

## **Developing a communicative board game as a teaching medium: Describe products through descriptive text in English speaking**

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### **Abstract**

Speaking remains one of the most difficult skills for Indonesian students learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Many junior high school learners struggle with limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and fear of making mistakes, which often results in silence and low participation during speaking activities. In addition, classroom practices that only involve group representatives in oral presentations limit speaking opportunities for the rest of the students. These issues highlight the need for engaging, interactive, and inclusive learning media that can motivate students to speak confidently and equally. This study aimed to develop a communicative board game as a speaking medium to teach descriptive text for 8th-grade students in junior high school. The research employed a Research and Development (R&D) design consisting of seven stages: collecting information and data, analyzing the data, designing the product, expert validation, revising, producing the final product, and conducting field testing. Participants included 29 students and one English teacher at a private Islamic junior high school in Medan. Data were collected through interviews and questionnaires to determine student needs. Findings indicated that students required fun, interactive speaking activities that encouraged them to speak more confidently. The final product consisted of a communicative board game supported by cards, dice, pawns, and a cube. Expert validation and classroom implementation showed that the game improved student participation, encouraged speaking practice, and provided equal opportunities for all students to engage. This study concludes that the board game is an effective and practical medium for teaching descriptive speaking in EFL junior high school contexts.

### **Keywords**

communicative board game, descriptive text, English speaking, guessing game, Research and Development (R&D), product promotion

## Introduction

Speaking is widely recognized as one of the most challenging language skills for students learning English as a foreign language (EFL), particularly in Indonesia. Based on pre-observation conducted at a private Islamic junior high school in Medan, it was found that many students considered speaking to be the most difficult skill to master. The challenges they encountered stemmed from their lack of vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and a strong fear of making mistakes, all of which contributed to their reluctance to express ideas verbally. Consequently, students often remained silent during speaking activities, leading to minimal engagement and low contribution during English learning. This issue is consistent with findings by Fitriana (2020), who highlighted that EFL students frequently experience anxiety when asked to speak in English, often due to insufficient lexical knowledge and fear of negative evaluation.

Furthermore, classroom observations revealed that teachers contributed to this issue by applying conventional teaching methods that limited students' speaking opportunities. Instead of involving all learners, only one representative from each group was asked to present discussions by the teacher, while the rest of the group members remained passive listeners. This condition is problematic as it contradicts the principles of communicative language teaching, which emphasize learner-centered interaction and equal opportunity to use the target language. According to Rohdiana (2017), teachers must be creative in selecting interesting materials and must employ varied strategies, such as role plays, discussions, and educational games, to promote active participation and enhance students' speaking performance.

In addressing the issues above, it is essential to consider the role of communicative competence in speaking instruction. Communicative competence, as defined by Richards (2006), refers to a learner's ability not only to understand and produce grammatically correct sentences but also to use them appropriately in various communicative contexts. Lin and Chien (2010) support this view, stating that effective oral communication requires both linguistic accuracy and pragmatic appropriateness. Thus, EFL classrooms must provide students with opportunities to engage in real-life communication tasks that promote both fluency and accuracy.

One such opportunity lies in integrating genre-based speaking tasks into classroom practice. In the context of the 2013 English Curriculum (Kemdikbud, 2017), students are required to understand and produce a variety of text types, including procedure, narrative, recount, report, and descriptive texts. Among these, descriptive text serves as a foundational genre that helps students describe people, places, animals, or objects in detail using specific language features. Although typically taught through writing, descriptive text can be utilized in speaking instructions to support students in describing products, thereby simulating authentic communication contexts.

An engaging way to bring this genre into speaking tasks is through product-promotion scenarios, where students describe and present products as if selling them. This task reflects real-life speaking situations and aligns with entrepreneurial learning principles. Wahyuni and Rofiki (2022) found that product-based learning improved students'

speaking motivation and creativity by allowing them to simulate real-world communication. However, their study did not incorporate structured instructional media to facilitate interaction, which can limit student participation and consistency in learning outcomes.

To bridge this gap, this present study proposes the development of a communicative board game as a teaching medium. Board games provide structured, interactive environments that foster student engagement and equal participation. According to Nurhayati and Fitriana (2021), educational board games can improve vocabulary retention, reduce speaking anxiety, and encourage spontaneous language use. Similarly, Chen and Hsu (2020) argue that incorporating board games into EFL classrooms promotes motivation and collaborative speaking, especially when integrated with task-based instruction. By designing a board game that embeds descriptive text elements and simulates product promotion, students are given the chance to describe products orally within a communicative and game-based context.

