
Exploring students' communication skills through sales learning in junior high schools

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Abstract

This research aims to describe improving students' communication skills by combining the syntax of the Gallery Walk and Two Stay Two Stray learning models, hereinafter referred to as sales learning. This research is quantitative with a quasi-experimental approach. Data collection methods included observation sheets, communication skills and data analysis of communication skills improvements using the TCR formula and t-test results. The results showed that the TCR score of the experimental class was 76.92, and the TCR of the control class was 59.19. The results of this research indicate a significant increase in communication skills for students who study sales learning compared to students who do not use sales learning. Communication skills are described in several indicators, namely, the ability to convey opinions, the ability to listen to opinions, the ability to provide appropriate responses, the ability to encourage other group members to participate in expressing their opinions, and the ability to resolve conflicts.

Keywords

Communication skills,
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Introduction

Education is regarded as a crucial pillar in shaping individuals and society. Education can be understood from two distinct perspectives. From a societal standpoint, education is viewed as a process of cultural inheritance passed down through generations, embodying enduring cultural values. Conversely, from the individual's perspective, education is seen as a process intended to develop and enhance the potential inherent in humans (Hasmori et al., 2011). The applied learning model emphasizes student engagement based on the characteristics of competencies and learning materials. The skills prioritized in the 21st century are higher order thinking skills (HOTS), essential for preparing students to tackle global challenges. The four 4C skills include (1) critical thinking and problem-solving skills, (2) communication skills, (3) creativity and innovation skills, and (4) collaboration skills.

Good communication skills are essential for understanding, conveying, and obtaining information effectively in education. Social science subjects play a central role in equipping students with knowledge of social science, history, geography, and economics knowledge. Practical communication skills are crucial in helping students understand, analyze, and convey information related to social science subject matter. Students' communication skills do not arise spontaneously but develop through a long journey fostered by the school environment. Communicative interactions between students, between students and teachers, and within the context of learning are valuable experiences that support the development of communication skills. This experience also plays a crucial role in preparing students to participate in competitions focusing on language skills (Vandercruyse et al., 2013). Thus, teachers must select the appropriate learning model, as it creates and nurtures an environment where students can learn and engage with various learning components (Paniagua & Istance, 2018). Choosing the learning model is a step taken to motivate students to enhance their learning outcomes. The application of the learning model must be adjusted to the needs of students (Kostolányová et al., 2011). In determining the appropriate model, it is important to consider its alignment with the objectives to be achieved in teaching (Biggs, 2003). Junior high school students in their teens are responsible for developing various skills, including communication skills (Ibda, 2015). Part of the developmental tasks during adolescence involves advancing communication and interaction skills with peers, individually and in groups (Saputro, 2018). Practice and problem-solving stimulation facilitate the acquisition of communication skills (Dewi, 2018).

Communication is a systematic process in which individuals interact with and through symbols to form and interpret meaning (Sadowski, 2022). Communication can occur with complex or straightforward methods, and current technological changes have significantly changed how humans interact (Volti & Croissant, 2024). Communication skills can be honed through student activities that involve exchanging arguments and often expressing their ideas verbally and in writing. Communication is a key principle in learning that requires developing and improving skills (Aprianto et al., 2019). The important role of students' communication skills in the learning process towards improvement can be realized through social interactions between students and interactions between students and teachers, and, in this context, it is emphasized that the stimulation of students' communication skills needs to be carried out

through learning methods that can explore students' potential. Social interactions among students and between students and teachers can enhance student relationships, enabling them to engage in real situations that help develop various aspects of their communication skills. Thus, a school environment that supports positive social interactions can significantly contribute to developing students' communication skills.

Communication can be categorized based on the number of participants involved, such as interpersonal, group, organizational, and mass communication (Gainforth et al., 2014). Communication is an interaction between a group working together to achieve a common goal, so each member has a different role in its implementation. The meaning of communication involves the exchange of symbols or signs, either through words or nonverbal expressions. This communication focuses on the similarity in the interpretation of symbols to form a relationship of togetherness, closeness, or intimacy between the parties involved in the communication interaction (Suherman, 2020).

Communication skills involve speaking orally and writing about various issues related to the subject matter. Communication skills benefit students because they can understand the teacher's information and messages in the subject context. In addition, communication skills allow students to respond, express their thoughts and views, and dare to ask questions when they have difficulty understanding a topic (McTighe & Wiggins, 2013).

