

## **An Analysis Of The Tongue Twister Technique Of Students Class of SMPN 1 Sitiung**

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### **Abstrak**

*Teaching pronunciation skills in English is an important aspect that needs to be paid attention to in the learning process. Many students have difficulty pronouncing certain sounds, such as /r/, /l/, /θ/, and /ð/. Therefore, teachers need to apply methods that are engaging, interactive, and in accordance with the needs of students. One of the methods used in this study is the tongue twister game which is considered effective in practicing pronunciation in a fun way. This study aims to describe the application of the sound repetition game method in pronunciation learning in grade VII of SMPN 1 Sitiung and to identify its advantages and weaknesses. The approach used is qualitative descriptive with a case study design. The data collection technique was carried out through observation and interviews with teachers and students of grade VII for the 2025/2026 school year. The results of the study show that this method is applied gradually, starting from giving examples by teachers to taking turns reciting practice by students. The use of media in the form of text and pictures helps students' understanding. The students' responses showed increased confidence and pronunciation ability. The learning atmosphere became more active and fun. However, some challenges were also found, such as the need for longer time and there are still students who lack confidence when speaking in front of the class.*

**Keywords:** *Technique, Pronunciation, Tongue Twister*

### **Abstract**

*Pengajaran keterampilan pelafalan dalam bahasa Inggris merupakan aspek penting yang perlu mendapatkan perhatian dalam proses pembelajaran. Banyak siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam mengucapkan bunyi-bunyi tertentu, seperti /r/, /l/, /θ/, dan /ð/. Oleh karena itu, guru perlu menerapkan metode yang menarik, interaktif, dan sesuai dengan kebutuhan siswa. Salah satu metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah permainan pengulangan bunyi (tongue twister) yang dinilai efektif dalam melatih pelafalan secara menyenangkan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan penerapan metode permainan pengulangan bunyi dalam pembelajaran pelafalan di kelas VII SMPN 1 Sitiung serta untuk mengidentifikasi kelebihan dan kelemahannya. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi dan wawancara terhadap guru dan siswa kelas VII tahun ajaran 2025/2026. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa metode ini diterapkan secara bertahap, dimulai dari pemberian contoh oleh guru hingga praktik pelafalan secara bergiliran oleh siswa. Penggunaan media berupa teks dan gambar membantu pemahaman siswa. Respon siswa menunjukkan peningkatan kepercayaan diri dan kemampuan pelafalan. Suasana belajar menjadi lebih aktif dan menyenangkan. Namun, beberapa tantangan juga ditemukan, seperti kebutuhan waktu yang lebih panjang serta masih adanya siswa yang kurang percaya diri saat berbicara di depan kelas.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Teknik, Pelafalan, Tongue Twister*

## Introduction

Pronunciation is one of the important aspects of learning English. The ability to pronounce words well and correctly not only contributes to the understanding of meaning, but also has a great influence on students' confidence in communicating. (Adriati, 2019) stated that proper pronunciation is one of the main factors in conveying messages effectively. (Khaerani, 2023) also emphasized that clear pronunciation can increase the success of communication in foreign languages. More than just conveying meaning, pronunciation also tells the identity and personality of the speaker. (Zdena et al., 2021) describes clarity as "the ability to be understood by the listener in a given time and situation." The difference in sound distribution between English and Indonesian is one of the main obstacles for learners in Indonesia. Prananingrum and Kwary in (Daniel, 2016) show that Indonesian students have difficulty producing sounds in English due to phonetic differences between languages. Cruthers explained that these difficulties arise due to the presence of new sounds in the target language that are not found in the student's mother tongue, as well as the different distribution of sounds between languages (Daniel, 2016).

In oral communication, good pronunciation is very important, even more important than perfect grammar or vocabulary. (Burns & Claire, 2003) emphasizes that with good pronunciation and intonation, a person can still communicate effectively despite making mistakes in sentence structure. In line with this, Yates in (Laurea, 2004) emphasizes that students who have perfect grammar can still fail to understand if their pronunciation is not clear. Several other factors that also affect students' pronunciation skills include the influence of mother tongue, socio-cultural factors, and personality factors (Khaerani, 2023). For example, many students pronounce the word three as /tiri/ or /tri/ because they are not familiar with the /θ/ sound. This kind of error can disrupt communication because it can change the meaning or reduce the clarity of the message.

