

USING WEREWOLF GAME IN SPEAKING LESSONS AMONG PRIMARY ESL
LEARNERS: A CASE STUDY

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DEDICATION

Every challenging work needs self-efforts as well as guidance and supports of people surround especially those who were very close to our heart.
My humble efforts I dedicate to my sweet and loving parents, siblings, and my loved ones.

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'Thank you' is the best prayer that anyone could say. I say that one a lot. Thank you expresses extreme gratitude, humility, and understanding. – Alice Walker

Thank you!

ABSTRACT

The integration of games in language learning has become popular among English language teachers. However, they need more recommendations on suitable and effective speaking games for them to adapt. Hence, this case study aimed to explore the learning experiences in participating Werewolf game in speaking lessons through the lens of a group of primary ESL learners. In general, the Werewolf game is a social deduction game that is fun and communicative. The population of the study was the primary ESL learners in the Southern Peninsula of Malaysia. 8 learners (n=8) were selected to be the research participants. Moreover, two qualitative instruments, namely (1) semi-structured interview protocol and (2) observation protocol were used for data collection. Then, a thematic analysis was employed to analyse and discuss the result of the study. The findings revealed the usefulness and the suitability of the game rules of procedures. Nonetheless, the obstacles faced among the learners were uncovered. Correspondingly, the suggested ways to overcome the challenges encountered were highlighted. Implications of the study demonstrated the positive feedbacks and precautions that should be taken by language teachers in adapting the game in their pedagogical practice. Future research may employ mixed-method research and increase the number of research participants to improve the generalisability of the study.

ABSTRAK

Integrasi permainan dalam pembelajaran bahasa merupakan sebuah pendekatan popular dalam kalangan guru Bahasa Inggeris. Namun, mereka memerlukan lebih banyak cadangan mengenai permainan yang sesuai dan berkesan agar mereka dapat mengadaptasikannya dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran yang berfokuskan kemahiran bertutur. Oleh itu, kajian kes ini bertujuan untuk meneroka pengalaman dan pendapat murid mengenai permainan ini. Secara amnya, permainan *Werewolf* merupakan sebuah permainan deduksi sosial yang menyeronokkan dan bersifat komunikatif. Populasi kajian adalah murid sekolah rendah di selatan Semenanjung Malaysia. 8 orang murid ($n = 8$) telah dipilih sebagai peserta kajian ini. Selain itu, dua instrumen metodologi kualitatif, yakni (1) protokol wawancara separa berstruktur dan (2) protokol pemerhatian, digunakan untuk pengumpulan data. Selepas proses pengumpulan data, analisis tematik telah digunakan untuk menganalisis dan membincangkan hasil dalam kajian. Hasil kajian menunjukkan keberkesanan dan kesesuaian peraturan prosedur permainan tersebut. Walaupun begitu, rintangan yang dihadapi dalam kalangan murid telah dikenal pasti. Sejajar dengan itu, langkah mengatasi cabaran yang dihadapi turut dijelaskan. Implikasi kajian menunjukkan maklum balas positif dan langkah berjaga-jaga yang harus dititikberatkan oleh para guru bahasa dalam mengadaptasi permainan tersebut dalam pedagogi mereka. Penyelidikan masa depan disarankan untuk menggunakan kaedah penyelidikan campuran dan menambah jumlah bilangan peserta kajian untuk meningkatkan generalisasi kajian.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCTS	-	Creative and Critical Thinking Skills
CEFR	-	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
DSKP	-	<i>Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Penilaian</i>
EFL	-	English as Foreign Language
EL	-	English Language
ELT	-	English Language Teaching
ESL	-	English as a second language
Ext.	-	Extract
FL	-	Foreign Language
IIOF	-	Integrated Input Output Framework
KPM	-	<i>Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia</i>
KSSR	-	Primary School Standard Curriculum
L1	-	First Language
L2	-	Second Language
MKO	-	More Knowledgeable Other
OP	-	Observation Protocol
RO	-	Research Objective
RQ	-	Research Question
SCT	-	Sociocultural Theory
SDG	-	Social Deductive Game
SIP	-	Semi-structured Interview Protocol
SLA	-	Second Language Acquisition
TBLT	-	Task-based Language Teaching
TnL	-	Teaching and Learning
ZPD	-	Zone of Proximal Development

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The integration of games in language teaching and learning (TnL) has become popular and ubiquitous among language teachers for its effectiveness and the quality offered among learners. Different games provide learners different experiences and benefits in various ways (Hang, 2017). Despite being one of the favourable choices, teachers still encounter uncertainties in using specific games in their classes. As claimed by Akdogan (2017), they are still doubtful of exploiting games as learners might favour playing the games purely for fun instead of truly developing the focused language skill. Wingate (2016) stated a general misapprehension that games are merely used to make language learning look easy and fun. As a result, teachers opt to consider employing games by deliberating the time and procedures (Klimova, 2015), as well as connecting it to the curriculum. Plus, limited studies on teaching speaking using games, particularly the social deduction board game, Werewolf game, in primary English as a second language (ESL) context is done. Teachers need a more comprehensive understanding of the activity to be adapted into their lessons.

In addition, the learners are hesitant to express themselves in the English language (EL), which is their second language (L2), because of their high affective filter, and lack of exposure and use of L2. This can be reduced by using speaking games. The games work as tasks that create a fun learning environment and stimulate a purpose for the learners to communicate. This provides spaces and opportunities for them to explore, understand and use L2. To complete the mystery in the game, they interact with one another and conduct a series of discussions by exchanging ideas, thoughts, opinions, reasons, justification, and predictions. Thus, these alleviate their affective filter and other psychological barriers. Plus, Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT), Krashen's second language acquisition (SLA) theory, and sociocultural

theory (SCT) support that interaction and assistance in a stress-free learning environment among learners are imperative for L2 development.

Referring to the discussion, rigorous and in-depth studies are needed among teachers to gather and obtain more recommendations of activities or games to be adapted into their classrooms. These studies provide insights and enable them to have a comprehensive understanding of how and what the games are used and perceived. Ergo, a case study to explore the use of the Werewolf game in speaking lessons through the lens of a group of primary ESL male learners was conducted. Opinions, experiences, and thoughts were collected and investigated through semi-structured interviews and observations. The findings of the present case study would help ESL teachers understand the game deeply from the learners' point of view.

1.2 Background of the Study

Speaking, which is one of the four language skills apart from listening, reading, and writing, is the main bridge for learners to acquire and master EL. The primary goal of language learning is to develop speaking skills as means of effective communication (Leong & Seyedeh, 2017). It is used in daily communication to exchange and convey meanings and thoughts with other individuals in a variety of events (Julio & Contreras, 2018). However, Table 1.1 (on page 4) shows some factors that hamper language learners' acquisition and discourage them to speak and produce utterances orally. To select the appropriate teaching activity, it is best to identify and understand the roots of the problems encountered by the learners. Hence, this section of the project report discusses and describes the factors and obstacles faced by the learners, particularly in speaking, and the use of games in teaching L2.

