

EFFECTIVENESS OF ADAPTED ENKLEK GAME FOR IMPROVING STUDENT'S KALAM IKHBARI SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

Arabic speaking skills are among the essential abilities that second-language learners must master. However, most students find it difficult to speak Arabic due to limited vocabulary and lack of speaking practice in class. Therefore, this study aims to determine the effectiveness of the modified Engklek game as a learning medium in improving students' kalam ikhbari skills in Arabic learning. This study employs a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental method. The research subjects were students from Classes VIII A and VIII B at Al-Fatih 1 Islamic Integrated Junior High School, each consisting of 32 students. Data were collected through oral tests using a pretest and posttest model. The game modification for speaking skills was carried out by incorporating Arabic learning elements into the game system, such as thematic vocabulary and sentence structure patterns. Furthermore, students' roles were designed to be not only active participants but also direct language users in communicative and enjoyable situations. The results showed a significant improvement in the experimental group's speaking ability, with an average pretest score of 33 and a posttest score of 65, while the control group experienced only a slight increase from 35 to 40. The improvement in the experimental group's speaking skills fell into the moderate category, with a percentage increase of 47%. Thus, the use of the modified Engklek game proved effective in enhancing students' speaking skills in Arabic learning.

Keywords: Arabic speaking skills, Engklek Game, Kalam Ikhbari

INTRODUCTION

Speaking skills are the most important aspect of communication, especially when it comes to foreign languages. Speaking skills are essential in everyday life because they are the primary means of communicating with others (Baghdadi, 2017). In addition, speaking is also necessary for expressing one's needs and feelings. In order to develop these skills, one needs to practice repeatedly so that their speaking skills will improve. In the field of Arabic, this skill is the main language skill that learners must master because if it is weak, they will have difficulty communicating with native speakers. Because of this, this skill will be taught gradually in Arabic language learning.

In the practice of Arabic speaking skills, one of the most commonly used forms of verbal expression is kalam ikhbari. The word “إخباري” refers to a sentence that conveys information, and is derived from the word “إخبار,” which means to report an incident or event. The word “إخبار” itself comes from the verb “أخبر - يُخبر”, which is its source. Thus, kalam ikhbari can be defined as an expression or statement used by the speaker to convey news, information, or details about something, with the aim of ensuring that the listener knows or understands the information. The term kalam ikhbari is synonymous with descriptive speech or descriptive text.

Descriptive speech is a verbal activity that requires learners to describe a particular person, place, or thing (Smith & Tague-Busler, 2009). Descriptive speech or descriptive text consists of two main parts, namely introduction and description. The introduction section aims to introduce a specific person, place, animal, or object to be described. Meanwhile, the description section contains a more detailed description of the object that has been introduced previously (Sipayung et al., 2021).

Descriptive speech is in line with kalam ikhbari, because both provide descriptive information so that listeners can clearly imagine the thing or situation in question. In practice, this skill can be developed through various communication activities that involve student's oral production, such as recounting experiences, explaining processes, or reporting the results of discussions. These activities encourage students to construct sentences in a logical order and express them with confidence.

However, in practice, most students find it difficult to speak and lack confidence because they are afraid of making mistakes when speaking due to their limited vocabulary (Zabidin et al., 2023). The lack of learning motivation and limited opportunities to practice Arabic caused by restricted lesson hours are also major factors influencing this ability. Therefore, students need to be trained to strengthen their language skills. This phenomenon would not occur if teachers consistently trained students' language abilities and reinforced their vocabulary so that their speaking skills could be more optimal.

Therefore, interactive learning media that focus on strengthening vocabulary have proven effective in improving learning outcomes. For instance, a study on the implementation of flashcard media demonstrated a significant improvement in Arabic language learning, where students' activity observation scores increased remarkably from 36.66% in the pre-cycle to 93.33% in cycle II. Furthermore, the classical completeness of learning outcomes showed substantial progress, rising from 28.57% in the pre-cycle to 90.47% in cycle II. These data emphasize that the use of engaging and interactive visual media is essential to overcome vocabulary-related challenges and enhance student engagement (Yunatalia & Esha, 2025).