What distinguishes this present study from previous ones is its integrated pedagogical approach. While Rohdiana (2017) and Nurhayati and Fitriana (2021) emphasized the use of games for general speaking purposes, this study introduces a genre-based communicative board game specifically designed for teaching descriptive text through product description. Unlike previous models that focus on selective participation, the game employs turn-based mechanics to ensure that every student is actively involved in speaking. Moreover, by incorporating entrepreneurial simulation into the board game design, the activity not only builds linguistic and communicative skills but also fosters creativity, confidence, and real-world application of English. Therefore, this research offers a novel instructional design that merges genre-based language instruction, communicative speaking tasks, and game-based learning into a single, effective medium tailored for junior high school students.

## Method

The research method outlines the detailed procedures undertaken in the study, allowing readers to assess the suitability of the chosen methodology. This study employed the Research and Development (R&D) approach, which focuses on creating an educational product based on the analysis of students' needs. The R&D method adopted in this study is based on the model developed by Borg and Gall. According to Borg and Gall (2003), Research and Development is a systematic process used to design, test, and refine educational products until they reach a defined level of effectiveness. In this study, the R&D process was implemented through seven stages: collecting information, analyzing the data, designing the learning media, validating the product, revising the product, producing the final version, and conducting field testing.

In addition, the classification of the questionnaire used in the needs analysis of this study was adapted from Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) framework of target needs, which includes three key components: necessities, lacks, and wants. They emphasize the importance of addressing these three aspects when carrying out a needs analysis. In this

study, a total of thirty-four closed-ended items were distributed to respondents, consisting of six items on necessities, three items on lacks, and five items on wants.

## **Participants**

The subject of this study was 8<sup>th</sup> graders at a private islamic school in Medan. These participants were selected due to the observation that the instructional media employed in teaching descriptive text were not sufficiently to effectively engage students in speaking activities. The media used did not provide sufficient stimulation, challenge, or communicative interaction to encourage students to actively participate in oral language practice. In the observed classroom, the teacher relied primarily on PowerPoint presentations and paper-based materials, which, from the researcher's perspective, were inadequate in fostering the development of students' speaking skills. Moreover, the paper-based tasks were used solely for documenting group discussions, and only one representative from each group was assigned to present the results. Consequently, the majority of students were deprived of meaningful opportunities to speak and improve their oral proficiency. This lack of inclusive participation hindered the creation of a communicative learning environment, which is essential for developing students' confidence and competence in speaking English.

## **Instruments**

The data in this study were gathered using two instruments: interviews and questionnaires. The interview was conducted with the English teacher, while the questionnaires were distributed to students and designed in a multiple-choice format to allow them to select responses. Data collection was carried out through both the interview and the questionnaires. The interview was recorded using a mobile phone and involved a discussion with the English teacher to gain insight into the instructional media used for teaching speaking and to identify challenges students faced during the learning process, particularly in speaking activities. The researcher also directly observed the teaching media used in the classroom. Meanwhile, the questionnaires were distributed to eighth-grade students to explore their learning needs and interests related to speaking, with a focus on speaking descriptive text.

## **Data Analysis**

The collected data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative data, obtained from the teacher interview, were transcribed from the audio recordings into written form. Quantitative data, gathered from student questionnaires, were analyzed by calculating the statistical percentages of each response. The questionnaire responses were then categorized into three key areas based on Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) target needs framework: necessities, lacks, and wants. These analyses were essential in determining the most appropriate speaking medium for students at a private Islamic junior high school in Medan, and in identifying their specific needs and interests in learning oral descriptive text.

## Results and Discussions

The development process of the Communicative Board Game as a speaking medium followed seven key stages: (1) data and information collection, (2) needs analysis, (3) media design, (4) expert validation, (5) revision, (6) final product development, and (7) field testing.

### Gathering Data and Information

Before conducting the main research, preliminary data and information were gathered through classroom observation. The observation showed that the eighth-grade English teacher at a private Islamic junior high school in Medan primarily used PowerPoint to facilitate the teaching of descriptive text. However, this medium was found to be uninteresting and ineffective in motivating students to actively engage in speaking tasks. In addition, the teacher often divided students into groups and required each group to select a representative to present their discussion results. This method limited speaking opportunities to only a few students, while the rest remained passive throughout the lesson. As a result, only the group representatives were able to practice their speaking skills, while the majority of students lacked meaningful opportunities for oral language development.

### Need Analysis

A questionnaire was administered to 29 eighth-grade students at a private Islamic junior high school in Medan as a means to identify the students' learning needs. The questionnaire contained 14 items designed to assess learners' needs in relation to speaking instruction, particularly in descriptive text. The needs analysis focused on three core categories: necessities, lacks, and wants, based on the framework proposed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987). This analysis provided a clearer understanding of what students require in order to enhance their speaking skills in a more engaging and communicative environment.

