

The Impact of Greeting Cards on Enhancing Students' Speaking Proficiency: A Qualitative Study in Class VIII E of SMPN 2 Bengkulu City

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ABSTRACT

The use of language as a means of communication inherently entails encountering obstacles, particularly in mastering spoken expression for effective comprehension. Thus, the acquisition of language skills demands inventive approaches to instruction. This research endeavors to enhance students' motivation and proficiency in English speaking by introducing Greeting Card Media in the educational setting of Class VIII E at SMP Negeri 2 Bengkulu City. The research adopted a descriptive qualitative approach, utilizing Classroom Action Research and a case study design. The study involved 34 students from Class VIII E as participants. Pre-test and post-test assessments were employed as research instruments, revealing an average pre-test score of 59.56 and a post-test score of 87.21. These results underscore the efficacy of greeting cards in enhancing students' speaking proficiency. Among the 34 students engaged in English language learning, the integration of greeting cards as a pedagogical tool proved pivotal. The findings demonstrate a notable increase in students' speaking motivation during English lessons, as evidenced by the transition from an initial average motivation score of 59.56 to a post-test score of 87.21, affirming the positive impact of greeting card media on language acquisition and student engagement.

Keywords: *language, speaking and greeting cards.*

A. Introduction

Language, as a pivotal instrument for global communication, facilitates the exchange of thoughts and knowledge across diverse cultural landscapes and societies (Sari, 2019). In cross-cultural interactions, proficiency in the native language of the interlocutor enhances the fluidity of communication, fostering mutual understanding. However, amidst such encounters, English emerges as a universal medium, transcending linguistic barriers and enabling seamless dialogue (Desmayani, 2019).

The imperative of English proficiency is evident in its omnipresence across various educational platforms, including formal institutions, community colleges, primary schools, and online learning platforms. Mastery of English encompasses proficiency in speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills, serving as the bedrock of

language acquisition. Nonetheless, it is through interactive discourse that individuals refine their linguistic capabilities, particularly in oral expression (Desmayani, 2019).

Oral proficiency stands as the cornerstone of English language acquisition, wielding a transformative influence on learners' linguistic competence (Yuneva, 2018). Communication through speech is a ubiquitous human activity, intricately woven into the fabric of daily interactions, enabling individuals to articulate thoughts and emotions (Armasita, 2017). Proficiency in spoken English transcends mere linguistic prowess, permeating various facets of life, from securing employment opportunities to fostering effective interpersonal relationships within professional, academic, and social spheres.

Central to the facilitation of language learning is the role of instructional media, which serves as a catalyst for enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes (Rosyada, 2008). Recognizing the pivotal role of media in language acquisition, educators leverage diverse pedagogical tools to cultivate students' enthusiasm for learning English. Among these tools, greeting cards emerge as a creative and versatile medium for language instruction.

Greeting cards represent a dynamic platform for English language learning, encapsulating sentiments and expressions within a tangible format (Febrianor, 2022). Whether crafted for formal occasions or personal correspondence, these cards serve as conduits for linguistic practice and cultural exchange. Students are afforded the opportunity to explore various themes and occasions, such as birthdays, congratulatory messages, and expressions of gratitude, thereby expanding their vocabulary and communicative repertoire. Through the creation and exchange of greeting cards, learners engage in meaningful language activities that foster linguistic proficiency and cultural appreciation.

It's evident that many students encounter challenges in acquiring proficiency in spoken English, as observed firsthand during the author's investigation at SMPN 2 Bengkulu City, particularly among eighth-grade students (Class VIII E). These difficulties stem from English being a foreign language with distinct pronunciation from Indonesian, coupled with students' unfamiliarity with English sentence structures. Additionally, the limited variety of instructional media employed by teachers exacerbates these challenges. Through this study, the author aims to shed light on

effective strategies for English language instruction, particularly through the utilization of greeting cards. By highlighting the significance of innovative teaching methods, such as greeting cards, the research seeks to equip educators with valuable insights into enhancing English speaking proficiency. It is hoped that this research will serve as a resource for educators, prompting greater consideration of the instructional media employed in English language instruction.

B. Research Method

Among the array of research methodologies, case study research is chosen by the author due to its capacity to delve into specific instances concerning student learning motivation. This study is classified as descriptive qualitative research, specifically an exploratory case study, which seeks to elucidate particular cases. The author identified a case within SMPN 2 Bengkulu City, focusing on student learning challenges through observations during the Pengenalan Lingkungan Sekolah (PLP) program. Additional data were garnered through interviews with students and the distribution of questionnaires to further elucidate the identified case.