As a further solution that integrates interactive elements and practical application, game-based learning can be implemented both inside and outside the classroom to optimize students' speaking skills. Rizki and Kastur mentioned that game-based learning can improve student's speaking skills so that they are more confident in speaking Arabic, because games provide students with repeated opportunities to practice their language skills (Rizki & Kastur, 2024). This principle is supported by findings in the context of other foreign languages. For example, a study on The Positive Effects of the Online Game Mobile Legends revealed that participants acknowledged an improvement in their foreign language abilities (specifically English vocabulary) since playing the game (Anggraini et al., 2022). These findings indicate that environments or activities that consistently expose learners to and require the use of new vocabulary such as through gaming are effective in enhancing language mastery. The implications are highly relevant to the context of Arabic learning; game-based media should be utilized to create intensive and repetitive exposure to Arabic vocabulary as a crucial foundation for developing *kalam ikhbari* skills.

There are many types of games that can be applied in the classroom to improve their speaking skills, one of which is a modified version of engklek for language teaching. This game originally came from Rome, Italy. It was called *Hopscotch*, derived from the words “*hop*”, meaning to jump, and “*scotch*”, referring to the lines drawn on the playing area (Darmawan et al., 2024). Harianti describes

engklek as a traditional children's game in which players move by hopping from one box to another without losing their balance (Harianti et al., 2024). The game engklek was first introduced by the Dutch during their colonization of Indonesia, and it was referred to as "Zondag Maandag" in the Dutch language (Okyanida, 2023). It is called engklek because the game has rules, namely that players must use only one foot and jump on geometric shapes until all squares are passed (Sukadariyah et al., 2020).

The engklek game has its own unique characteristics. It involves the use of game tools such as stones or seeds, which are thrown into geometric shapes drawn on the ground. The geometric pattern consists of five vertical rectangles, with an additional rectangle placed on both the right and left sides (Hidayat & Effendi, 2020). This game is usually played by at least two players, and there is no limit to the maximum number of participants. A study states that engklek can improve student's fluency in expressing their opinions, making them more enthusiastic about speaking and increasing their confidence in expressing their opinions (Syahria, 2020).

In addition, by playing engklek, children will be trained in reading their body movements, moving their bodies, increasing their agility, developing communication skills, devising good strategies, controlling their emotions, and practicing cooperation with their peers (Sari et al., 2023). The engklek game also provides benefits in developing children's character, enhancing their social skills, and improving their logical intelligence (Rusyad, 2020). A study shows that playing engklek helps develop children's gross motor skills through the activity of hopping on one foot (Syam, 2023). In addition, Ratu in Amirullah mentions that the engklek game can help students practice communication with their peers, foster discipline, develop intelligence, and cultivate patience, as well as create a sense of comfort within a group (Amirullah et al., 2021). Another study also indicates that the use of the traditional engklek game can enhance the language development of children aged 5–6 years (Munika et al., 2024).

In Arabic language learning, engklek can also help students develop their language skills. This outcome resonates with Wulandari's study, which reveals that a significant effect on children's ability to memorize Hijaiyah letters, both in distinguishing letter shapes and how to read them, as well as their ability to write them (Wulandari et al., 2022). Teatantia also said that the engklek game media applied in Arabic language learning received very positive responses from students (Teatantia & Nurhadi, 2020). Therefore, this modified engklek game was created to provide opportunities for students to improve their language skills, which are sometimes hampered by the lack of learning time in class. Thus, the modified engklek game for language teaching is a combination of game tools, physical activities, rules, and the desired targets, namely improving Arabic language skills and strengthening student's vocabulary. This game is played outside of formal class hours to reinforce student's language skills in class through practice.

The benefits of this modified engklek game include increasing student interaction in the classroom, thereby training their speaking skills. In addition, it will accelerate their understanding of Arabic through fun practice, as well as develop student's motor and cognitive skills. By using the modified engklek game, students will play while remembering vocabulary and practicing speaking, thereby training their skills, which will ultimately optimize their language abilities.