### *Necessity*

Necessity refers to the types of needs determined by the requirements of the target learning situation. In this study, a needs analysis was conducted through questionnaires designed to identify what students consider essential for learning. The results indicated that students expressed a strong preference for appropriate and engaging learning media to support their practice in oral descriptive text. Additionally, students reported that they felt more comfortable practicing English with their peers rather than with their teacher, suggesting that peer interaction provides a more relaxed and supportive environment for speaking activities.

**Table 1.** Students Necessities Analysis Speaking Media of Descriptive Text

| No | Questions                                                                                                                | Items                                       | F  | Percentage | N                          |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----|------------|----------------------------|
| 1  | In practicing speaking skill when studying Descriptive Text, you usually discuss more with...                            | Friends                                     | 15 | 51.70%     | 29                         |
|    |                                                                                                                          | Teacher                                     | 14 | 48.30%     |                            |
| 2  | Your goal in learning Descriptive Text is....                                                                            | to be able to speak English                 | 5  | 17.20%     | 29                         |
|    |                                                                                                                          | to be able to explain something in English  | 7  | 24.20%     |                            |
|    |                                                                                                                          | to be able to describe something in English | 15 | 51.70%     |                            |
|    |                                                                                                                          | Others                                      | 2  | 6.90%      |                            |
|    |                                                                                                                          |                                             |    |            |                            |
| 3  | Does your English teacher use media when teaching Descriptive Text?                                                      | Yes                                         | 26 | 89.70%     | 29                         |
|    |                                                                                                                          | No                                          | 3  | 10.30%     |                            |
| 4  | When teaching descriptive text, teacher usually uses learning media such as...                                           | Powerpoint                                  | 26 | 52.00%     | 50<br>(Multiple Responses) |
|    |                                                                                                                          | Game                                        | -  | -          |                            |
|    |                                                                                                                          | Pictures                                    | 12 | 24.00%     |                            |
|    |                                                                                                                          | Videos                                      | 10 | 20.00%     |                            |
|    |                                                                                                                          | Others                                      | 2  | 4.00%      |                            |
| 5  | Do you think the media used by the teacher can help you train or improve speaking skills when studying descriptive text? | Yes                                         | 28 | 96.60%     | 29                         |
|    |                                                                                                                          | No                                          | 1  | 3.40%      |                            |
| 6  | In your opinion, is the use of media needed to make you easier in learning Descriptive Text?                             | Yes                                         | 28 | 96.60%     | 29                         |
|    |                                                                                                                          | No                                          | 1  | 3.40%      |                            |

Based on the questionnaire results, students recognized the need for appropriate, engaging media to support their learning of oral descriptive texts. More than half (51.7%) preferred practicing English with peers rather than with the teacher (48.3%). This highlights their need for collaborative, low-anxiety speaking environments. Additionally, 51.7% stated that the main purpose of learning descriptive text was to describe something in English, which directly reflects the functional focus of language use in context. These findings align with Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) framework of "necessities," which emphasizes what learners need to function effectively in a target situation. It also echoes the findings of Nurhayati & Fitriana (2021), who confirmed that learners benefit from communicative environments supported by interactive media like board games, which enhance speaking motivation and confidence. Similarly, Chen and

Hsu (2020) found that using communicative games significantly improved students' speaking performance and motivation in EFL classrooms.

However, the continued use of PowerPoint (reported by 52% of students) as the main teaching tool contradicts these necessities. This finding was supported by the study of Rohdiana (2017) which found that traditional medium like PowerPoint made lack interaction and fail to stimulate active speaking, reinforcing the need for alternative, student-centered media.

### **Lacks**

To identify students' areas of difficulty, several questionnaire items addressed their challenges in learning descriptive text.

**Table 2.** Students' Lacks Analysis Speaking Media of Descriptive Text

| No | Questions                                                                           | Items                                             | F  | Percentage | N  |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----|------------|----|
| 1  | Do you have any difficulties while learning descriptive text?                       | Yes                                               | 11 | 37.90%     | 29 |
|    |                                                                                     | No                                                | 8  | 62.10%     |    |
| 2  | In your opinion, when learning descriptive text, the most difficult material is.... | Things                                            | 3  | 10.30%     | 29 |
|    |                                                                                     | Public builds/places                              | 9  | 31.10%     |    |
|    |                                                                                     | Animals                                           | 14 | 48.30%     |    |
|    |                                                                                     | People                                            | 3  | 10.30%     |    |
| 3  | While learning about Descriptive Text material, you are more likely to...           | Active (Be braver to speak English)               | 13 | 44.80%     | 29 |
|    |                                                                                     | Passive (Prefer to be silent and afraid to speak) | 16 | 55.20%     |    |

From the data above, Despite the majority of students (62.1%) reporting no general difficulty in learning descriptive text, 55.2% identified as passive participants in class. Moreover, 48.3% reported difficulty describing animals—more than those who struggled with public buildings (31.1%), people (10.3%), or things (10.3%). These findings suggest a specific content-related weakness in oral expression related to animal descriptions.