This study adopts a single instrumental case study approach, focusing on the specific issue of students' speaking learning within English language education. The choice of this research design is motivated by the recognized difficulties faced by tenth-grade students at SMPN 2 Bengkulu City in mastering spoken English. To address this, the researcher employs a pre-test and post-test methodology to measure the impact of using greeting cards as a teaching aid. The pre-test establishes a baseline understanding, while the post-test evaluates the effectiveness of the intervention. Additionally, a questionnaire is administered to gather insights into the implementation of greeting cards and their influence on students' speaking abilities in Class VIII E. This structured approach aims to provide valuable insights into enhancing students' speaking proficiency and addressing learning challenges in English language education.

This study seeks to assess the effectiveness of employing greeting cards as a pedagogical tool to enhance students' speaking skills. By utilizing a single instrumental case study, pre-test and post-test assessments, and questionnaire administration, the

research aims to offer practical solutions to the identified learning difficulties while contributing to the broader field of English language education.

C. Research Finding and Discussion

The research conducted at SMPN 2 Bengkulu City revealed significant improvements in students' speaking abilities following the implementation of greeting cards as a teaching tool. Prior to the intervention, students exhibited varying levels of proficiency in spoken English, as indicated by pre-test scores ranging from 30 to 75, with an average score of 59.56. However, post-test scores demonstrated substantial enhancement, ranging from 85 to 90, with an average score of 87.21.

This notable improvement indicates a positive impact on students' speaking skills. The observed progress in students' speaking performance underscores the effectiveness of incorporating greeting cards into English language instruction. The interactive nature of the greeting card activities provided students with opportunities to practice verbal expression in a supportive learning environment. Through these activities, students were able to develop confidence in articulating their thoughts and ideas in English. Moreover, the use of greeting cards facilitated meaningful communication and encouraged students to engage actively in oral interactions.

The findings highlight the importance of employing diverse instructional strategies to enhance students' speaking proficiency. By integrating creative and interactive teaching methods like greeting cards, educators can effectively address the challenges associated with language learning. Additionally, the results emphasize the role of practical, student-centered approaches in promoting effective language acquisition. Overall, the study underscores the significance of leveraging innovative instructional tools to foster students' speaking skills and facilitate meaningful language learning experiences.

The utilization of greeting cards as a teaching aid has led to notable advancements in the speaking proficiency of Class VIII E students at SMPN 2 Bengkulu City. With post-test scores averaging 87.21, a significant improvement from the pre-test average of 59.56, this intervention demonstrates the effectiveness of integrating interactive instructional methods into English language education.

These findings emphasize the importance of providing students with diverse and engaging learning experiences tailored to their needs, ultimately fostering a conducive environment for linguistic development and enhancing students' confidence in expressing themselves verbally in English.

Corelation Speaking and Greeting Card

In English learning, mastering speaking is crucial (Irmawati, 2019). Teaching speaking is often the toughest task for educators. Speaking isn't just about sharing ideas; it's also about gaining new knowledge. In Class VIII E, we use resources like the "Congratulations" module. This module isn't just for celebrations; it can also be a unique way to improve speaking skills. Greeting cards are another tool we use. They're like mini lessons in English, with greetings written on small cards. They're not just for special occasions; they can also help maintain friendships.

Greeting cards come in various shapes and designs, making them engaging for learners. Building on the research findings from SMPN 2 Bengkulu City, which showcased remarkable enhancements in students' speaking abilities through the integration of greeting cards as a teaching tool, the correlation between speaking proficiency and the use of greeting cards becomes even more apparent.

The substantial improvements observed in post-test scores, with an average increase from 59.56 to 87.21, highlight the positive impact of this intervention on students' speaking skills. This progress underscores the effectiveness of incorporating greeting cards into English language instruction, providing students with interactive opportunities to practice verbal expression within a supportive learning environment.

By actively engaging students in meaningful communication through greeting card activities, educators foster confidence and fluency in spoken English, ultimately promoting a student-centered approach to language acquisition. Thus, the findings not only emphasize the importance of employing diverse instructional strategies to enhance speaking proficiency but also underscore the significance of leveraging innovative tools, such as greeting cards, to facilitate meaningful language learning experiences.