The application of conventional teaching methods with limited communicative strategies and activities is one of the factors to this challenge (Esmail et al., 2015; Nirmawati, 2015). At this point, learners receive the inputs passively and reiterate the information memorised in their examinations (Yap, 2016). They also simply repeat after their teachers and the audio materials without trying to contribute theirs. Siti

Hajjar et al. (2018) found that teacher-centred teaching is still being largely practised for quick concepts delivery and classroom management consideration. This might also be due to the lack of understanding and repertoire on how to involve their learners using the ESL communicative activities (Dole et al., 2016). Consequently, they frequently face difficulties to select and adapt fun and effective methods in their speaking lessons (Adek & Sitti, 2019). Therefore, this study intended to offer insights into the different speaking activity which was the Werewolf game.

Moreover, psychological barriers, such as nervousness, shyness, low level of motivation, and low self-esteem among learners are evidenced to be the other reasons why they feel uncomfortable speaking L2 (Azzahroh, 2015; Cheng, 2018; Idrissi, 2019; Nurhayati, 2015; Mohamed, 2017; Yong & Yeo, 2016). Similar studies have demonstrated that most L2 learners are hesitant to speak due to the aspects mentioned (Larasaty & Yutinih, 2018) considering their communication apprehension (Nuraqilah & Aminabibi, 2019), and anxiety of producing incomprehensible and ungrammatical utterances which might make them look silly (Ahmed et al., 2017; Kartikasari, 2018). Leong and Seyedeh (2017), as well as Riadil (2020) further explained that these learners frequently have the fear of speaking EL due to inhibition (feeling of worry), affective factors, low participation, and mother-tongue use. These are common among L2 learners. The problems were similar among the targeted learners of the present study whereby they were shy and lacked the confidence to speak L2.

Apart from that, deficient vocabulary repertoire and limited ideas to communicate contribute to the challenge. Studies in Table 1.1 pointed out that learners frequently stammer while speaking L2 because of the lack of practice and exposure to authentic L2 communication and expression (Idrissi, 2019; Kartikasari, 2018). A similar problem was faced among the learners of the present study whereby they use L2 only during EL periods at school. Most of them speak in their mother tongue which is either Tamil, Malay, or Mandarin at home and the medium of instruction at school is Malay. As a result, they lacked the motivation to speak as they had difficulty remembering anything to say (Leong & Seyedeh, 2017). Dhani (2018), Maulana (2019), and Rusreena et al. (2018) agreed that the lack of ideas to tell, vocabulary to deliver ideas, and exposure to speak are the few main reasons for speaking difficulties

(Riadil, 2020). It shows that activities or games used should not only be limited in classrooms, but learners can carry out the activities themselves during their own time. Hence, they use L2 more frequently.

Table 1.1 Obstacles in speaking EL among learners

Challenges	Studies
Fear and hesitated to speak	Adansi and Oringo (2019); Alharbi (2015); Alonso (2014); Gudu (2015); Humaera (2015); Lau et al. (2020); Larasaty and Yutinih (2018); Leong and Seyedeh (2017); Riadil (2020)
Traditional teaching methods	Azzahroh (2015); Dionar and Adnan (2018); Esmail et al. (2015); Nirmawati (2015); Siti Hajjar et al. (2018); Yap (2016)
Lack of different activities repertoire among teachers	Siti Hajjar et al. (2018); Dole, Bloom, and Kowalske (2016)
Psychological barriers	Cheng (2018); Dionar and Adnan (2018); Grazza and Benmorsi (2018); Idrissi (2019); Kartikasari (2018); Larasaty and Yutinih (2018); Leong and Seyedeh (2017); Maulana (2019); Nurhayati (2015); Mohamed (2017); Riadil (2020); Yong and Yeo (2016)
Communication apprehension	Nuraqilah & Aminabibi (2019)
Lack of practice and exposure	Idrissi (2019); Kartikasari (2018); Leong and Seyedeh (2017); Rusreena et al. (2018)
Lack of vocabulary, ideas	Dhani (2018); Rusreena et al. (2018); Maulana (2019); Leong and Seyedeh (2017)

After discussing and understanding the background problems encountered by the learners in learning and acquiring L2 speaking skills, it is imperative for teachers to gain information and knowledge to different methods to be utilised in enhancing the speaking experiences of those learners. There are several ways that teachers may consider teaching to improve the learners' speaking skills (Diana, 2018). Games are one of the renowned and suggestible methods that teachers can implement in their lessons. Table 1.2 depicts a noteworthy list that reveals some of the related recent studies gathered on the use of games in TnL to enhance speaking skills and other aspects. Variegated types of board games are conducted to enhance speaking skills, communicative competence, descriptive expression, and spoken interaction (Adek & Sitti, 2019; Kartikasari, 2018; Putri et al., 2016; Rohdiana, 2017; Yong & Yeo, 2016;

York, 2020). Adansi and Oringo (2019) included a series of games (role plays, problem-solving, puzzles, and board race) whereas Dionar and Adnan (2018) used the Truth or Dare game to improve speaking acquisition.

Besides, games can be implemented in different language skills (as in Table 1.2). Board games were used by Kim (2019), and Susanti and Trisnawati (2019) to teach grammar components. Wafi (2019) included games to facilitate the learning of syntax. Language games were also used to promote vocabulary mastery (Akdogan, 2017; Ayesha et al., 2016; Giemwaruju & Surjosuseno, 2018; Ramadhaniarti, 2016). Moreover, games were available to improve other language aspects and development such as creative and critical thinking skills (CCTS) (Eckstein, 2018), Foreign Language (FL) anxiety (Grazza & Benmorsi, 2018), motivation, and learning styles (Sevy-Biloon, 2017). As a result, it could be argued that language teachers can include the element of games into TnL appropriately regardless the language skills and aspects focused.