These lacks indicate that learners may not struggle with understanding descriptive content but with expressing it fluently and confidently. This result was in line with Richard's (2006) theory that communicative competence goes beyond grammatical knowledge to include the ability to express language appropriately in context. Similarly, Wahyuni & Rofiki (2022) reported that students performed better when exposed to familiar and visual-based descriptive content, such as animals, because such content lowers the cognitive burden during speaking. Therefore, the selection of animal-based descriptive content in this study was appropriate for addressing learners' specific lacks as students are familiar and easy to visualize, was supported by Fitriana (2020), who noted that concrete, familiar objects facilitate student speech production in descriptive speaking tasks.

## **Wants**

Wants is the learners expect about language that they want to master. Table 3 displayed students' general wants in learning English, especially speaking in descriptive text.

**Table 3.** Students' Wants Analysis Speaking Media of Descriptive Text

| No | Questions                                                                                                                 | Items       | F  | Percentage | N  |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----|------------|----|
| 1  | When learning English, the learning media that you need to improve speaking skills is....                                 | PowerPoint  | 8  | 27,6%      | 29 |
|    |                                                                                                                           | Game        | 11 | 37,9%      |    |
|    |                                                                                                                           | Pictures    | 3  | 10,3%      |    |
|    |                                                                                                                           | Videos      | 7  | 24,2%      |    |
| 2  | In your opinion, does the use of game as learning media can improve your speaking skills, especially in descriptive text? | Yes         | 28 | 96,6%      | 29 |
|    |                                                                                                                           | No          | 1  | 3,4%       |    |
| 3  | Have you ever heard of the Communicative Board Game?                                                                      | Yes         | 23 | 79,3%      | 29 |
|    |                                                                                                                           | No          | 6  | 20,7%      |    |
| 4  | Do you think the Communicative Board Game can improve your speaking skills in Descriptive Text material?                  | Yes         | 23 | 79,3%      | 29 |
|    |                                                                                                                           | No          | -  | -          |    |
|    |                                                                                                                           | No idea     | 6  | 20,7%      |    |
| 5  | In your opinion, the use of Communicative Board Games to improve speaking skills in Descriptive Text material will be.... | Interesting | 21 | 72,5%      | 29 |
|    |                                                                                                                           | Boring      | -  | -          |    |
|    |                                                                                                                           | Just normal | 1  | 3,4%       |    |
|    |                                                                                                                           | Others      | 1  | 3,4%       |    |
|    |                                                                                                                           | No answer   | 6  | 20,7%      |    |

The data highlighted that students desired engaging and enjoyable media to improve their speaking abilities. A significant portion (37.9%) preferred learning through games, followed by PowerPoint (27.6%), video (24.2%), and pictures (10.3%). Furthermore, 96.6% of the respondents agreed that game-based learning could help them improve their speaking skills in descriptive texts. The majority were familiar with board games (79.3%), and 72.5% rated such games as interesting.

These preferences reflect the “wants” component in Hutchinson and Waters’ framework, which refers to learners’ subjective desires and interests. The strong preference for game-based media aligns with Fitriana & Santosa (2022), who emphasized that games enhance engagement, reduce anxiety, and foster communicative competence. Likewise, Chen and Hsu (2020) found that students participating in communicative board games demonstrated significantly improved oral fluency and classroom participation. This result also challenges the assumption that digital or traditional media (e.g., PowerPoint) suffice in speaking instruction. As shown by Klimova (2015), student interest and enjoyment are key predictors of oral participation. Thus, developing a communicative board game that involves peer interaction and role-playing aligns with students’ preferences and learning motivation.

In this study, role-playing was implemented through a guessing game, where students were asked to describe animals in a persuasive manner as if they were promoting them as saleable products. This approach integrated descriptive language with elements of entrepreneurship, encouraging learners to apply English in a meaningful, contextualized way. Such design reflects the principle of task-based learning, where speaking tasks are embedded in real-life scenarios, as supported by Bygate (2018), who emphasized the value of task repetition and authentic interaction in fluency development. Furthermore, Fitriana & Santosa (2022) noted that role-play and game-based learning improve learner autonomy and communicative competence, while Chen and Hsu (2020) confirmed that learners involved in promotional, game-based tasks demonstrated significantly greater oral fluency and engagement. Through promoting animals in a game format, students were able to practice not only linguistic features of descriptive text but also persuasive communication, thereby strengthening both their speaking proficiency and their creative thinking within an engaging and student-centered framework.