The author found several previous studies that became the main sources for this study. The first article was *The Effectiveness of the Engklek al-Bashair Game on the Initial Ability to Recognize Hijaiyah Letters in Children Aged 4–5 Years at Al-Madinah Islamic Kindergarten, Semarang*, written by Siti Mardianti, et.al. This study aims to measure the extent of the influence of using the Engklek al-Bashair game, which is a traditional game modified to teach Hijaiyah letters to children through four stages, namely: recognizing single letters, writing them, reading them with harakat, and connecting them with other letters. The purpose of these stages is to help children recognize Hijaiyah letters gradually. This study used a quasi-experimental design (pre-experimental design) with a one-group pretest-posttest model, involving 30 children from the age group. The results of this study indicate that this game is effective in significantly improving children's ability to recognize Hijaiyah letters (Wulandari et al., 2022). The similarity between these studies lies in the game media used, namely the engklek game and its implementation in the field of Arabic language, and the results can reinforce the findings of this study. Meanwhile, the difference between these studies lies in the dependent variable, namely the ability to recognize Hijaiyah letters, and the research sample, which consists of children aged 4-5 years, while this study focuses on Arabic speaking skills and the sample consists of junior high school students.

The second article, *The Use of Indonesian Traditional Games to Upgrade Pupils' Speaking Skills and Lessen Pupil's Speaking Anxiety*, was written by Syahria. This study discusses the effectiveness of the traditional game of Engklek in improving student's ability to speak fluently and reducing their anxiety when speaking. This study used an experimental design comparing two groups: one group taught using the Engklek game and another group taught through the presentation method. The results showed that the group using Engklek experienced a significant improvement in speaking skills compared to the control group. In addition, most students stated that this game helped them improve their fluency, reduce their anxiety when speaking, and encourage motivation while improving their cognitive and social skills (Syahria, 2020). The results of this study provide an empirical basis for adapting the Engklek game in the context of Arabic language learning, particularly in improving the speaking skills of intermediate-level students. The difference in this study lies in the target language, which is English, and its application in the classroom. Meanwhile, this study focuses on Arabic and its application with descriptive sentences.

The third article used is *Development of the Traditional Game Engklek and Its Application in Arabic Vocabulary Learning in Grade VIII at Wahid Hasyim Islamic Junior High School*, written by Fatimatuzzahroh. This study aims to design and apply the Engklek Mahnatuna game as a learning medium to improve student's mastery of Arabic vocabulary. This research stems from the problem of a lack of variety in learning methods, which causes students to feel bored and less interactive in the learning process. This study uses a research and development (R&D) method with the ADDIE model, which consists of five stages: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The results show that the Engklek Mahnatuna educational game received a rating of "very feasible," with a feasibility level of 89% based on the assessment of learning media experts, 98% from subject matter experts, and a positive response from students of 86% (Fatimatuzzahroh, 2024).

This study is an important reference for modifying the engklek game in kalam teaching and analyzing the effectiveness of this game in improving student's speaking skills. The similarity between this study and the aforementioned study lies in the method used and the teaching domain, which is limited to vocabulary. Meanwhile, this study focuses on speaking skills and uses a quasi-experimental method.

The fourth article is *Development of Arabic Learning Media Based on Portable Arabic Engklek Games for Fourth Grade Students at SD Islam Sultan Agung Yogyakarta in the 2019/2020 Academic Year*, written by Teatantia. This study aims to design and develop learning media based on portable Engklek games as a teaching aid in Arabic language learning. The researcher used the research and development (R&D) method with the Borg & Gall model, which includes several stages: needs analysis, media design, validity testing, field testing, and product revision. The results of the study produced a specially designed Engklek game board, equipped with learning cards containing vocabulary and grammar rules that students must apply while playing. The test results showed that this media obtained a score of 85.8% (excellent category) from media experts, 82.5% (good) from subject matter experts, and 74.1% (good) from teachers. In addition, students gave a very positive response with a percentage of 88.8% (Teatantia, 2020). This research also became the main reference in modifying the Engklek game for speaking skills. However, this study only provided applications for each Arabic language skill and did not test its effectiveness in those skills. Therefore, in this study, the researchers wanted to test the effectiveness of the Engklek media in improving speaking skills.

RESEARCH METHODS

This type of research is quantitative research using a quasi-experimental method. The research model used is a non-equivalent control group design involving two groups, namely the experimental group that will be given the engklek game and the control group that will not be given the game. The population in this study was all students at Al-Fatih 1 islamic integrated junior high school. The accessible population of this study was all eighth-grade students at Al-Fatih 1 islamic integrated junior high school. The research sample consisted of 32 students from class VIII B for the experimental group and 32 students from class VIII A for the control group. The techniques used to collect data were documentation studies and oral tests in the form of pre-tests and post-tests.

