani, Silaberanti, Seberang Ulu I. It spanned three weeks, from April 21 to May 9, 2025.

3.4 Population and Sample

From a population of 199 eleventh-grade students, a sample of 54 learners was chosen via convenience sampling.

- Experimental Group: XI DKV 1 (27 students)
- Control Group: XI AKL (27 students)

3.5 Treatment Design

The experimental class engaged in structured Werewolf Game sessions designed to stimulate verbal communication in a low-pressure environment. Both groups completed a pre-test and post-test, but the control group continued using conventional textbook-based instruction.

3.6 Instruments for Data Collection

Two main tools were employed:

- Speaking Assessment Rubric: Measured pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence structure, and interaction, with ratings from "very poor" to "very good."
- Oral Tests: Students performed a 2–3-minute self-introduction and hobby description before and after treatment to enable consistent comparison.

3.7 Instrument Validation and Reliability

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Content validity was confirmed through expert consultation with English teachers at the school. A pilot test demonstrated the instrument's effectiveness. Inter-rater reliability determined using SPSS 25 and Cronbach's Alpha yielded a coefficient of 0.994, indicating exceptionally high reliability.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were used to summarize results. To test the effectiveness of the intervention, the researcher conducted:

- Normality and homogeneity tests
- An independent samples t-test to compare both groups' post-test performance

3.9 Hypothesis Testing

Using a significance level of **0.05**, the hypotheses were:

- H_0 : The Werewolf Game does not improve students' speaking skills.
- H_1 : The Werewolf Game improves students' speaking skills.

With 54 participants and a two-tailed t-table value of 1.671, the null hypothesis would be rejected if: the calculated t-value exceeded 1.671, and the p-value was below 0.05. This outcome would indicate that the Werewolf Game had a statistically significant effect on students' speaking performance.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the research findings along with their interpretation based on the statistical analyses conducted. The study was carried out at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang from April 21 to May 9, 2025, involving two groups: the experimental class (XI DKV 1) and the control class (XI AKL). Students' speaking proficiency was

measured through pre-tests and post-tests, and each assessment was evaluated by two independent raters—an English teacher and the researcher. The results showed that both groups experienced some degree of improvement; however, the gains in the experimental group, which received instruction through the Werewolf Game, were notably larger than those observed in the control group. This trend was consistently reflected in the post-test scores evaluated by both raters.

To determine whether these improvements were statistically significant, normality tests were conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk procedures. Across all datasets—including pre-test and post-test results for both the experimental and control groups—the significance values exceeded 0.05. These outcomes verified that the data were normally distributed, thus validating the use of parametric statistical procedures.

A homogeneity test using Levene's method was also performed to assess whether the two groups had equal variances. The significance values obtained 0.182 for Rater 1 and 0.113 for Rater 2 confirmed that the assumption of homogeneity was met. Consequently, an independent samples t-test was administered to compare the post-test results of both groups. The analysis revealed significant differences between the groups' performance. Rater 1 reported a t-value of -2.771 with a p-value of 0.008 and a mean score difference of 2.09 in favor of the experimental group. Similarly, Rater 2 recorded a t-value of -2.535 with a p-value of 0.014, demonstrating a mean difference of 1.63 points. These statistical outcomes

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indicate that the Werewolf Game intervention had a measurable and positive effect on students' speaking proficiency.

The results provide strong empirical support for the hypothesis that the use of the Werewolf Game enhances speaking skills among eleventh-grade learners. These findings are in line with previous research, such as the study by Naila (2024), which documented a substantial 28.44-point increase in speaking scores following the implementation of the Werewolf Game, accompanied by a highly significant p-value of 0.000. Such consistency across studies reinforces the argument that game-based learning can be a powerful pedagogical tool for improving oral communication abilities.

The results also resonate with Migdal's Theory, which emphasizes the importance of learner agency, interaction, and structured participation within learning environments. The Werewolf Game, by design, invites students to take active roles, negotiate meaning, exchange information, and construct arguments within a dynamic, collaborative setting. This high level of engagement strengthens learners' communicative competence through authentic interaction. The alignment of the present findings with Migdal's theoretical framework underscores the value of interactive, student-centered learning models. It suggests that structured role-play and game-based activities not only enhance motivation but also create meaningful contexts for language use, contributing to significant improvements in students' speaking performance.

In sum, the statistical evidence, supported by theory and previous

empirical studies, confirms that the Werewolf Game is an effective instructional strategy for developing speaking skills in an engaging, participatory, and communicatively rich environment.

5. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the Werewolf Game is an effective instructional strategy for enhancing the speaking skills of eleventh-grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Palembang. The experimental group demonstrated significantly greater improvement than the control group, particularly in pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence structure, and interaction, confirming that game-based learning fosters a more communicative, engaging, and supportive environment for oral language development. These results also align with Migdal's theory, which emphasizes the importance of learner agency and interactive participation in achieving meaningful learning outcomes. Future research should consider employing longitudinal or mixed-methods designs to examine long-term skill development, expanding the sample to include students from various schools or educational levels, and comparing the effectiveness of different types of games, both digital and non-digital. Further studies may also explore affective factors such as motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence, as well as conduct deeper analyses of student interaction during gameplay to better understand how communicative competence is constructed within game-based learning contexts.

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