### ***Interview Analysis***

An interview was conducted with the English teacher of the eighth grade at the private Islamic junior high school in Medan in order to complement the questionnaire findings. The interview aimed to verify and enrich the data gathered from students. The teacher reported challenges in motivating students to speak, attributing these difficulties to students' limited vocabulary and their tendency to feel shy when expressing ideas verbally. Although some media were utilized in teaching, the teacher acknowledged that they were not sufficiently interactive or stimulating to encourage active classroom communication. Thus, the teacher expressed the need for more interactive learning tools that could facilitate student-to-student communication. These findings are consistent with the students' responses and reinforce the necessity of interactive, peer-oriented speaking tasks. The teacher's input supports Rahmawati & Ertin (2021), who emphasized the role of media in creating meaningful and communicative classroom experiences. Moreover, the need for interactive media aligns with Bygate (2018), who argued that speaking tasks are most effective when learners engage in authentic, meaningful communication with their peers. Hence, both teacher and student data support the development of an interactive and student-centered medium—such as the Communicative Board Game—to enhance speaking practice in descriptive text, especially with animal-themed content. The detailed results of teacher's interview can be seen in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Teacher's Interview

| <b>No</b> | <b>Questions</b>                                                                                                                    | <b>Answer</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1         | What are the difficulties that you usually face in encouraging students to speak in class to improve the students' speaking skills? | Indeed, in the four skills in English, one of the most difficult skills to apply to the students is speaking. So one of the reason why it is difficult, could be because of the limited vocabulary mastered by the students. Indeed, there are some children whose vocabulary is also pretty much, their vocabulary is good. However, when expressing it, they were still awkward, still embarrassed. So apart from the problem in |

| No | Questions                                                                                                                                     | Answer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                                                                                                                                               | vocabulary, there was also a problem with their self-confidence. Thus, they were shy, awkward. Maybe the problem arises because there is no supportive environment yet. So if there is a supportive environment, maybe even though they have limit vocabs, they can still build their confidence.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2  | Do you think that the use of media is needed to improve students' speaking skills in studying descriptive text?                               | Definitely needed. Media is needed for all materials (not only descriptive text). Because media also help teachers of course in conveying material to students. If it's the same in speaking, even though the final result is speaking, we definitely need an intermediary to the children to provoke or stimulate them to speak by using the media. Therefore, media is necessary.                                                                                               |
| 3  | What media are usually used by you to improve students' speaking skills?                                                                      | So far, for productive skill like speaking, I usually more focused using audio-visual such as sound, whether it's a conversation or news then also videos. So far, it's still about sound, video and other media like images.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 4  | What are the advantages and disadvantages of the media that you usually use?                                                                  | As for the audio, I usually look for native audio instead of Indonesians in order to make the students know what the native speakers' talking are like. So when we play English native speakers audio and they listen to it, they are still confused about what is conveyed. Likewise with videos, because I often look for native ones rather than Indonesian. Therefore, that's the weakness, what is the meaning of what the native said (they still difficult to understand). |
| 5  | What kind of learning media development is needed to improve the speaking skills of class VIII students?                                      | Of course, speaking skills must use more interactive learning media, which media can provoke students to be able to communicate. So students don't just listen or see. However, students can also respond. So, the media can provoke students to communicate with each other. Then, the point is that the media must be interesting, interactive and creative.                                                                                                                    |
| 6  | In your opinion, can the use of the Communicative Board Game in descriptive text support class 8th grades in improving their speaking skills? | The media is interesting and the children are also interested. Indeed, for the students, if we convey the material monotonously without interesting media, the students will not be enthusiastic. But with this media, I think this game have been played before by them (they familiar with it). Thus, we can say that this media can attract children's interest to learn English.                                                                                              |

## Media Design

### *Designing the Equipment of Communicative Board Game*

The researchers used the template of board game, named Who Is It? Board Game



**Figure 1.** Communicative Board Game's Board Template

The researcher just used the board game template from Who Is It? Board Game and made the other equipment, such as: start point, cards (descriptor and guesser cards), instruction on how to play, box for the small equipment and Communicative Board Game box by using Adobe Photoshop CS3.

On making the start point (Fig. 2), the size that was made by the researcher was 6,5x4,5 cm based on the board game's size needed, so that it was fitted to the board game.