Documentation studies were used to obtain written data that supported the achievement of the research objectives related to modifying the engklek game for Arabic language teaching, such as textbooks, previous studies, and images that supported this research. Meanwhile, tests were conducted to obtain scores before and after the study to see the effect of the engklek game in improving speaking skills.

In the process of data analysis, the Shapiro–Wilk test was utilized to assess data normality, considering that each class contained less than 50 participants. The test served to verify whether the data were normally distributed. Then, the homogeneity test was also used to see whether the data distribution in each group was homogeneous or not. Furthermore, the author used the Mann-Whitney U nonparametric test because the data obtained was not normally distributed, as a method of analyzing the data to determine the presence of a significant difference between the experimental and control groups' posttest results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The application of modified engklek

Before implementing this game, the author first designed the engklek board in Canva with a poster size of 50cm x 100cm. Each square on the engklek board was made with a size of 14.5cm. After the design was complete, the file was saved in PDF format and the largest size was selected so that the design would not break when printed. Then, print the poster with a size of 100cm x 200cm, and the poster is ready to use. The model is as follows:



Figure 1. The adapted Engklek game board

The modified engklek game for language teaching combines Arabic language elements in each box on the engklek board. The added elements are Arabic numbers that must be said by each student who plays every time they step on a square containing Arabic numbers and several Arabic questions that must be answered by students while playing engklek. The steps are as follows:

1. The teacher divides the students into several groups of 6 students in each group.
2. Each group selects 3 representatives to come forward and answer questions while playing engklek.
3. The teacher determines the order of the players by playing rock-paper-scissors.
4. One of the players throws the gacu into the first square and must pass through each square with one foot, except for numbers 4, 5, 7, and 8. The two students who are representatives of their group only need to watch one of their friends play engklek.
5. The student who throws the gacu must say the numbers they step on using Arabic.
6. At boxes 4 and 5, the student takes the provided paper and says the vocabulary word they get using Arabic.
7. After that, the student jumps back until they reach box 9, where the teacher asks a short question related to the picture the student gets.
8. Then, the other two students join the engklek game until each student is standing on squares 9, 7&8, and 4&5, and the three students answer orally the instructions given.
9. After finishing, the three students must jump back to square 1 in turn.
10. Repeat until all groups have had their turn.

Results of Statistical Tests

1. Experimental Group

Result Range	Pre-test	Pre-test (%)	Post-test	Post-test (%)
90 – 100	0	0%	0	0%
80 – 89	0	0%	7	22%
70 – 79	0	0%	8	25%
60 – 69	2	6%	9	28%
50 – 59	6	18%	5	16%
0 – 49	24	75%	3	9%
Total	32	100%	32	100%

Table 1. The Results of The Test in The Experimental Group

The pre-test data showed that the majority of students in the experimental group obtained low scores, with 75% of students scoring below 50. Only a small number of students scored between 50 and 59 (18%) and between 60 and 69 (6%), while no students scored above 70. After being given treatment with the modified Engklek game, the post-test results showed a significant improvement. The number of students who scored below 50 dropped dramatically to only 9%, while many students were able to achieve higher scores. Sixteen percent of students scored 50–59, 28% scored 60–69, 25% scored 70–79, and 22% scored 80–89.

The failure to achieve the maximum score can be attributed to several factors. First, the limited duration of the treatment may have hindered students from fully developing their abilities. Second, although there was an improvement in confidence and fluency in speaking, other aspects such as sentence structure, pronunciation, and vocabulary richness may not yet have been fully mastered by the students. Third, the nature of speaking skills themselves requires consistent and long-term practice. Therefore, this comparison shows an improvement in student’s speaking skills after the treatment, as evidenced by the shift in scores from being concentrated in the low range to being more spread out in the middle to high range

2. Control Group

Result Range	Pre-test	Pre-test (%)	Post-test	Post-test (%)
90 – 100	0	0%	0	0%
80 – 89	0	0%	0	0%
70 – 79	3	9%	1	3%
60 – 69	1	3%	3	9%
50 – 59	1	3%	9	28%
0 – 49	27	84%	19	59%
Total	32	100%	32	100%