Based on small group communication theory, which focuses on individual interactions in small group settings, it has strong relevance to collaborative learning. In cooperative learning, students form small groups to achieve shared learning goals. This theory explains how individuals communicate in discussion groups, and indicators such as the ability to express opinions, listen to views, respond, encourage members to contribute, and resolve conflicts are key to the dynamics of this communication. The communication process in small groups is the foundation for achieving shared understanding and learning goals. These indicators reflect collaborative communication skills essential in creating a productive environment and supporting exchanging ideas and joint solutions. By applying small group communication theory, cooperative learning can be enhanced by better understanding and managing the communication aspects involved in student interactions in small groups. Several learning models, such as Gallery Walk and Two Stay Two Stray, have improved student learning outcomes in social studies. Namaziandost et al. (2018) found that Gallery Walk and Two Stay Two Stray can improve students' communication skills. However, in this research, the syntax of these two models was modified so that all students gain experience in expressing opinions, listening to opinions, responding, encouraging other members to express their opinions, and resolving conflicts.

These findings illustrate the potential and effectiveness of various learning models in developing communication skills and student learning outcomes. However, despite the benefits these models offer, the researchers identified some weaknesses, such as lack of equal involvement and student inactivity in some models. Therefore, this research proposes sales learning as a modification to Gallery Walk and Two Stay Two Stray. The design of Sales Learning addresses these weaknesses by ensuring equal opportunities for each group member to actively participate in discussions and presentations. By introducing the role of "salesperson," this model aims to encourage active participation and involvement of all

students in the learning process, especially in social studies subjects in grade VII at SMP Perguruan Islam Ar Risalah Padang.

Literature Review

Practical communication skills are essential for students, particularly as they prepare for the increasingly complex demands of future academic and professional environments. Mastery of these skills facilitates successful interactions with peers and educators and lays the groundwork for effective collaboration and leadership in the workforce. This literature review analyzes the role of sales learning as a pivotal educational tool in enhancing communication skills among junior high school students. The review highlights how integrating sales training into the curriculum by exploring various studies and methodologies can provide students with practical experiences that build their confidence and competence in verbal and non-verbal communication. As students engage in sales-related activities, they develop critical skills, such as persuasiveness, active listening, and adaptability which are invaluable throughout their educational journeys and future careers.

Importance of communication skills

Communication skills are fundamental for personal and professional success, supporting effective interaction across various contexts. [Guffey and Loewy \(2018\)](#) emphasized that proficient communication facilitates improved academic performance and fosters positive workplace dynamics. For junior high school students, this developmental stage is particularly crucial; it is a time when they begin to engage more actively with peers, teachers, and other authority figures, shaping their social and academic identities.

During these formative years, students cultivate the ability to express their thoughts and articulate their ideas clearly, which is essential for effective engagement in classroom discussions and group activities. Developing these communication skills enables them to participate in constructive dialogue, voice their opinions confidently, and respond thoughtfully to feedback. As they navigate various social interactions, students learn to listen actively, empathize with others, and adapt their communication styles to suit different audiences.

This skill set enhances their academic experiences and prepares them for future challenges in higher education and the professional world. Strong communication abilities are indispensable in college settings, where students must collaborate on projects, present their ideas, and engage in discussions with diverse groups of individuals. Additionally, these skills are crucial in the workplace, where practical communication can lead to successful teamwork, conflict resolution, and career advancement.

By fostering strong communication competencies, students can build self-confidence, enhance collaborative efforts, and navigate diverse social environments more effectively. This helps them establish meaningful relationships and equips them to face challenges with resilience and adaptability. Cultivating communication skills lays a solid foundation for their future success, empowering them to thrive in their personal and professional lives.

Sales learning as a methodology

Sales education is a dynamic and multifaceted methodology that offers practical scenarios for students to develop and refine their communication skills. [Kompella and McMillan \(2020\)](#) indicated that experiential learning methods, particularly those incorporating role-playing within sales contexts, significantly enhance students' verbal and nonverbal communication skills. This hands-on approach allows learners to practice their skills in a controlled environment and fosters active engagement with the material, making the learning experience more impactful.

By simulating real-world sales interactions, students can apply theoretical knowledge in meaningful ways, effectively bridging the gap between classroom learning and practical application. This experiential learning process encourages students to immerse themselves in authentic scenarios, where they can experiment with various communication techniques and receive immediate feedback on their performance.