**Figure 2.** Start Point for Board Game

Board game was merged with the Board Game by using the glue. Board game display picture can be seen in Fig. 3.

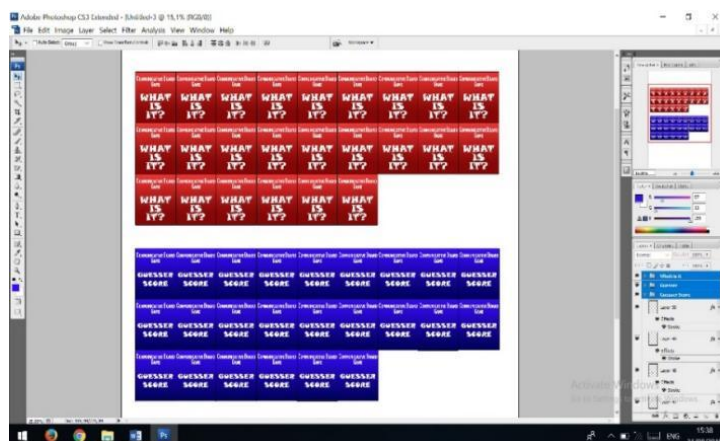


**Figure 3.** Board Game Display

The researcher used Adobe Photoshop Cs3 to edit and compiled all the cards whether the descriptor or guesser cards (Picture 4 and 5). The descriptor cards' background were in red color, while the red color background were for the guesser. Moreover, the researcher also took the interesting cartoon pictures and also took the score in each cards.

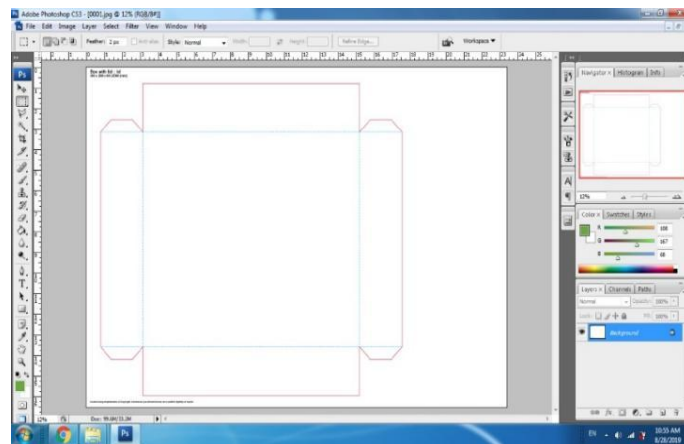


**Figure 4.** Animal Cards with the Scores for Descriptor

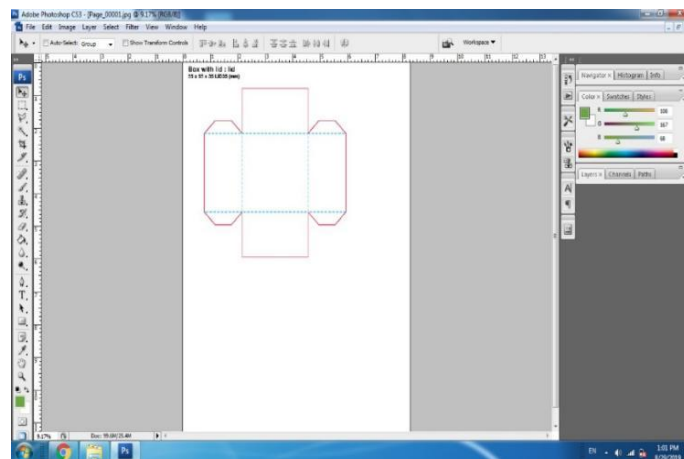


**Figure 5.** Card's Background for the Descriptor and Guesser

The template pattern of the boxes were made from the <https://templatemaker.nl/boxlid/> website. After the templates pattern were done, they were input in Adobe Photoshop CS3.



**Figure 6.** Template Pattern Box Communicative Board Game

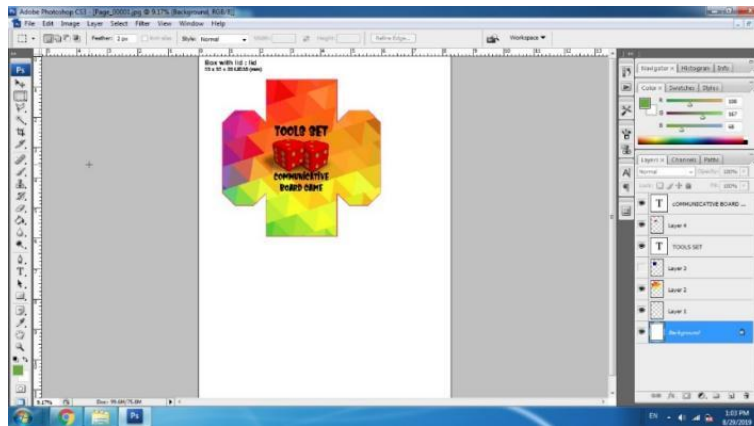


**Figure 7.** Template Pattern Small Box for Equipment of Communicative Board Game

After inputting the template pattern, the researcher input the interesting pictures and set the colourful colour to beautify and to make the interesting boxes.