Based on initial observations at SMPN 1 Sitiung, it was found that most students still had difficulty in pronouncing words in English. These difficulties are caused by the lack of speaking practice, lack of confidence, and differences in phonetic systems between English and Indonesian. Common mistakes that are often made include the pronunciation of the /θ/ and /ð/ sounds, difficulty in distinguishing between long and short vowels, and inappropriate intonation. To overcome these problems, various approaches have been developed. One of them is the use of the tongue twister technique, which is a series of words or phrases with similar sound patterns and difficult to pronounce quickly. This technique not only trains students' articulation, but also helps improve speaking fluency in a fun atmosphere. Despite its great potential, research on the application of this technique in the context of classroom learning is still limited, especially at the junior high school level.

This study aims to examine in depth the application of the tongue twister technique in improving the pronunciation skills of grade VII students at SMPN 1 Sitiung. In addition, this study also wants to explore students' experiences while using this technique and what obstacles they face. By using a qualitative descriptive approach, it is hoped that the results of this study can make a real contribution to improving the effectiveness of teaching pronunciation at the junior high school level.

## Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen because this study aims to describe in depth the experience of students in using the tongue twister technique and explore its advantages and disadvantages in the context of learning pronunciation in grade VII of SMPN 1 Sitiung. Case studies are chosen to gain a comprehensive understanding of phenomena that occur in real situations and in specific contexts. This research was carried out at SMPN 1 Sitiung in the 2025/2026 school year. The subjects in this study were 5 grade VII students who were selected purposively, namely students who showed difficulties in English pronunciation, and 1 English teacher who applied the tongue twister technique in the learning process. The data collection techniques used in this study include observation and interviews. Observations are carried out directly on the learning process in the classroom, focusing on the way teachers implement the tongue twister technique, how

students respond, and the interactions that occur during learning activities.

Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with teachers and students to delve deeper into their experiences, responses, and obstacles faced during the application of the tongue twister technique. Interview questions are developed based on predetermined indicators so that the data obtained is more focused and relevant. The data obtained from the results of observations and interviews were analyzed using an interactive analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman. The analysis process includes three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is done by sorting and simplifying raw data into relevant important information. The presentation of data was carried out in the form of narratives and direct excerpts from the interview results. Conclusions are drawn based on the patterns and themes that emerge from the data that has been analyzed.

## Results and Discussion

Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted, researchers found that the use of tongue twister techniques in learning pronunciation of grade VII students of SMPN 1 Sitiung provided several important findings. The findings are classified into three main aspects, namely implementation, advantages, and obstacles in the application of this technique in the classroom.

### 1 Implementation of the Tongue Twister Technique

The teacher applies the tongue twister technique systematically. The first stage begins by giving examples of pronunciation slowly and clearly. This example is conveyed either directly or through supporting media such as text and images. After that, the teacher invites students to practice together in class. In this stage, students say tongue twister sentences in unison so that they get used to hearing and imitating the correct pronunciation. The next stage is individual or small group exercises. Each student is given the opportunity to practice pronunciation in turn. The atmosphere of the classroom is made fun, for example by giving praise or applause when students succeed in pronouncing sentences well. The teacher also uses interesting intonation and relates the content of the sentence to the real context to make it easier to understand.

From this implementation, it can be seen that students become more enthusiastic about participating in learning because the methods used are more varied and not boring. They are actively involved and the interaction between teachers and students takes place in two directions. Students are also more courageous to try to speak even though they are not entirely accurate.

### 2 Advantages of the Tongue Twister Technique

From the application of this technique, several main advantages were found. First, students show increased confidence in speaking English. They are more daring to appear and try to say challenging sentences without fear of being wrong. This technique provides a play-like atmosphere, so students feel comfortable and interested.

Second, this technique is effective in helping students recognize and pronounce difficult sounds, such as /r/, /l/, /s/, /f/, and /θ/. This sound is often a challenge for EFL students. With repetition through fun sentences, students can better distinguish and produce the sounds.

Third, the learning atmosphere becomes more active and fun. All students were involved, including those who were previously less active. This shows that this technique can accommodate students' differences in abilities in the classroom.

Fourth, the repetition of sounds in tongue twisters also improves students' abilities in rhythm, intonation, and fluency in speech. They learn to regulate their breathing and articulation in a more controlled way, which affects their overall speaking quality.

### 3 Obstacles in the Application of Techniques

While it brings many benefits, this technique also has some obstacles. Some students feel embarrassed or lack confidence, especially when they have to speak in front of their friends. This is a challenge for teachers to create a supportive learning atmosphere.