Table 2. The Results of The Test in The Control Group

In the pre-test results of the control group, most students (84%) scored below 50. Only a few students scored higher, namely 3% in the range of 50–59, 3% in the range of 60–69, and 9% in the range of 70–79. No students scored above 80. After the post-test, there was a slight improvement, but not as significant as in the experimental group. The number of students who scored below 50 decreased to 59%, while 28% of students were in the 50–59 range, 9% in the 60–69 range, and only 3% in the 70–79 range. As in the pre-test, no students scored above 80. Overall, although there was an improvement in the control group, the change was relatively small compared to the experimental group.

3. Normality Test

Result	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistic	df	Sig.	Shapiro-Wilk Statistic	df	Sig.
pre_eksperimen	.289	32	<.001	.808	32	<.001
post_eksperimen	.111	32	.200*	.944	32	.096
pre_kontrol	.209	32	.001	.817	32	<.001

post_kontrol	.159	32	.038	.909	32	.011
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Table 3. Test of Normality

According to the Shapiro–Wilk test results, the significance values were <0.001 for the experimental pre-test, 0.096 for the experimental post-test, <0.001 for the control pre-test, and 0.011 for the control post-test. The testing criteria indicate that the data is normally distributed if the significance value is greater than 0.05. Thus, only the data in the experimental post-test is normally distributed, while the data in the experimental pre-test, control pre-test, and control post-test is not normally distributed. Therefore, further data analysis uses non-parametric statistical tests, given that most of the data does not meet the assumption of normality.

4. Homogeneity Test

Result	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Based on Mean	1.006	1	62	.320
Based on Median	.974	1	62	.327
Based on Median and with adjusted df	.974	1	61.795	.327
Based on trimmed mean	.965	1	62	.330

Table 4. Test of Homogeneity of Variance

Based on the results of the variance homogeneity test (Levene's Test), the significance values for all criteria (based on the mean, median, median with adjusted df, and trimmed mean) were greater than 0.05, namely 0.320; 0.327; 0.327; and 0.330. Thus, it can be concluded that the data from the experimental group and the control group have homogeneous variance. This means that the two groups have the same level of variance, making them suitable for comparison in the next stage of hypothesis testing.

5. Mann Whitney U Test

Result	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Experimental post-test	32	44.70	1430.50
Control post-test	32	20.30	649.50
Total	64		

Test Statistics	
	Result
Mann-Whitney U	121.500
Wilcoxon W	649.500
Z	-5.269
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001

Table 5. Mann Whitney U Test

Based on the results of the Mann-Whitney test, the value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)= <0.001, as the obtained value falls below the 0.05 level of significance, a significant difference can be observed between the learning achievements of the experimental and control classes. Furthermore, the experimental class recorded a Mean Rank of 44.70, exceeding that of the control class (20.30). These findings suggest that the implementation of the Engklek game had a positive and substantial impact on improving student's learning outcomes.

6. N-Gain Test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ngain Score	32	.17	.75	.4729	.18700
Ngain persen	32	16.67	75.00	47.2944	18.70030
Valid N (listwise)	32				

Table 6. N-Gain Test

Based on the results of data analysis using the normalized gain (n-gain) formula, it is known that there was an increase in student learning outcomes in speaking skills after being given treatment in the form of learning with modified engklek game media. The average n-gain value obtained by students in the experimental class was 0.4729, which is in the moderate

category and able to influence their speaking skills by 47%. These results indicate that learning using the engklek game can make a positive contribution to improving student's speaking skills in Arabic.

CONCLUSIONS

Modifying the Engklek game in Arabic language learning has been proven effective in improving student's speaking skills through repetition of vocabulary, sentence structures, and communicative interactions in a fun learning environment. This game motivates students to actively participate, strengthens their language memory, and trains their fluency in speaking. The results show a moderate effect, so it is recommended to combine this game with other methods such as role-play for more optimal results. These findings also reinforce behaviorist theory through stimulus-response and cognitive theory, which emphasizes the active process of remembering and processing vocabulary in the context of learning.

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