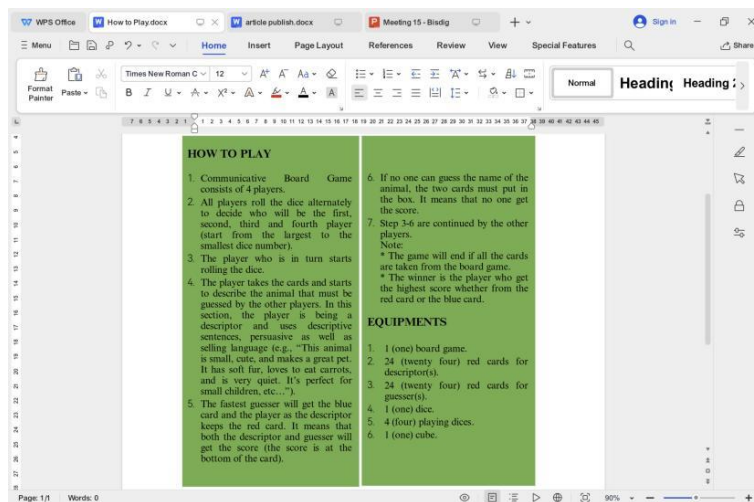


**Figure 8.** Box's Design of Communicative Board Game



**Figure 9.** Small Equipment Box's Design of Communicative Board Game

The equipment needed like dice, playing pawns and cube were taken from the authentic monopoly. The rules were made by using Microsoft Word 2013.



**Figure 10.** The Design of Communicative Board Game's Rules

Fig. 10 shows the steps of playing the Communicative Board Game. As for how to play this game as follows:

1. Communicative Board Game consists of 4 players.
2. All players roll the dice alternately to decide who will be the first, second, third and fourth player (start from the largest to the smallest dice number).
3. The player who is in turn starts rolling the dice.
4. The player takes the cards and starts to describe the animal that must be guessed by the other players. In this section, the player is being a descriptor and uses descriptive sentences, persuasive as well as selling language (e.g., "This animal is small, cute, and makes a great pet. It has soft fur, loves to eat carrots, and is very quiet. It's perfect for small children, etc...").
5. The fastest guesser will get the blue card and the player as the descriptor keeps the red card. It means that both the descriptor and guesser will get the score (the score is at the bottom of the card).

6. If no one can guess the name of the animal, the two cards must put in the box. It means that no one get the score.
7. Step 3-6 are continued by the other players.

Note:

- \* The game will end if all the cards are taken from the board game.
- \* The winner is the player who get the highest score whether from the red card or the blue card.

## **Validating to Experts**

The validation process involved two qualified evaluators: a professor in English education from Medan State University and an English teacher at a private Islamic junior high school. Using a Likert-scale questionnaire (1–5), the experts assessed both the content validity (media, activities, setting, and layout) and media validity (design and development).

The first expert rated the media at 96.4%, while the second rated it at 98.6%, categorizing the developed board game as excellent across all six aspects. This high level of agreement demonstrates the product's instructional relevance, content accuracy, and pedagogical value.

These results align with Tomlinson's (2013) principle of materials development, which emphasizes that language teaching materials should be evaluated through expert review to ensure suitability for learner needs. Similarly, Rahmawati & Ertin (2021) emphasized that instructional media must be validated both for linguistic accuracy and for the ability to foster communication. The expert validation also supports Clark and Mayer's (2016) multimedia theory, which encourages designing materials that are visually appealing, cognitively engaging, and contextually meaningful for learners. Besides, the results contradict outdated assumptions that traditional linear media (e.g., PowerPoint) are sufficient for developing speaking skills. As Fitriana & Santosa (2022) found, dynamic and game-based materials were rated significantly higher by both students and educators in terms of interactivity and learner engagement.

## **Revising**

Following the experts' review, minor revisions were suggested. Expert 1 acknowledged the medium's usability for classroom teaching. Expert 2 offered constructive feedback, affirming the medium's design and pedagogical effectiveness while recommending its expansion to include other English skills and topics in the future.