Moreover, this method promotes the development of critical thinking and adaptability, as students must tailor their communication strategies to suit different audiences and contexts. For instance, they learn to adjust their tone, body language, and messaging based on their interlocutors' specific needs and reactions. This flexibility is crucial in today's diverse and fast-paced communication landscape.

Ultimately, sales learning equips students with essential tools to navigate various interpersonal dynamics and enhance communication competence. The skills gained through this methodology prepare students for successful careers in sales and empower them to become practical communicators in any field. By fostering confidence, adaptability, and strategic thinking, sales education emerges as an invaluable vehicle for cultivating the communication skills necessary for success in both professional and personal realms.

Impact of sales training on communication

Numerous studies have highlighted the significant positive impact of sales training on enhancing students' communication abilities. For instance, [Roberts and Pruitt \(2019\)](#) revealed that students who actively engaged in sales programs substantially increase their confidence regarding public speaking, and notable improvements in their interpersonal skills. These enhanced communication abilities extend far beyond the confines of sales; they are directly applicable to various aspects of students' academic and personal lives.

As students become more proficient in articulating their thoughts and ideas, they experience greater ease participating in classroom discussions and expressing their viewpoints. This newfound confidence facilitates peer collaboration on group projects, allowing for more productive teamwork and enhanced problem-solving capabilities. Furthermore, the skills learned through sales training help students to navigate social interactions with increased assurance, fostering better relationships with their peers and teachers.

Students can also take on leadership roles in extracurricular activities and community projects thanks to the confidence they acquire from sales training. This empowerment boosts their self-esteem and encourages them to take initiative and fully engage in their school and

community environments. Overall, the skills acquired through sales training serve as a crucial foundation for students' educational pursuits. By enhancing their communication competencies, students are better prepared to succeed in diverse settings, ultimately positioning them for future success in their academic and professional endeavors.

Challenges in implementing sales learning

Despite its numerous benefits, implementing sales learning in junior high schools faces several significant challenges. One primary obstacle is that many educators may lack adequate training in effective sales methodologies, which can hinder their ability to deliver the curriculum effectively. Furthermore, there is often resistance from educational institutions that prioritize traditional curricula, viewing sales training as a deviation from standard academic practices. Smith (2021) noted that successfully integrating sales learning into the educational framework requires a substantial shift in pedagogical approaches. This shift emphasizes active participation and real-world applications, moving away from conventional lecture-based teaching methods.

Additionally, concerns about aligning sales training with educational standards and outcomes may lead to apprehension among school administrators. Overcoming these challenges necessitates professional development for teachers, advocacy for curriculum innovation, and a broader acceptance of sales skills as essential components of student education. By addressing these hurdles, schools can better equip students with communication skills crucial for their future success.

The literature consistently indicates that sales learning can serve as an effective mechanism for enhancing communication skills among junior high school students. By integrating practical sales training into the curriculum, educators can foster essential communication competencies that will benefit students in their academic pursuits and prepare them for future professional endeavors. This approach equips students with the tools to articulate their ideas clearly, engage in meaningful dialogue, and build strong interpersonal relationships. However, further research is needed to explore the best practices for seamlessly integrating this methodology into existing educational frameworks to maximize the impact of sales learning. Investigating how various teaching strategies, assessment methods, and curricular designs can be adapted to incorporate sales education will provide valuable insights. By identifying and implementing these best practices, schools can create a more holistic educational experience that empowers students to thrive in diverse social and professional environments.

Methodology

This research used a quantitative design with a quasi-experimental approach. Specifically, the design implemented is a non-randomized control group pre-test-post-test format. Initially, each class participates in a pre-test (T1) to establish baseline data regarding student learning outcomes. Following this assessment, the experimental class receives a specific treatment (X) to enhance their learning experience over a designated period. In contrast, the control class receives no treatment (X), allowing for a comparative analysis of the two groups. After the instructional period, both classes undergo a post-test (T2) to evaluate

the effectiveness of the treatment and to measure the resulting learning outcomes of the students. The details of the treatment implemented in the experimental class are summarized in Table 1 below, which outlines the methodologies and activities designed to facilitate improved learning.

