# The Effects of Tongue Twisters on Improving Pronunciation Proficiency among Eleventh-Grade Students

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study aims to determine whether the effect of tongue twisters can improve the pronunciation of eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Lembo. A quasi-experimental design was employed with a sample of 64 students selected using random sampling techniques. Random sampling was chosen to reduce bias, produce a representative sample, facilitate statistical analysis, and allow for replicability of the research. Data were collected through writing tests administered twice as pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was given to the experimental group before the treatment, while the post-test was administered afterward. The researcher collected and analyzed the data using the formula proposed by (Cohen et al., 2007) and SPSS 22. The results indicated a significant improvement in the pronunciation scores of the experimental group, with a pre-test average of 51.56 and a post-test average of 77.97. In contrast, the control group showed a smaller improvement. The Mann-Whitney test revealed a significant difference between the two groups (p < 0.05), indicating that innovative teaching methods can enhance students' pronunciation skills. These findings suggest integrating interactive activities into English language teaching, and training for teachers is necessary to implement this method effectively. The study also opens up opportunities for further exploration of other variations of games in teaching pronunciation.*

## 1. Introduction

Pronunciation is an important part of oral communication because it involves how words are pronounced, including the production and articulation of sounds. According to Asilfa (2019), good pronunciation is crucial to effective communication because it ensures clear and accurate understanding of words. Additionally, pronunciation skills affect not only the clarity of the speaker, but also their comfort and confidence when speaking in formal or informal situations (Turumi, 2016; Prihandoko et al., 2021; Ko et al., 2025; Rahman & Weda, 2019). Mispronunciation can cause confusion and misunderstanding and diminish students' confidence in speaking a foreign language.

Students learning English at SMA Negeri 1 Lembo faced significant pronunciation challenges. These difficulties hindered their communication skills and diminished their confidence when speaking a foreign language. Through interviews with the English teacher, the researcher discovered that most students struggled to pronounce English words correctly. Despite the teacher providing various exercises to improve pronunciation, students still struggled with fluency, emphasis, and appropriate intonation. Hakim and Sampurna (2020) identified several factors contributing to these challenges, including inadequate pronunciation training and excessive focus on grammatical structures that often neglect critical pronunciation aspects. Additionally, long, complicated example sentences decreased student interest in practicing, leading to increased stress and reduced motivation to speak English. Therefore, exploring more engaging and effective pronunciation teaching methods was essential.

This study aimed to enhance students' pronunciation using tongue twisters. This technique was not only challenging but also enjoyable, and it was expected to boost students' confidence, making them speak more like native speakers (Azis et al., 2021; Sabila et al., 2025; Suheri et al., 2025). Practicing tongue twisters exposed students to various sounds and pronunciations, enriching their speaking skills. Sugiharto et al., (2022) defined the use of this technique as anticipated to increase student motivation toward learning pronunciation, making the process more interactive and enjoyable. This approach allowed students to learn pronunciation in a more natural way, ultimately improving their communication skills.

Students who had trouble pronouncing words correctly at SMA Negeri 1 Lembo were the main target population for this study. By including this study, the researcher hoped to provide a welcoming and comfortable learning atmosphere that encouraged creativity in their pronunciation. Maghrabi (2013) stated on order to create a successful learning environment, collaboration between instructors and students was important, and teachers played a critical role in directing this process. This study was based on the actual needs that field instructors had discovered, as many students still had trouble pronouncing words correctly even after completing a variety of activities.

Several studies have investigated the effectiveness of tongue twisters in enhancing students' pronunciation skills. Fahruli (2020) found that eighth-grade students using tongue twister videos significantly improved their pronunciation compared to those using audio narratives, with a moderate effect size of 0.30. Cahyani (2020) reported that second-year students at SMA Swasta Melati Binjai showed notable improvements in pronunciation and fluency with the tongue twister method, as evidenced by pre-test and post-test results. Similarly, Husni, Khairita, fadhila (2023) demonstrated significant gains in communication skills among students at SMKN 1 Kota Besar, with pre-test and post-test scores increasing from 37.0 to 55.8. Despite these findings, gaps remain regarding the variety of educational contexts, as most studies focused on different school levels. The current study addresses this by focusing on eleventh-grade students at SMA NEGERI 1 LEMBO, using a quasi-experimental design to specifically explore consonant pronunciation improvement, thereby expanding the understanding of media formats in pronunciation training.