In addition, students also have difficulty remembering and pronouncing long sentences with similar sounds. Some of them lose concentration and repeat pronunciation errors. This indicates the importance of choosing tongue twister sentences that are appropriate to the student's ability level and giving practice gradually.

Another obstacle is the focus of students who only focus on pronunciation without understanding the meaning of the sentences they say. Although their pronunciation was quite good, they did not understand the meaning of the sentence. This is an important note for teachers to explain the meaning so that students also learn context and not just memorize sounds.

The results of this study show that the tongue twister technique has great potential as an alternative method in learning pronunciation at the junior high school level. If used consistently and tailored to the student's condition, this technique can be an interesting and effective phonetic learning strategy. Teachers are advised to continue to develop variations of tongue twister sentences that are relevant to the learning theme and pay attention to the elements of meaning in the exercise. Audio-visual media can also be used to support comprehension and provide examples of correct pronunciation. Training is also needed for teachers in designing appropriate and contextual materials. Overall, the tongue twister technique not only helps with pronunciation technically, but also encourages affective aspects such as confidence, courage, and active student engagement. With proper implementation, this method can have a wide positive impact on English language learning in junior high school. broad positive impact on English language learning in junior high school.

## **Discussion**

This tongue twister technique makes a positive contribution to improving students' pronunciation skills. Students show progress in articulation and courage to speak. (Celce-Murcia, 2009) states that repeated practice in a positive atmosphere can strengthen students' phonological awareness. In addition, the increase in the pronunciation of foreign sounds supports the opinion (Kelly, 2000) and (Machackova, 2012) about the importance of intensive practice to master the articulation of a foreign language. However, there are several obstacles in the application of this technique. Some students feel embarrassed to appear in front of the class and have difficulty remembering long sentences. This is in line with the opinion (Gilakjani, 2017) that affective factors such as anxiety can affect success in learning pronunciation. Teachers need to balance aspects of pronunciation and understanding of meaning so that communication is more effective (Ridge, 2011).

These results are in line with research (Adriati, 2019) and (Nirwana AR; Suraya Mukandar; & Tri Kurnia Badu, 2020) which also shows the effectiveness of tongue twisters in improving students' articulation clarity and confidence. In addition to the advantages and disadvantages found, the results of this study also show that there is a close relationship between increasing students' confidence and the quality of their pronunciation. Students who are initially passive begin to show a willingness to speak more clearly after successfully pronouncing tongue twisters correctly. This supports the opinion (Khairani et al., 2023) that affirms that good pronunciation not only impacts sound mastery, but also improves overall communication success. Thus, emotional and linguistic aspects support each other in the pronunciation learning process.

In addition, these findings also provide an idea that the tongue twister technique can be flexibly integrated into the English learning curriculum at the junior high school level. If applied consistently with a contextual approach and tailored to the student's level, this technique can be one of the fun and effective phonetic learning strategies. The practical implication of this study is the need for training for teachers in developing appropriate tongue twister variations and the ability to give meaning to the sentences used. In this way, students not only imitate sounds, but also understand the actual context of communication.

In the future, the use of technology can also be a solution to overcome time constraints in classroom learning. Through media such as audio and interactive videos, students can also practice

pronunciation outside of class hours independently. In addition, technology also provides space for teachers to adjust the material to the abilities of each student, so that the learning process becomes more inclusive and effective. Compared to traditional methods such as drilling or phonics exercises which tend to be monotonous and less meaningful, the tongue twister technique has its own advantages. This technique combines elements of play, thinking challenges, and engaging students' feelings in learning. Therefore, tongue twisters feel more fun and are able to increase students' enthusiasm for learning, especially at the junior high school level which is experiencing emotional and social development.

### Conclusion (Close)

Based on the results of research conducted at SMPN 1 Sitiung, it can be concluded that the use of tongue twister techniques makes a positive contribution to teaching English pronunciation. This technique has proven to be effective in helping students distinguish and pronounce similar sounds in English clearly and precisely, such as the sounds of /r/, /l/, /θ/, and /ð/. Through a structured and supported approach using text and image media, students show improvements in articulation skills, speech rhythm, and confidence when communicating in English. In addition, the use of tongue twisters also creates a fun, interactive, and student-centered learning atmosphere. This technique not only trains the technical aspects of pronunciation, but also builds the mental readiness of students to dare to speak without fear of making mistakes. Thus, tongue twisters can be used as an alternative method that is effective in teaching pronunciation at the junior high school level, while contributing to the development of speaking skills and student involvement in the English learning process.

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