Table 1.2 Summary of current studies of games in language learning

Authors	Summary of Studies
<i>Speaking</i>	
Adansi and Oringo (2019)	Games (role plays, problem-solving, puzzles, and board race) were used to influence and improve the acquisition of speaking skills among the learners.
Adek and Sitti (2019)	The paper discussed how to use Werewolf game to teach speaking to EFL Senior High School students through five stages adapted from Bloom's taxonomy: observing, questioning, experimenting, associating, and communicating.
Dionar and Adnan (2018)	The paper used Truth or Dare Game in improving speaking of senior high school students.
Kartikasari (2018)	Board game technique was used to improve learners' speaking skill under the theme 'Would you like to come?'
Nirmawati (2015)	Speaking board game was developed to enhance speaking skills among students.
Putri et al. (2016)	The study discovered the effectiveness of using Board Game in improving students' speaking skill in expressing descriptive text or describing people.
Rohdiana (2017)	The communicative board game (Monopoly Game) was used to develop EFL young learners speaking skill. Learners' responds toward the game implementation were analysed.
Yong and Yeo (2016)	Board game (What Say You: Picture This, What's Your View, One Word Card, Sentence Level, Choose One, and Wild Card) were used to examine

Authors	Summary of Studies
	the anxiety level and to enhance the speaking performance of ESL low-proficiency polytechnic students.
York (2020)	Board games (One Night Ultimate Werewolf and Pandemic) were used to promote students' spoken interaction and engagement in the language teaching and learning process.
<i>Other related language skills (listening, reading, writing, grammar)</i>	
Akdogan (2017)	Games activities and materials were developed to promote learners' ability to memorise vocabulary in a relaxed manner.
Ayesha et al. (2016)	The study investigated the effectiveness of using the seven language games (Listing, Erasing a Word, Circle Rotation, Mini Game Show, Charades, Sketching, and Categories) in facilitating the learners' vocabulary acquisition.
Giemwaruju and Surjosuseno (2018)	The study compared the effectiveness of using the game Simon Says and picture technique to enhance vocabulary mastery among young learners in a kindergarten.
Kamal and Kim (2019)	The authors studied the attitudes of EL teachers towards the use of grammar games in the classroom. The effectiveness of the games (Noughts and Crosses, Double or Quits, Grammar Tennis, and Your Words) were examined among high school students.
Ramadhaniarti (2016)	The researcher investigated students' perceptions on teaching vocabulary using games.
Susanti and Trisnawati (2019)	Board games were used to improve learners' basic English grammar and perceptions on the use the games.
Wafi (2019)	A series of games (relay race, hidden eyes, music box, playing cards, satay sticks, and quiz competition) were included in the classroom to help learners in learning English syntax.
<i>Learning Experience (psychological aspects, and motivation)</i>	
Eckstein (2018)	Students and teachers were involved to determine the effects of game-based language learning on four areas: English development, game competence development, critical thinking development, and problem-solving development.
Grazza and Benmorsi (2018)	The study focused on the main issue faced by the students: FL anxiety. They were exposed to a new technique in the oral expression. The effects of using the game technique (Werewolf) in reducing FL anxiety among students were investigated.
Sevy-Biloon (2017)	Four types of games (Speaking Game, Boardgame, Board Rush, and Charades) were included in the studies to examine how these gameplays were able to intrinsically motivate, promote different learning styles, advance EL learning among 30 selected university students.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The discussion in the preceding section uncovered the problem backgrounds and one of the useful ways to overcome them. This section of the chapter will continue

deliberating the problems and issues closely related to the present study, highlighting the research gaps, and signifying the need for further inquiry in teaching speaking through Werewolf. There are several matters emphasised.

Numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the use of games in enhancing speaking skills and learning experience among learners via different research methods and designs, as shown in Table 1.3. Quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, and classroom action research designs were the commonly employed methods. Here, there is no single way of conducting the study if it suits the aims of the research (Patten & Newhart, 2018). In addition, research on the focused matter, which is using Werewolf in speaking lessons among primary ESL learners, has yet provided mature and sufficient information and knowledge. Therefore, there is a gap in this context. As a result, the present researcher chose to carry out a qualitative case study to answer the identified research questions. As the researcher would like to explore the strengths, challenges, and ways to overcome the challenges in the game implementation, a case study would be the best choice. As stated by Ridder (2017), a case study research scientifically discovers a real-life phenomenon and within its environmental context. The researcher is also able to observe the behavioural changes among learners throughout the phases of the activity. The qualitative findings and results may contribute to an in-depth understanding of the matter from the learners' point of view that is beneficial for the language teachers.

Table 1.3 Research methods employed in the past current research

Methods	Studies
Quantitative	Ariani (2019); Dore (2019); Grazza and Benmorsi (2018); Neupane (2019); Okanlawon et al. (2017); Puspitorini (2018); Putri et al. (2016); Rahmawati et al. (2019); Wrobetz (2019); Yong and Yeo (2016)
Qualitative	Adansi & Oringo (2019); Colby (2017); Rohdiana (2017); Sevy-Biloon (2017); Tilton (2019)
Mixed-methods	Cheng (2018); Eckstein (2018); Guaranga (2019); Kusnierek (2015)
Classroom Action Research	Dewi et al. (2017); Fauziah (2018); Kartikasari (2018); Maulana (2019); Nirmawati (2015); Nurbaya et al. (2016); Nurhayati (2015); Octaviana et al. (2019); Priyono (2014); York (2020)

As discussed in the preceding section, numerous researchers have been researching the effectiveness of games, in general, in various language skills and aspects. Table 1.4 classifies the related current studies conducted. It is observable that games can be applied to teach language skills and to enhance other aspects. Most of the studies demonstrated positive findings in terms of the effectiveness of games. Indeed, there are common strengths when there is an element of the game in learning L2. However, limited research discussed both the strengths and challenges of Werewolf in speaking language learning. It has contributed to another gap in the study.

Table 1.4 The use of games in the past research

Skills and aspects	Studies
Speaking	Adansi and Oringo (2019); Dionar and Adnan (2018); Kartikasari (2018); Maulana (2019); Putri et al. (2016); Rohdiana (2017); York (2020)
Reading	Akdogan (2017); Ayesha et al. (2016); Fauziah (2018); Giemwaruju and Surjosuseno (2018); Nurhayati (2015); Octaviana et al. (2019); Ramadhaniarti (2016); Wrobetz (2019)
Writing	Colby (2017); Fauziah (2018); Rahmawati et al. (2019); Yosephine and Yosephine (2017); Zahara and Fatimah (2018)
Grammar	Ariani (2019); Kamal and Kim (2019); Susanti and Trisnawati (2019); Wafi (2019)
Psychological aspects (motivation, anxiety)	Cheng (2018); Dore (2019); Grazza and Benmorsi (2018); Sevy-Biloon (2017); Yong and Yeo (2016)

Furthermore, it is observable that most of the research conducted was implemented among learners in secondary and tertiary levels, as shown in Table 1.5. Fewer studies explored the target issues among young learners in the primary school setting. Basically, young learners, aged below 12, typically have rather different interests, proficiency levels, cognitive abilities, and preferences as compared to teenagers and adolescences (Mok, 2013). By conducting this study and collecting qualitative data, the findings can fill the existing gaps by providing more information and understanding of how young learners think and learn which would be beneficial in the future reference.