Table 1. *Treatment in learning in sample classes*

| Experimental class | Control class |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning begins with an engaging video as an initial stimulus to spark interest and curiosity among the students. • After watching the video, the students divided the students into five distinct groups, assigning each group a different theme related to the video. • Students engage in lively discussions, brainstorming ideas and perspectives within their groups. They then collaboratively write down the results of their discussions on large pieces of cardboard, aiming to make their presentations as creative and enjoyable as possible. • Each group presents their findings to the rest of the class. Students assume different roles, acting as receptionists and sales representatives, which allows them to practice their communication skills. • During the first half of the presentation round, one group presents while the others listen and provide feedback. • After this initial round, students switch roles, allowing everyone to experience both presenting and receiving information. • This dynamic approach fosters teamwork, creativity, and public speaking skills, making the learning experience interactive and memorable. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learning process commences with a thought-provoking trigger question posed by the teacher, designed to stimulate students' curiosity and engagement. • The lesson unfolds conventionally, using a teacher-centered approach. The teacher then systematically points out the learning material, providing clear explanations and examples to ensure comprehension. • Students primarily listen and take notes, absorbing the presented information. • The teacher may use various teaching aids, such as slides or handouts, to enhance understanding and retention of the material. • The teacher encourages questions and clarifications throughout the lesson, but the primary focus remains on the teacher delivering content. • It allows for structured learning, ensuring students receive the same foundational knowledge before subsequent activities or discussions. |

The instrument used in this research tested students' communication skills. Students' communication skills scores were analyzed by calculating the average score using TCR and T-test. Descriptive analysis was carried out to describe the data collected from respondents. Communication skills were analyzed using a weighted average with the formula (Sudjana, 2021).

$$P = F / N \times 100\%$$

Description:

P = Percentage obtained

F = Frequency of respondents' answers

N = Number of Samples

To determine the level of achievement of respondents in each variable, the achievement level formula (TCR) was used:

$$TCR = \text{average number} / \text{maximum ideal score} \times 100\%$$

Table 2. *Category of Degree of Achievement (TCR)*

| % Achievement | Category |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 90 -100 | Very Good |
| 80-89 | Good |
| 65-79 | Enough |
| 55-64 | Less |
| 0-54 | Not Good |

This research design aims to offer helpful ideas about the effectiveness of sales learning in enhancing communication skills among junior high school students, ultimately contributing to their academic and personal development.

Findings

The data regarding the impact of sales learning was meticulously gathered using observation sheet instruments, which served as the primary technique for collecting research data. This systematic approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of student engagement and progress. The data was presented and processed using the TCR (Category of Degree of Achievement) framework, categorizing student scores into distinct achievement levels. This framework facilitates a clearer understanding of the students' performance and highlights the effectiveness of the sales learning intervention in enhancing communication skills among junior high school students.

Table 3. Comparison of communication skills between control and experimental groups

| Indicators | Control class | | | Experimental class | | |
|--|---------------|-------|----------|--------------------|-------|----------|
| | Mean scorea | TCR | Category | Mean score | TCR | Category |
| Ability to convey ideas/opinions | 2.59 | 55.21 | Less | 3.22 | 80.42 | Good |
| Ability to listen to other people's opinions | 2.69 | 66.96 | Enough | 3.11 | 77.86 | |
| Ability to provide appropriate feedback/responses | 2.55 | 63.69 | Less | 3.09 | 80.06 | Enough |
| Ability to encourage other group members to participate and express their opinions | 2.25 | 49.67 | Less | 2.90 | 72.19 | Good |
| Conflict resolution skills | 2.47 | 60.44 | Enough | 2.97 | 74.10 | Enough |
| Average | 2.51 | 59.19 | Less | 3.03 | 76.92 | Enough |

The experimental class obtained a TCR of 80.42%, indicating that students can express their opinions well. The ability to listen to other people's opinions obtained an average score of 3.11 with a TCR of 77.86%, indicating that students can express their opinions quite well. The ability to provide appropriate feedback/responses obtained an average score of 3.09 with a TCR of 80.06%, indicating that students can express their opinions well. The ability to encourage other group members to participate and express their opinions obtained an average score of 2.90 with a TCR of 72.19%, indicating that students can express their views quite well. The ability to resolve conflicts obtained an average score of 2.97 with a TCR of 74.10%, indicating that students can resolve disagreements quite well. Overall, the average ability of students' communication skills was 3.03 with a TCR of 76.92, indicating that students' communication skills with sales learning were quite good.