These suggestions reflect the iterative process of material development as outlined by Graves (2000), who argued that instructional design should not be static but refined continuously based on professional input. This also supports Jailani et al. (2020), who emphasized the significance of expert-driven revision in ensuring educational products meet both curriculum goals and learner expectations.

## **Final Product**

After incorporating expert feedback, the final version of the Communicative Board Game was completed. The product incorporated students' preferences and addressed their speaking challenges, particularly in describing animals. The final medium included a full-color game board, character cards, dice, task cubes, and a teacher's instruction manual—designed to promote interaction and peer discussion in English.

The alignment between the product and learner needs is consistent with the findings of Nurhayati & Fitriana (2021), who argued that learner-centered material design increases classroom participation and achievement. Additionally, Chen & Hsu (2020) found that board games that integrate visual, cognitive, and linguistic elements yield positive outcomes in both learner confidence and fluency.

## **Field Testing**

The teaching medium was then tested in a real classroom setting with eighth-grade students during English speaking activities. The results were promising: students showed increased participation, and the game encouraged every student—not just group representatives—to actively engage in speaking. The comfortable, peer-oriented structure made students feel less anxious, leading to more frequent and spontaneous use of English. Students also consulted their teacher for vocabulary, indicating a healthy learning dynamic.

This aligns with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982), which states that learners acquire language more effectively when their anxiety is low and motivation is high—both of which were fostered by the game format. Furthermore, Bygate (2018) and Klimova (2015) emphasized the importance of task-based and game-based learning in promoting spoken fluency and reducing performance pressure.

Additionally, the findings support Rahmawati & Ertin (2021), who found that speaking activities embedded in peer interaction increased student confidence and communicative competence. In contrast, traditional turn-taking models (e.g., group representative speaking) often led to passivity and unequal learning opportunities.

In conclusion, the Communicative Board Game proved to be not only valid and appropriate but also effective in encouraging inclusive participation, vocabulary exploration, and improved speaking performance among junior high school learners.

## **Conclusion**

Following the analysis of the research findings, it can be concluded that the speaking media previously used in the classroom lacked engagement and failed to effectively stimulate students to speak English. Although students generally did not encounter major difficulties in understanding descriptive texts, they remained passive during speaking activities. Most students expressed a preference for practicing English with their peers rather than with the teacher, which may have contributed to their low

participation. This indicates a strong need for interactive and communicative learning media that can actively motivate students to speak in English.

To address this need, a new learning medium, the Communicative Board Game, was developed based on students' preferences and learning needs. The development process followed the Research and Development (R&D) model by Borg and Gall (2003), comprising seven stages: data collection, needs analysis, media design, expert validation, revision, final product development, and field testing. The expert validation results confirmed this learning medium as appropriate for classroom use, with the first and second validators scoring the product at 96.4% and 98.6%, respectively, categorizing it as highly valid.

Field testing showed that the Communicative Board Game successfully encouraged all students to participate in speaking tasks, transforming the learning process from teacher-centered to student-centered. Students engaged more confidently with their peers, frequently seeking clarification and vocabulary support when needed. One of the core components of this medium was a role-playing guessing game, in which students described animals as if they were products to be promoted. This activity not only aligned with their preferences for peer-based, game-oriented interaction but also provided meaningful contexts to practice descriptive and persuasive language.

Furthermore, by incorporating elements of product promotion, the game supported not only students' speaking ability but also introduced basic entrepreneurial thinking—a valuable 21st-century skill. Through such activities, learners practiced how to "sell" ideas using language creatively, persuasively, and interactively, which mirrors real-world communication scenarios. This strategy enhances both linguistic competence and soft skills like confidence, creativity, and public speaking.

Ultimately, these findings emphasize the importance for English teachers to utilize engaging, student-centered learning tools that cater to learners' interests while simultaneously addressing curriculum goals. A medium, such as the Communicative Board Game can be applied both in and outside the classroom, with or without teacher supervision, enabling students to independently practice speaking in an enjoyable and meaningful way—particularly in mastering descriptive text.

As a recommendation, future researchers working in similar fields are encouraged to further develop this kind of board game by expanding its content beyond animals. Potential topics for descriptive and promotional speaking tasks may include places (such as tourist destinations, cultural landmarks, and functional objects), people (involving the promotion of services, skills, or performances), as well as various things. Such expansions will allow learners to engage with a broader range of vocabulary and real-world topics, enhancing both their communicative competence and awareness of diverse content areas. Additionally, integrating role-play and entrepreneurial scenarios across different genres of texts may further enrich speaking instruction in junior high school and beyond.

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