Table 1.5 Settings of related current research

Settings	Studies
Pre-school level	Giemwaruju and Surjosuseno (2018); Nurhayati (2015)
Primary level	Rahmawati et al. (2019)
Secondary level	Adansi and Oringo (2019); Adek and Sitti (2019); Akdogan (2017); Ariani (2019); Azzahroh (2015); Dionar and Adnan (2018); Fauziah (2018); Kamal and Kim (2019); Kartikasari (2018); Maulana (2019); Nirmawati (2015); Okanlawon et al. (2017); Putri et al. (2016); Ramadhaniarti (2016); Wafi (2019); Yosephine and Yosephine (2017)
Tertiary level	Cheng (2018); Eckstein (2018); Grazza and Benmorsi (2018); Sevy-Biloon (2017); Susanti and Trisnawati (2019); Octaviana et al. (2019); Tilton (2019); Wrobotz (2019); Yong and Yeo (2016); York (2020)

Other than that, the past studies gathered were widely on English as Foreign Language (EFL) as compared to the ESL context. As the use of EL in different countries may be affected by the users' language use, learning strategies, and cultural views (Lee, 2016; Sato & Storch, 2020; Storch & Sato, 2019), there might be different opinions and thoughts on the use of games in speaking lessons. Hence, the present researcher intended to gain more understanding and viewpoints of the experience from the lens of Malaysian ESL learners. In addition, several researchers have proven that there was a significant difference in learning experience between learners from different genders (Amalia et al., 2019; Bahri et al., 2017; Lau et al., 2020). Thus, another context and gap opted in this study was the single-gender participants which were all male learners. The researcher could focus on the findings from the focused gender. This further demonstrated the suitability of employing a qualitative case study because it approached a more personalised context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Crowe et al., 2011; Thomas, 2021) which was Malaysian male ESL learners. Hence, the findings could provide more insights focusing on the context.

Table 1.6 delineated the gathered current research conducted in using the Werewolf game in education and language learning. In recent years, the game has caught the attention and interest of many researchers. Adek and Sitti (2019) proposed an outline and procedures of using the game in teaching speaking to EFL learners. Grazza and Benmorsi (2018) investigated the effectiveness of the game in alleviating

the FL anxiety experienced by the learners. Eckstein (2018) and York (2020) included the Werewolf game as part of the activities in their studies to enhance CCTS and spoken interaction, respectively. Moreover, Wrobetz (2019) used the game to improve learners' vocabulary mastery. As a result, it can be argued that the Werewolf game still has wide researchable space which needs to be explored. From the list provided in Table 1.6, most of the studies related to the Werewolf game were conducted in EFL and secondary or tertiary contexts. In addition, the studies still lacked a clear and in-depth understanding of the direct involvement of the Werewolf game among young learners as most of the studies covered the other aspects of learning. As a result, these elicited the research gaps because the present research intended to venture deeply into the experience playing the game among Malaysian primary ESL learners in speaking lessons which have yet been explored to date.

Table 1.6 Current research related to Werewolf game

Authors	Focus	Methodology	Research Gap
Adek and Sitti (2019)	Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EFL Senior high school learners 	Setting (Secondary EFL learners)
Eckstein (2018)	Critical Thinking and Problem-solving Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed method EFL learners and teachers Survey questionnaire and interview 	Mixed method, setting (tertiary EFL learners), using 3 types of games (Uno, Keep Talking and Nobody Explodes, and One Night Ultimate Werewolf) to enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills
Grazza and Benmorsi (2018)	FL anxiety level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative (quasi-experimental) 200 male and female EFL learners Score on Foreign Language Anxiety 	Quantitative, setting (Tertiary EFL learners), Using Werewolf to reduce FL anxiety
Wrobetz (2019)	Vocabulary retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative (Quasi-experimental) 13 EFL university learners 	Quantitative, setting (Tertiary EFL learners), using Werewolf to improve vocabulary retention
York (2020)	Spoken communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative 115 EFL university learners Questionnaire 	Quantitative, setting (Tertiary EFL learners)

In short, one of the main essences of concern that determines this study worth conducting is, as discussed in the preceding sections, that there is a need to suggest more practical language learning methods, particularly in developing speaking skills. This is because learners frequently encounter challenges in acquiring the skills due to proficiency, psychological, and environmental issues, as well as teachers often fall short of reliable speaking activities for young learners to interact and express opinions, ideas, and justification. Next, there has yet been sufficient research to date that demonstrates the use of the Werewolf game in speaking lessons in primary ESL context. Furthermore, language TnL has begun shifting from teacher-oriented teaching to communicative learner-centred activities in which games are one of the ideal options among teachers. Hence, a study that focuses on and provides a comprehensive understanding and picture experienced by learners of the proposed game, Werewolf, in speaking lessons is required.

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives (ROs) of this research are as following:

- I. To find out the advantages of using Werewolf in speaking lessons among primary ESL learners.
- II. To discover the challenges of using Werewolf in speaking lessons among primary ESL learners.
- III. To explore the ways suggested or taken to overcome the challenges encountered by the primary ESL learners in using Werewolf in speaking lessons.

1.5 Research Questions

The research sought to reveal and answer the following research questions (RQs):

- I. What are the advantages of using Werewolf in speaking lessons among primary ESL learners?
- II. What are the challenges of using Werewolf in speaking lessons among primary ESL learners?
- III. What are the ways suggested or taken to overcome the challenges encountered by the primary ESL learners in using Werewolf in speaking lessons?

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This section discusses the related approaches or theories in the present study, using the Werewolf game in speaking lessons among primary ESL learners. Figure 1.1 illustrates the approach and theories addressed in the present study.

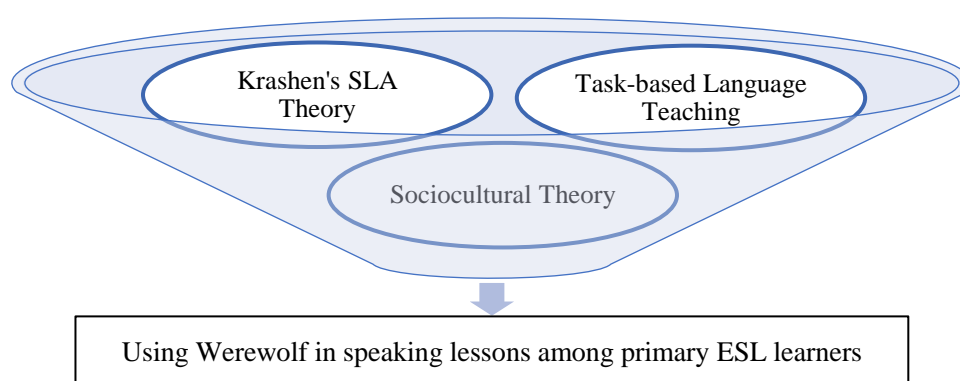


Figure 1.1 Related approach and theories in the present study

1.6.1 Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT)

In general, TBLT is one of the significant communicative language teaching methodologies that offers learners opportunities to create their own semantically meaningful utterances in a natural way (Byrnes & Manchon, 2014; Namaziandost et al., 2017). This approach focuses on tasks as the central and primary means of language teaching (Namaziandost et al., 2017). Ellis, Skehan, et al. (2020), and York (2020) pointed out that tasks, simply referred to as the activities, are what learners do with the target language to attain the objectives. The learners exchange and negotiate for meaning and information with others and this promotes their comprehension, production, and discussion (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Robinson, 2011). As a result, they learn to use the language needed for different daily conversations and situations.