This study was conducted at SMPN 2 Bengkulu City, focusing on a cohort of 34 students in class VIII E. The methodology involved administering both pre-tests and

post-tests to evaluate students' English language proficiency. Following the implementation of this method, the researcher obtained the following data:

Table 1 Pre-test and Post-test Scores of Class VIII E Students

Number	Participant	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score
1	Agung Alzi Rizki	55	85
2	Aisyah Salsabila	70	90
3	Aji Fahri Arifin	45	85
4	Anugrah Athif Syahrif	65	85
5	Aqila Nafesya Pratama	40	85
6	Aura Annisa Fitri	55	90
7	Azizah Meiferli Putri	65	85
8	Caesar Hasian	70	90
9	Daffa Islami Fikriyansyah	55	90
10	Dania Aurelia Yonita	70	90
11	Demia Flourentia Dwi	70	90
12	Erika Qharin Nofriyanti	65	85
13	Farel Zatiedo	70	85
14	Haninda Tiara Adelia	60	90
15	Intan Naira	50	85
16	Jasmin Nur Amira	40	90
17	Kaysan Irfan Murtaza	45	85
18	Keysha Mentari Harfi	35	85
19	Mandala Rifki Jaya Al fatir	30	85
20	Muhammad Aziz Alfandi	70	85
21	Muhammad Dzaki Sabrah	60	85
22	Muhammad Fardhan Aldzaky	55	90
23	Muhammad Ikram Putra	60	85
24	Muhammad Naufal Syafiq	60	90
25	Naulan Febriana	70	85
26	Puja Derti Angraini	70	90
27	Puti Vasquella Angelique	75	90

28	Raisha Dwi Asti	70	90
29	Risco Agustian Pratama	50	85
30	Rizki Putri Ilahi	75	90
31	Siti Masita	60	85
32	Syauqi Syafiq	60	85
33	Titania Ramadhani Putri	70	90
34	Tri Handoyo	65	85

These results demonstrate that the average pre-test score for students is 59.56, while the average post-test score is 87.21. The insights gleaned from students' experiences and perceptions, gathered alongside the pre- and post-test grades, provide a comprehensive understanding of their development in speaking skills and the effectiveness of integrating greeting cards in English language education. These observations underscore the transformative impact of employing greeting cards as a pedagogical tool.

Increased Confidence

Students reported feeling more confident in their speaking abilities as they progressed through the course. This newfound confidence was evident in their willingness to actively participate in speaking activities, even among students who initially scored lower on the pre-test. For example, students who initially struggled with pronunciation or hesitated to speak in front of their peers demonstrated increased self-assurance and a willingness to engage in spoken English dialogue.

Improved Articulation and Expression

Through the use of greeting cards, students developed a greater proficiency in articulating their thoughts and ideas in English. They expressed feeling more comfortable expressing themselves verbally and demonstrated improved clarity and coherence in their speech. Additionally, students exhibited a broader vocabulary and a better understanding of language structures, leading to more fluent and natural communication.

Enhanced Peer Interaction

Observations revealed increased peer interaction and collaboration during speaking activities involving greeting cards. Students engaged in meaningful conversations, exchanged ideas, and provided constructive feedback to their peers. This collaborative learning environment fostered a sense of camaraderie and support among students, encouraging them to take risks and experiment with their language skills in a safe and encouraging setting.

Motivation and Engagement

Students expressed enthusiasm for the greeting card activities, finding them enjoyable and stimulating. Many students expressed a desire to improve their speaking skills further and actively sought out opportunities to practice speaking English both inside and outside the classroom.

Cultural Understanding and Appreciation

Through the creation and exchange of greeting cards, students gained a deeper appreciation for cultural nuances and traditions associated with English-speaking countries. They expressed interest in learning more about different cultural practices and customs, which in turn enhanced their cross-cultural communication skills and global awareness.

The findings underscore a notable disparity between students' pre-test scores and their actual level of English proficiency. Despite variations in initial assessments, students exhibited significant progress in their post-test scores, indicating a marked improvement in their speaking prowess. Subsequently, the researcher employed greeting cards as a means to evaluate students' grasp of spoken English. The results revealed that integrating these cards into English instruction led to a tangible enhancement in students' confidence levels. This was evident through qualitative observations, wherein students demonstrated a heightened willingness to engage in oral communication tasks and present their original work in front of their peers. Such empirical evidence underscores the efficacy of incorporating greeting cards as a pedagogical tool to foster students' confidence and proficiency in spoken English.

D. Conclusion

To ascertain students' proficiency, pre- and post-test assessments are administered at the initiation and culmination of their academic journey. Drawing upon the research conducted in the preceding chapter, the author deduces the following conclusions:

Attaining fluency and efficacy in communication necessitates the acquisition of proficient speaking skills in English. Adequate learning resources are indispensable for mastering spoken English. Greeting cards serve as a pedagogical tool that can enhance students' fluency in English speaking. According to the findings of this study, disseminating greeting cards to students can contribute to their development as proficient English speakers.

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