There were many advantages to using tongue twisters in pronunciation exercises. This approach not only made learning fun but also encouraged active pronunciation participation through play (Luviana, 2018). The study contrasted participatory teaching strategies, such as tongue twisters, with conventional approaches, such as writing sentences on the board and providing direct pronunciation training. According to Husni et al., (2023) this method made the learning process challenging and enjoyable by providing ample practice opportunities and enabling students to transition from slow to fast pronunciation. Ultimately, the goal was to boost students' confidence in speaking and their ability to pronounce words correctly (Krenz et al., 2023; Yaumi et al., 2024; Youngsun et al., 2024). Using tongue twisters encouraged more frequent practice, improving speaking skills by actively involving students in a dynamic learning process.

## 2. Methodology

This study used a quasi-experimental design with an experimental group that included pre-test and post-test results. According to Cohen et al. (2007), the design of the study was explained as follows:

Experimental       O1     X     O2

Control               O3     X     O4

**Where:** O1 = Experimental class       O3          = Control group

O2          = Experimental class      O4 = Control group

X                      =Treatment

For this study, the researcher used a random sampling technique and carefully selected cases to include in the sample based on their assessment of representativeness. The researcher chose XI IPA 1 as the experimental group and XI IPA 2 as the control group. The researcher picked the experimental group based on the results of preliminary research. Compared to other classes in the population, the class that became the experimental group still had difficulties with pronunciation.

random sampling method was utilized to select participants. The study involved two intact classes, each receiving different instructional treatments. The experimental group engaged in pronunciation activities using tongue twisters as a media, whereas the control group received instruction through conventional teaching methods.

The study targeted of eleventh grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Lembo during the 2024/2025 academic year, consisting of two classes with a total of 64 students. Using a random sampling technique, two classes were selected: Class XI IPA 1, which included 32 students, was assigned as the experimental group, while Class XI IPA 2, with 32 students, served as the control group. Consequently, the total sample size for this study was 64 students.

In this study, two versions of the test were administered: a pre-test aimed at measuring students' pronunciation skills before the treatment, and a post-test designed to evaluate any improvements in pronunciation after the treatment. The pronunciation test served as the assessment instrument to measure the changes that occurred.

## 3. Result and Discussion

### 3.1 Result

The research examined the students in experimental group before and after the treatment while the students in control group were examined without treatment. After computing the scores, the researcher found some differences between the result of two group. By seeing the result, the researcher can measure that the using of tongue twister's games as the teaching media improved the students' pronunciation at SMA Negeri 1 Lembo.

This section present students' pronunciation scores in the pre-test and post-test, along with the mean and standard deviation. The researcher organized the data into tables and used SPSS 22 to calculate the scores. The classification of students' pronunciation scores in the pre-test and post-test can be in table

**Table1. Descriptive Statistic**

| | N | Range | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-Test Experiment | 32 | 45 | 30 | 75 | 51.56 | 12.979 |
| Post-test Experiment | 32 | 30 | 65 | 95 | 77.97 | 6.940 |
| Pre-test class control | 32 | 40 | 30 | 70 | 45.63 | 9.980 |
| Post-test class control | 32 | 35 | 45 | 80 | 60.47 | 10.346 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 32 | | | | | |

Based on the calculation result on the descriptive analysis presented in the table above, in the experimental group, the lowest pre-test was 30, and the highest score was 75, in the post-test, the lowest score was 65 and the highest was 95. The mean value of the pre-test was 51.56, while the mean value of the post-test was 77.97. In the control group, the lowest pre-test score was 30, and the highest scores was 70. In the post-test, the lowest score was 45 and the highest scores 80. Judging from descriptive statistics, the pre-test and post-test scores. The mean value of the pre-test was 45.63 while the mean value of the post-test was 60.47.

A normality test was conducted on the pre-test and post-test data for both the experimental and control groups. The following table indicates whether the data from the two groups are normally distributed, using the criterion that data is considered normal if the significance value (sig) is greater than 0.05.

**Table 2. The Test of Normality**

| | Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Class | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Pre-test experiment | .114 | 32 | .200* | .948 | 32 | .122 |
| Post-test experiment | .146 | 32 | .079 | .952 | 32 | .168 |
| Pre-test class control | .139 | 32 | .121 | .936 | 32 | .059 |
| Post-test class control | .139 | 32 | .120 | .936 | 32 | .058 |

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on the result of calculations using SPPS 22, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed. With Kolmogorov Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk sig values > 0.05. Because the data in this research were normally distributed, the research continued using non parametric statistics.