Furthermore, TBLT values learners' roles, learning motivation, participation, interests, and confidence in doing the tasks in different settings (Branden, 2015; Motlagh et al., 2014). Hall (2017) reported that teacher talk should be reduced, in contrast, providing opportunities for learners to talk, practise, and produce the language. Teachers become the facilitator or task suppliers for learners to participate in meaning-focused tasks and simultaneously experiment with spontaneous and authentic English (Cheng, 2018). This assists the learners to concentrate on the subject matter and engaging their knowledge and opinions on the subject (Ellis, Skehan, et al., 2020). Indeed, the tasks prepared should be able to enhance fluency practice and classroom interaction which further generates learning opportunities (Bao & Du, 2015). Thus, it is reasonable to adapt TBLT in language learning as learners can fully participate in the activities.

Integrated Input Output Framework (IIOF) by Paul and Harris (2020) outlines a strong connection between the topic of the input and output tasks. It is claimed that deliberate introduction to the input tasks assists learners in completing the output task. Figure 1.2 depicts the task processes in the framework. Generally, it is the further revised version of the task structure framework proposed by Willis (1996). Similarly, IIOF comprises two cycles (Input Task and Output Task) in which each cycle consists of three basic phases, mainly Pre-task, Task, and Post-task.

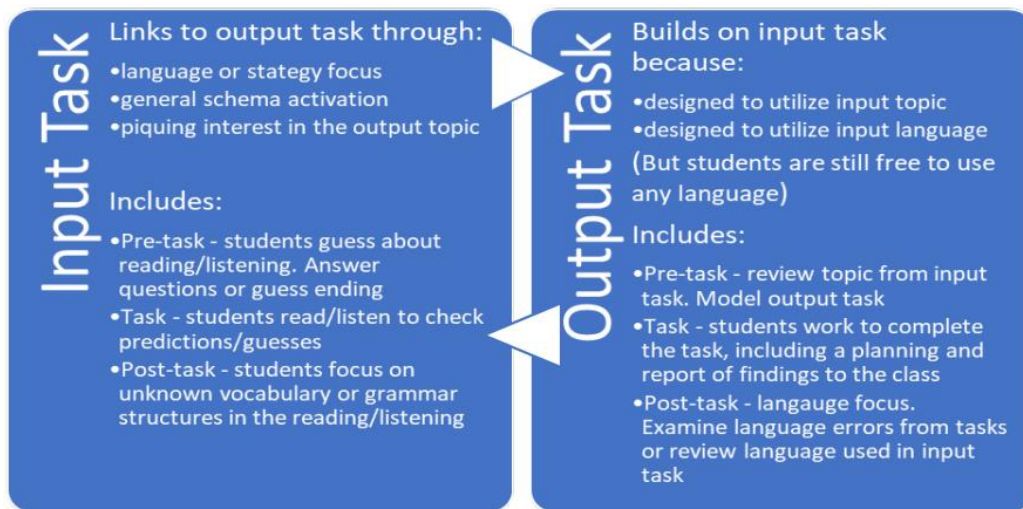


Figure 1.2 Integrated input output framework of TBLT (Paul & Harris, 2020)

The cycle begins with the Input Task whereby inputs are provided. The topic-related vocabulary, phrases, grammar, ideas, and thinking skills are explored and highlighted to help the learners understand the task instructions and needs (Paul & Harris, 2020). The inputs are useful in preparing the skills needed to complete the tasks (York, 2020). During this cycle, they are directed to the focused topic, hence relevant schemata are activated easing the introduction of the output tasks. Certainly, Ellis (2018) supported that before producing their utterances or language, the learners should be provided and allowed some time to receive relevant information or learn the language. Sufficient exposure and understanding of the language focus and context ensure the learners' participation in successful communication while completing the tasks. (Paul & Harris, 2020). Therefore, the initial cycle in the lesson is vital for learners' readiness.

After that, the learning process enters the Output Task whereby the learners produce and use their language known and learned in achieving the objectives set. As explained by Paul and Harris (2020), the Input Task cycle can play a role as the "large *pre-task* to the subsequent Output Tasks cycle" (p. 217). As in the Task stage, there could be brainstorming sessions, discussions, problem-solving exercises, or report presentations (Harmer, 2015) which are conducted orally or written. Here, the learners make full use of the language and skills learned throughout the pre-task or Input cycle. In the final stage which is post-task or language focus, they share their finding in

spoken or written form. Language features used are highlighted during the task cycle. Harmer (2015) explained that the teacher discusses the language used, makes corrections and adjustments, and provides feedbacks after the learners complete the assignments. Indeed, the tasks create opportunities to generate their language. It is believed that if they focus on form and structures is taken away, teachers can develop the learners' ability to do things in English. This does not mean that the accuracy is neglected (Ellis, Skehan, et al., 2020), however, the feedback on this is provided indirectly at the end of the activity. Teachers should enrich their learners' language by allowing using L2 as they use their language in everyday life.

1.6.2 Krashen's Theory of SLA

Next, this study also reflects the theory proposed by Krashen (2009) which argues that language acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language. Speakers are usually more concerned with the ideas and messages conveyed rather than understanding the form in their sentences (Adansi & Oringo, 2019). As a result, Krashen (2009) provided an insight into idealistic methods to be employed in language TnL. Providing comprehensible inputs in a stress-free classroom climate and messages that are interested by learners are the few suggestions presented. The present study focuses on two of Krashen's main hypotheses, mainly the input hypothesis and affective filter hypothesis.

1.6.2.1 Input Hypothesis

One of the interesting ideas was that language input serves as the main factor in language acquisition. To have an optimal language learning experience, teachers must be keen on their learners' initial knowledge (i) and the ability to receive new information inputs. The learners should be provided with understandable or comprehensible input (+1) which is slightly beyond their current productive and competency level ($i + 1$) (Verah, 2017). In fact, they have difficulty achieving learning goals and produce their utterances if the inputs received are tough and overwhelming

(Krashen, 2009). They should be spared some silent period to receive the inputs until they are ready to get engaged in the language production (Harmer, 2015). Once they are prepared, various activities and wide space for language production are available. Therefore, this corroborates that providing them with sufficient inputs, opportunities, and contexts to communicate and speak can develop their verbal communication and speaking skills.