Meanwhile, in the control class, it can be seen that students' communication skills in terms of the ability to convey ideas/opinions obtained an average score of 2.59 with a TCR of 55.21%, indicating that students have a poor ability to express their views. The ability to listen to other people's opinions obtained an average score of 2.69 with a TCR of 66.96%, indicating that students can convey opinions quite well. The ability to provide appropriate feedback/responses obtained an average score of 2.55 with a TCR of 63.69%, indicating that students cannot provide feedback. The ability to encourage other group members to participate and express their opinions obtained an average score of 2.25 with a TCR of 49.67%, indicating that students cannot encourage members to join in expressing opinions. The ability to resolve conflicts obtained an average score of 2.47 with a TCR of 60.44%, indicating that students can resolve disputes. Overall, the average ability of students' communication skills is 2.51 with a TCR of 59.19, which suggests that students' communication skills with conventional learning are not good. For the t-test results, they can be seen in Table 3 below:

Table 4. *Results of the T-test for communication skills independent samples test*

| Communication Skills | t | df | Sig |
|----------------------|--------|----|-------|
| | -9,939 | 56 | 0,000 |

The significance level obtained from the t-test is 0.000, indicating a statistically significant difference. These results demonstrate a notable increase in communication skills among students who engage with the sales learning method compared to those who do not. The data suggests that students taught through this innovative approach exhibit a higher level of achievement in communication skills than their peers who receive conventional instruction.

Consequently, the null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected, affirming that the sales learning model significantly enhances students' communication abilities. The findings strongly support the notion that this learning method is more effective in fostering vital communication skills.

Furthermore, the theoretical framework of social constructivism, as proposed by Lev Vygotsky, underlines the importance of social interaction in the learning process. According to Vygotsky, knowledge is constructed through collaborative experiences, which is particularly relevant when examining the development of communication skills within the context of the sales learning method. Key concepts from Vygotsky's theory, such as the importance of social dialogue and collaborative learning, provide a deeper understanding of how students can enhance their communication skills through active engagement and interaction. Several key concepts in Vygotsky's theory are relevant when discussing students' communication skills in the sales learning method:

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPP): the distance between what students can do independently and what they can do with help from others (e.g., teachers or peers). In the context of sales learning, ZPP may be seen when students try to sell the results of their discussions. They may need support from peers or teachers to convey their points effectively or respond to other groups' questions.

Mediation. Vygotsky believed that cultural tools, including language, play a vital role in learning. Language is a key mediating tool in the communication process. In sales learning, students use language as a primary tool to “sell” their ideas to other groups, practice their communication skills, and receive feedback to help them improve them.

Social Interaction: Vygotsky's theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning. Sales learning promotes deep social interaction, as students must interact with other groups, explain their ideas, listen to feedback, and adapt to new information.

Scaffolding is the support given to students during the learning process, which is removed as students become more independent. In the context of sales learning, this might involve initial support from the teacher in guiding students on how best to present their information or respond to questions, which is then reduced as students' skills develop. Applying Vygotsky's theory to sales learning, teachers can understand how students construct knowledge through social interaction and how they can support students in developing their communication skills through this method. Furthermore, teachers can also use feedback from other groups as a source of scaffolding to help students understand which areas of their communication skills need improvement.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research underscores the effectiveness of implementing the Sales Learning model—an innovative blend derived from the Gallery Walk and Two Stay Two Stray learning strategies—in significantly enhancing the communication skills of seventh-grade students at SMP Perguruan Islam Ar Risalah. The research used a quasi-experimental design to compare an experimental class exposed to the sales learning approach with a control class engaged in conventional learning methods. The findings revealed a marked improvement in students' communication skills within the experimental group, who achieved an average score of 76.92, categorized as “enough”. In contrast, the control group scored significantly lower, with an average of 59.19, classified as “less”.

Sales learning actively fosters a balanced and comprehensive experience in key communication competencies, including the clear articulation of ideas, attentive listening, appropriate feedback, and active participation in group discussions. These improvements across multiple communication skill indicators highlight the model's capacity to cultivate a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment. Grounded in Vygotsky's social constructivism theory—which emphasizes learning as a socially mediated process—this approach effectively nurtures students' social interaction and communication abilities by encouraging collaborative learning and meaningful peer engagement.

In conclusion, the research affirms that sales learning represents a successful pedagogical innovation for developing communication skills at the junior high school level. It offers a practical and impactful framework that educators can adopt to enrich social interactions and enhance communicative competence in the classroom, thereby contributing positively to students' academic and personal growth.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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