After confirming that the data were normally distributed, the Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare the pronunciation outcomes of the experimental and control groups. This non-parametric test is suitable for data that do not meet parametric assumptions. The results showed a Mann-Whitney U value of 84.500, indicating that students in the experimental group scored significantly higher than those in the control group. The Wilcoxon W value of 612.500 supports

this, reflecting better overall performance in the experimental group. The Z value of -5.790 demonstrates a substantial difference, while the p-value of .000 confirms a highly significant difference, allowing us to reject the null hypothesis. This indicates that the use of tongue twister games significantly improves students' pronunciation skills.

## 3.2 Discussion

The implementation of tongue twister games as a teaching medium has demonstrated significant effectiveness in enhancing students' pronunciation skills. Widianti (2022) noted this interactive approach not only made learning more enjoyable but also actively engaged students, encouraging them to practice consistently. Studies by Sari, Suhartono, and wardah (2022), incorporating creative activities, students exhibited increased motivation and participation in the learning process.

Given the non-parametric nature of the data, which did not conform to the assumptions required for parametric tests like the t-test, the Mann-Whitney U test was employed (Hossan et al., 2023). This test is particularly well-suited for comparing two independent groups with non-normally distributed data, making it ideal for our study. The results confirmed the effectiveness of the tongue twister games, with a significant p-value of .000, indicating that this interactive method led to markedly better pronunciation outcomes compared to traditional teaching approaches.

Moreover, the study highlighted the specific benefits of using tongue twisters in mastering challenging fricative consonant sounds, such as /v/, /θ/, /ð/, and /ʒ/. The statistical analysis reinforced that interactive teaching methods not only motivate students but also facilitate superior pronunciation skills (Putri Fahruli, 2020). These findings underscore the potential of innovative teaching practices in English language education, particularly in the realm of pronunciation.

The implications of this study extend to English language teaching methodologies. Educators are encouraged to integrate games and interactive activities into their curriculum to enhance students' language skills. According to Fish (2020), this approach can also be adapted for various aspects of language learning, including vocabulary and grammar. Furthermore, the importance of teacher training cannot be overstated; equipping educators with the skills to implement these innovative methods effectively is crucial for maximizing their impact (Cahyani, 2020).

To ensure the successful application of this teaching strategy, professional development opportunities for teachers should be prioritized (Purwanto, 2019). Such training can significantly improve the quality of education at SMA Negeri 1 Lembo and similar institutions, fostering a dynamic and engaging learning environment.

The procedural steps for implementing tongue twisters in the classroom are as follows (Lusiyani & Anindya, 2023):

a. Introduction of Vocabulary: Begin with clear definitions and explanations of each word in the tongue twisters to ensure students understand their meanings.

b. Model Pronunciation: Use videos that pronounce each word clearly multiple times, providing students with a model to replicate.

c. Teacher Demonstration: Pronounce the tongue twister sentences, emphasizing key terms.

d. Collaborative Reading: Have students read the sentences together, building confidence and reinforcing their learning.

e. Individual Practice: Randomly call on students to pronounce the tongue twisters individually, allowing for personalized feedback.

f. Imitative Practice: Encourage students to imitate the sounds they hear, starting with slower readings before progressing to faster pronunciations.

g. Showcase Skills: Provide opportunities for students to display their pronunciation skills, enhancing their confidence.

h. Feedback and Corrections: Identify words that students struggle with and offer additional guidance on their correct pronunciation.

According to Aini (2023) the findings of this study support the integration of interactive teaching strategies, such as tongue twister games, into English language instruction, demonstrating their positive impact on student engagement and pronunciation skills.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the results presented in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the implementation of tongue twister games significantly improved the pronunciation skills of students at SMA Negeri 1 Lembo. This conclusion is supported by the comparison of pre-test and post-test scores, where the Mann-Whitney U test yielded a significant p-value of .000, indicating a notable difference between the experimental and control groups. Therefore, the hypothesis proposed in this study is accepted. Furthermore, the findings suggest that tongue twister games serve as an effective tool for enhancing students' mastery of challenging sounds, particularly fricative consonants. In summary, the integration of tongue twister games into the learning process can be considered a valuable alternative for improving pronunciation skills among students at SMA Negeri 1 Lembo.

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