1.6.2.2 Affective Filter Hypothesis

Besides, high self-confidence and low affective filter among ESL learners are essential in SLA (Mehdi et al., 2013). Emotional and psychological states such as low motivation, low self-esteem, shyness, inhibition, and anxiety can hinder language learning and production among learners (Krashen, 2009; Riadil, 2020). These factors create a 'filter' or 'a mental block' and reduces L2 acquisition (Verah, 2017). Moreover, Ahmed et al. (2017) elaborated that most learners are hesitant to speak L2 due to their concern of making grammatical mistakes or producing incomprehensible utterances. Unfortunately, they ignore the facts that learning is a process, and it is acceptable to make mistakes (Kryeziu, 2015). Therefore, they feel inferior and participate in the communication reluctantly (Riadil, 2020). Thus, low self-confidence level and high affective filter in learning impede the learners from improving their mastery of the language.

1.6.3 Sociocultural Theory (SCT)

Another theory informed in the present research is SCT which is one of the prominent theories in SLA. It was mainly associated with Vygotsky (1978), who proposed the importance of social interaction among learners and their environment. He highlighted the roles of language, active participation, actual communication, and social interaction in fostering learners' L2 development and acquisition (Noriati et al., 2012; Storch & Sato, 2019). This theory also assumes that knowledge is created in the mind based upon participation and actual experiences of utilising the language as the

means of mediation (Lantolf et al., 2015). In short, social interaction and participation via the use of L2 play vital roles in the learners' development.

Indeed, learning takes place through social interaction when the learners participate to gain new information (Owen & Razali, 2018) with an expert or a more capable person (Atamturk et al., 2018). It helps them expand their zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Feryok, 2019). As illustrated in Figure 1.3, the ZPD is the distance between learners' prior knowledge and what they can learn with the guidance or assistance of adults or a more knowledgeable other (MKO) within a certain amount of time (Anderson, 2013). Feryok (2019) explained that ZPD acts as a tool for teachers to establish an intersubjective space that allows them to support their learners via collaborative interaction (among teachers and learners, and learners themselves) in the tasks to produce meaning in L2. Thus, collaboration and cooperation among the learners should be optimised in the learning process.

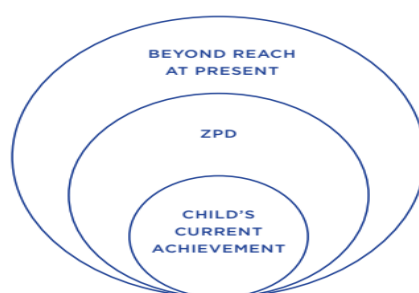


Figure 1.3 Representation of Zone of Proximal Development (Anderson, 2013)

Here, the teacher and MKOs play the role of the mediators in the learning through scaffolding (Lantolf et al., 2015). SCT addressed that this interaction potentially helps the learners learn more than when they are by themselves (Storch & Sato, 2019). They are active members of the learning group, and they work collaboratively to solve assigned tasks and problems. The teacher plays the role of a facilitator who helps the learners to get the target knowledge and skills required (Owen & Razali, 2018). When they can benefit from the experience of interacting with one another, they are in the ZPD (Lantolf et al., 2015). Through this interaction, the learners gain the opportunities to access and accommodate information and knowledge received efficiently.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

In SLA, non-linguistics aspects may influence one's learning. Alizadeh (2016) explained that intrinsic motivators sustain involvement and deepens learning interests. Moreover, Brown (2014) stated that most learners with a high anxiety level experience more inhibition to perform. This builds barriers to protect themselves against any failures. In addition to that, they might not be prepared to take risk of performing intelligent guesses or experimenting with the language for fear of making mistakes. Hence, it increases affective filters which hinder language learning and acquisition (Krashen, 2009). As a result, games are one of the tools that can be implemented to reduce and overcome this challenge. Armida (2019) supported that the games help the learners utilise and practise L2 in a stress-free way. This provides relaxed atmosphere as though they are only having a regular conversation with friends during the speaking activity (Sevy-Biloon, 2017). Indeed, games potentially create the learning environment which support the learners' production.

Furthermore, the present researcher uses the board game, Werewolf, as a task in the speaking lessons, as conducted by York (2020). In the game, the learners were assigned into two teams (villagers and werewolves) with random roles of characters. The main task requires them to eliminate the opponent to win the game. They contributed meaningful utterances and decisions via discussion without consciously worrying about the linguistic errors and mistakes. The game reflects the common principles presented in TBLT whereby the learners involve actively in the natural interaction and meaning production as they use L2 to achieve the specific outcome. Indeed, it emphasises on learner-centredness. Teaching EL in learner-centred approach is also highlighted in Primary School Standard Curriculum (KSSR) (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia [KPM], 2018) and 21st century TnL approach (Nur Syafiqah & Melor, 2019) in which learners dominate their learning (Hall, 2017). Hence, the Werewolf game encourages the learners' participations in their learning as it is learner-centred in nature.

Besides, the Werewolf game involves the learners in social interaction via discussion, observation, and negotiation throughout the game. As delivered in SCT,

they develop language skills through active participation and communication. During the discussion phase in the game, they may assist one another. This expands their ZPD as they are facilitated to do tasks which are beyond their present ability through scaffolding, exploration, and problem-solving (So & Seo, 2018). They try to find words and utterances to convey their ideas and opinions to persuade and convince their peers. Hence, they must use L2 as the mediator which functions as a crucial tool in completing the game or task.

Figure 1.4 depicts the conceptual framework addressed in the present research which adapted the principles and concepts from Anderson (2013), Krashen (2009), Paul and Harris (2020), and York (2020). The lesson using Werewolf, which served as a task, was divided into two major cycles (Input Task and Output Task) with three phases, mainly Pre-play, Play, and Post-play (York, 2020). The task began with Input Task Cycle. In this stage, learners were introduced with the instructions and tasks. The researcher tried to establish stress-free learning atmosphere by preparing them with the needed skills. They were exposed with the essential vocabulary and phrases to convey their messages in the game. They also listened to the game instructions and watched videos so that they could understand the procedures well. This is crucial as they could participate well if they comprehended the inputs.

Next, the activity enters the Output Task. The Input Task cycle plays a role as the “large *pre-task*” to the Output Tasks cycle (Paul & Harris, 2020, p. 217). The Play stage began by assigning their random roles. The learners with the ‘special powers’ played their roles during the ‘nights’. After each night, they carried out a discussion to identify the werewolves. The learners helped one another to provide words to deliver the intended ideas clearly. In this stage, their ZPD was expanded as they were assisted to express themselves independently. Thus, they developed the speaking skills through the activity rather than having memorisation of words and sentence structure (Ellis, 2011). Finally, the Post-play stage was carried out once the game ended. A debriefing session was conducted by providing positive remarks or praising on the correct responses and language use, as well as noting any errors and mistakes indirectly to prevent fossilisation.

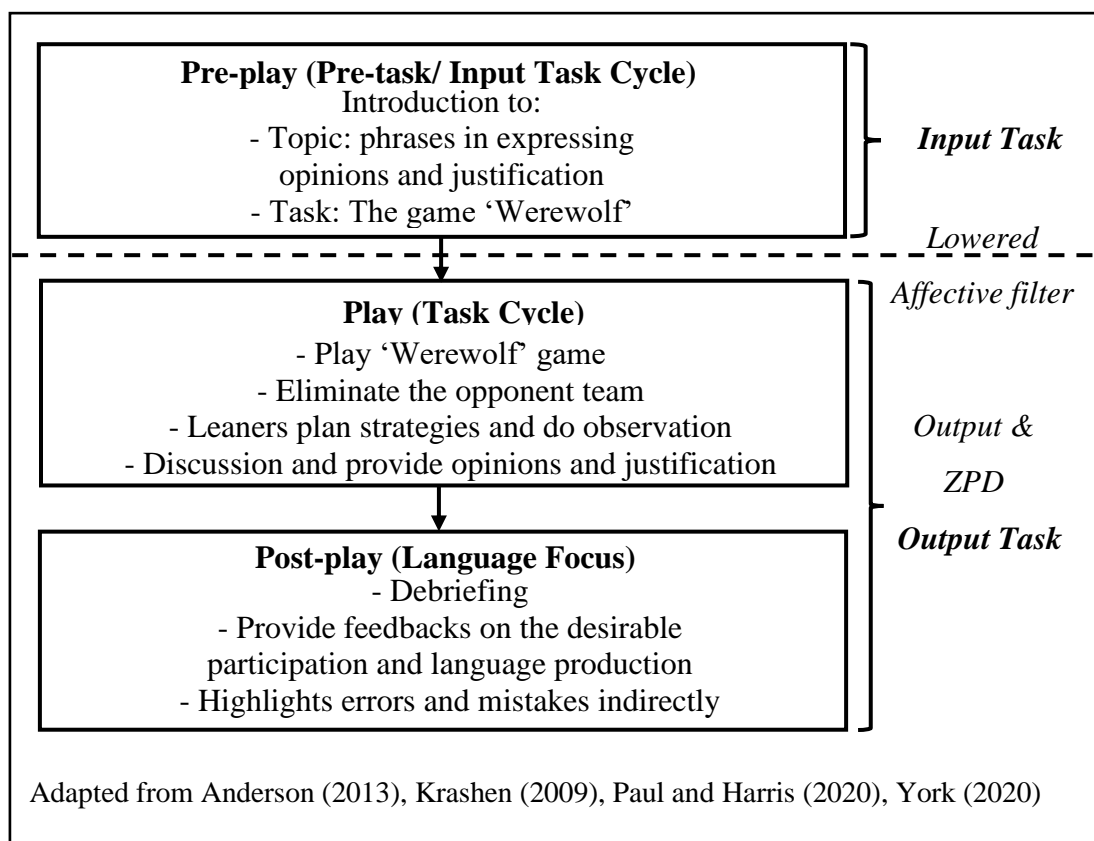


Figure 1.4 Conceptual framework of using Werewolf game in speaking lessons

1.8 Significance of the Study

In general, speaking has been posted as one of the vital language skills that should be mastered and acquired by language learners and users. This productive skill lays the foundation for effective communication and interaction on daily basis. Communication serves as a fundamental element in human life as it is highly demanded in every field (Reddy, 2019). It is because the ability to speak and convey the intended ideas, thoughts, and opinions verbally is the main aim in language learning (Nunan, 2015). Adek and Sitti (2019) added that learners should be able to use the language for communication purposes with ease. The inability of performing oral communication may cause uneasiness and failure of conveying intended meaning. It would, unfortunately, be carried forward till later years when the learners pursue higher levels of education. Thus, building a good foundation of speaking skill among young learners from primary level is imperative.

Unfortunately, it is a well-known phenomenon that EL learners who are good in comprehension, writing, and grammar, might have difficulties in speaking (Adansi & Oringo, 2019). They frequently find speaking as the most challenging and fearful tasks and activities (Alharbi, 2015; Alonso, 2014; Gudu, 2015; Sarwar et al., 2014). Most ESL learners might encounter shyness and fear of making mistakes in their speeches in which cause them having doubts in their speaking abilities (Azzahroh, 2015; Cheng, 2018). Hence, vigorous measurements should be taken in overcoming and remedying the situation so that these learners are well-prepared with the essential skills before going to higher education levels or workplace.

KPM (2018) outlined the standards in Year Four's *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Penilaian* (DSKP). Learners should learn and achieve the target standards at the end of their lessons or the schooling years. More emphases have been placed on speaking skill in the revised Year Four DSKP (KPM, 2018) and Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)-aligned EL textbooks. The learners are encouraged to exchange information and participate in active oral communication with the others to complete certain tasks (Sabudin, 2019). Speaking is focused as a core and an independent language skill in the curriculum. The activity in the study serves as a medium to develop and achieve the learning standards aimed in the DSKP, mainly “2.1.1 Explain and give reasons for basic opinions”, “2.1.2 Find out about and describe experiences in the past”, and “2.1.4 Give reasons for simple predictions” (KPM, 2018, p. 26). Hence, this can meet the needs in the curriculum determined.

Based on the needs, this research would suggest and provide the primary ESL teachers further insights on the strengths and challenges of Werewolf game. This game provides their learners opportunities to express opinions, share experience, and make justified predictions to win the game. As a result, the teachers gain more options of methods and activities to be adapted while devising classroom activities which develop their learners' speaking skills. Hence, appropriate speaking activities enable them to prepare expressive and communicative young speakers.

Apart from that, the result of the study provided the researchers and scholars the information and insights in acquiring speaking skills using the Werewolf game. The research also informed the different ways to be implemented in speaking lessons in ESL primary school context. Here, the strengths and challenges of using the game in speaking lessons among young learners were iterated in a deeper manner. Moreover, appropriate measurements were discovered and identified. Therefore, this contributed more understandings to the literature.

1.9 Scope of Study

This study focused on discovering the strength, challenges, and suggested ways to overcome the identified downsides in using Werewolf game in speaking lessons. The game was used as a task to encourage learners participating and expressing their opinions, thoughts, and ideas. They must make observation, share their experience, and make predictions to complete the game. The research was conducted among primary ESL young learners, aged 10, in a school in the Southern Peninsula of Malaysia. They were targeted as the research sample because they involved in the learning standards and game directly. As the study was deeply contextualised, a single-gender group of learners (male) was included. This enabled the researcher to focus on the specific point of view of the group. Besides, this research was conducted in six 60-minute lessons which spent up to six weeks as to achieve data saturation. Semi-structured interview protocols and observation protocols were exploited for data collection. The main aspects focused on the study were the usefulness and obstacles of using Werewolf in speaking lessons, namely the learners' motivation (participation, confidence, and learning interest), learning, thinking skills, relationship, behaviours, speech content, the game procedures and time management.

1.10 Definition of Terminology

This section defines the significant terms in the research entitled **“Using Werewolf Game in Speaking Lessons among Primary ESL Learners: A Case**

Study”. This enables the researchers to ensure the exactitude and lucidity of the research. Hence, the definitions are derived from dictionaries and the conceptual definitions regarding the intervention would be stated as well.

1.10.1 Using

Collins English Dictionary (2017) refers ‘using’ as use something or do something with it to do a job to achieve a particular result or effect. Steel (2009) defined the word ‘use’ as to do something with a machine, an object, a method, and others for a particular purpose. This research used Werewolf game as a classroom task for learners to work on. They spoke and exchanged their ideas, opinions, and thoughts in the process. The game was also used to create speaking opportunities for them so that they could achieve the objectives in the game.

1.10.2 Werewolf Game

In the context of this study, games are referred as the pleasurable and meaningful activities which create an artificial setting that encourages communication, interaction, and language practice based on presented rules, objectives, challenges, and conflicts. The selected game is Werewolf, a renowned social deduction game, which increases learners’ opportunities to speak and express their opinions, thoughts, and reasonings (York, 2020). The game is used in the study as an activity in the speaking lessons.

1.10.3 Speaking Lessons

The present study refers speaking as an interactive process between speaker and interlocutor which is used to communicate ideas, opinions, reasons, and feelings based on the context or situations through sounds, words, and meaningful utterances.

Besides, speaking skill is referred as the ability to talk at any time and in any situation and to produce the target language and share their ideas in a coherent way the listeners can comprehend the utterances and intended ideas with ease. In the context of this study, the lessons primarily focused on speaking skills. The learners used the skills as a medium of exchanging information in the lesson.

1.10.4 Primary ESL Learners

Steel (2009) described a learner as a person who is learning a subject or skill. In this research, the participants involved will be those who are learning and studying in Year 4 in a national primary school in Southern Peninsula of Malaysia. These learners use EL as their L2 to communicate either at school or at home.

1.10.5 Case Study

Thomas (2021) summarised and defined a case study as a holistic study which involves the analysis of “persons, events, decisions... other phenomena” (p. 12) by methods to inform and explain some analytical themes. In this study, the researcher explored the use of Werewolf game among primary ESL learners to understand their experience in the learning process.

1.11 Summary

This chapter began elucidating the preliminary points of this study by presenting the factors of speaking difficulties and some potential methods that can be applied to remedy the situation. Next, the discussion further identified and evaluated the problems and research gaps in the specific area of interest which determined the worth doing of this research. Then, the issue and direction of the study were stated clearly. Following that, frameworks in SLA that informed the research were explained.

Besides, the researcher narrowed down the circle of the study and described the expected outcomes so that the focus was clear and highlighted. Finally, to provide an unambiguous and comprehensive idea of the key points of the study, relevant terminologies were defined.

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Appendix A Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Semi-structured Interview Protocol

Using Werewolf Game in Speaking Lessons among Primary ESL Learners: A Case Study

Interviewer : _____ Day/ Date : _____
Interviewee's Code : _____ Time : _____

1. What do you normally feel while speaking English?
Apakah perasaan anda semasa bertutur Bahasa Inggeris?
2. Have you played Werewolf game before? What language did you use in the game?
Pernahkah anda main Werewolf? Bahasa apakah yang anda gunakan?
3. What do you think about the Werewolf game?
Apakah pandangan anda tentang Werewolf?
4. What did you feel while playing the game?
Apakah perasaan anda apabila bermain permainan ini?
5. What did you learn or get from the game?
Apakah yang anda dapat pelajari melalui permainan ini?
6. Which part of the game did you enjoy?
Bahagian manakah yang anda gemari?
7. Which part of the game helped you in learning speaking English? Was it easier to speak while playing the game?
Bahagian manakah membantu anda belajar bertutur Bahasa Inggeris? Adakah ia mudah untuk bertutur dalam Bahasa Inggeris semasa permainan ini?
8. Which part of the game did you find hard/ challenging/ less enjoyable?
Bahagian manakah yang anda rasa sukar/ mencabar/ kurang menyeronokan?
9. Overall, do you think it is easy or difficult to play Werewolf game? Why?
Secara keseluruhan, adakah anda rasa ia mudah atau sukar untuk main Werewolf? Mengapa?
10. How did your friends behave while playing?
Bagaimanakah rakan anda bertindak laku semasa bermain?
11. How did the game influence your relationship with your classmates?
Bagaimanakah permainan ini mempengaruhi hubungan anda dengan rakan sekelas?
12. Do you feel that a language can be learned while having fun in the classroom? Why?
Adakah anda berasa bahawa suatu bahasa boleh dipelajari sambil berseronok dalam kelas? Mengapa?
13. What do you think if Werewolf game is done in the future lessons? Would you like to play this game again? Why?
Apakah anda pandangan anda jika Werewolf dimainkan dalam kelas akan datang? Adakah anda hendak bermain permainan ini lagi? Mengapa?

14. What problems did you face throughout the gameplay (before, while, after playing)?
Apakah masalah yang anda hadapi sepanjang permainan ini (sebelum, semasa, selepas main)?
15. Could you describe the problem?
Bolehkah anda ceritakan masalah tersebut?
16. Did these problems discourage you from continuing the game?
Adakah masalah tersebut menghalang anda untuk bermain?
17. How did these problems affect you?
Bagaimana masalah ini mempengaruhi anda?
18. What were the difficulties you faced when you were in the discussion process?
Apakah kekangan yang anda hadapi semasa anda menyertai proses perbincangan?
19. How did you manage the problem?
Bagaimanakah anda mengurus masalah yang dihadapi?
20. What do you do to overcome the problem?
Apakah langkah/ tindakan yang anda ambil untuk mengatasi masalah?
21. What do you think about the ways taken?
Apakah pandangan anda tentang langkah yang telah anda ambil?
22. Do you think the ways taken were helpful? Why?
Adakah langkah mengatasi yang anda ambil itu berkesan?
23. What would you suggest to improve the gameplay?
Apakah cadangan penambahbaikan permainan ini yang anda ingin berikan?
24. What are the supports or teaching that you need so that you can play the game well?
Apakah sokongan atau pengajaran yang anda perlukan supaya anda dapat bermain permainan ini dengan lebih baik?