

The Role of Greetings And Introductios in Developing Communicative Conpetence Among Young Learners

Citra Novita Purba¹, Gracetisya Audry Aurellia Ginting², Amalia Nazlah³,
Tiarnita Maria Sarjani Br. Siregar⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Elementary Teacher Education Faculty of Education Medan State University

Email : citranovitapurba21@gmail.com¹, gracetisya123@gmail.com²,
amalianazlahhutabarat36@gmail.com³, lian.nita2010@gmail.com⁴

Abstract

Greetings and introductions are fundamental communicative competencies that play an essential role in early English language learning, particularly at the elementary school level. This article examines the concepts, functions, and importance of greetings and introductions, as well as effective strategies for teaching these skills to young learners. Using a literature review approach, this study analyzes theoretical and empirical sources related to basic English communication and young learner pedagogy. The findings show that teaching greetings and introductions significantly contributes to students' confidence, social interaction skills, and foundational speaking abilities. Effective strategies such as role play, language games, audiovisual media, and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach can enhance students' participation and comprehension.

Keywords: Greetings, Introductions, Speaking Skills, Young Learners, English Language Teaching

Peran Salam dan Perkenalan dalam Mengembangkan Kemampuan Komunikasi Pada Siswa SD

Abstrak

Greetings dan introductions merupakan kompetensi komunikasi dasar yang memiliki peran penting dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, khususnya pada jenjang sekolah dasar. Artikel ini mengkaji konsep, fungsi, dan urgensi materi greetings dan introductions serta strategi pengajaran yang efektif untuk meningkatkan kemampuan komunikasi siswa. Penelitian menggunakan metode studi pustaka dengan menganalisis berbagai sumber teoretis dan empiris yang berkaitan dengan komunikasi dasar dalam Bahasa Inggris dan pedagogi untuk peserta didik usia dini. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa pengajaran greetings dan introductions berkontribusi secara signifikan terhadap peningkatan kepercayaan diri siswa, kemampuan interaksi sosial, dan keterampilan berbicara dasar. Strategi pembelajaran

seperti role play, permainan bahasa, media audio-visual, dan pendekatan Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) terbukti dapat meningkatkan partisipasi serta pemahaman siswa. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa integrasi materi greetings dan introductions dalam aktivitas kelas sehari-hari mampu menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang positif dan memperkuat kompetensi komunikatif siswa.

Kata Kunci : Greetings, Introductions, Keterampilan Berbicara, Siswa Sekolah Dasar, Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris

INTRODUCTION

English has become a global language that plays a crucial role in international communication, education, technology, and cross-cultural interaction. In Indonesia, English instruction at the elementary school level serves as an essential foundation for developing early language competence. At this stage, young learners are not required to master complex grammatical structures; instead, the primary goal is to enable them to use the language in simple and meaningful communicative contexts. One of the most fundamental topics introduced to elementary students is greetings and introductions.

The topic of greetings and introductions holds significant importance because it represents the initial form of communication that commonly occurs in everyday interactions. The ability to greet and introduce oneself not only facilitates social interaction but also helps students build confidence and develop basic speaking skills in English. Through this material, learners are introduced to both formal and informal expressions, guided to understand situational context, and trained to respond appropriately in short conversational exchanges.

The urgency of mastering greetings and introductions is further reinforced by the fact that it serves as the foundation for more advanced English communication skills. Students who can greet and introduce themselves effectively tend to be more prepared to engage in subsequent learning activities, such as asking and answering questions, describing objects or events, and participating in simple dialogues. Teachers therefore play a vital role in creating a supportive, interactive, and enjoyable learning environment that encourages students to practice their speaking skills actively.

This article aims to examine the concepts of greetings and introductions, explore their importance in elementary English language teaching, and discuss effective strategies that teachers can implement to enhance students' communicative competence. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of more communicative and learner-centered English teaching practices for young learners.

This study employed a literature review design to examine theories, concepts, and previous research related to the teaching of greetings and introductions in elementary English language classrooms. Data were collected from various academic sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conference papers, and educational reports accessed through platforms such as Google Scholar, ERIC, and ResearchGate. Relevant literature was selected using keywords such as greetings, introductions, young learners, English language teaching, and communicative competence. Sources published within the last decade were prioritized to ensure the use of current and credible information. The collected literature was analyzed through qualitative descriptive analysis, which involved organizing sources into thematic categories, synthesizing key ideas, and interpreting findings to develop a comprehensive understanding of the importance and instructional strategies for teaching greetings and introductions. This method allowed the researcher to systematically integrate theoretical and practical insights, providing a strong foundation for discussing effective approaches in English language teaching for young learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this literature-based study reveal that teaching greetings and introductions plays a significant role in shaping young learners' communicative competence in English. Various sources consistently highlight that early exposure to simple communicative expressions enables students to develop confidence and familiarity with spoken English. The literature indicates that greetings such as "Hello," "Good morning," and "How are you?" and basic introduction phrases such as "My name is..." or "Nice to meet you" serve as essential linguistic tools for initiating interaction, both in and outside the classroom. These expressions act as the learners' first step toward understanding the social norms of communication, including politeness, turn-taking, and context-appropriate language use. The evidence suggests that when students master these basic expressions, they become more willing to participate in classroom conversations, interact with peers, and express themselves in simple English.

In addition, the reviewed literature shows that effective instruction of greetings and introductions contributes to creating a positive and interactive learning environment. Teachers who consistently integrate greetings at the beginning and end of lessons help establish rapport and reduce students' anxiety toward English. Classroom routines such as morning greetings, pair introductions, or simple conversational exchanges have been shown to improve student engagement.

Researchers emphasize that young learners feel more included and respected when teachers model natural communication behaviors, which, in turn, motivates them to imitate and practice similar expressions. This aligns with communicative language teaching principles, which emphasize meaningful interaction as the core of language learning. Therefore, the consistent use of greetings and introductions fosters social-emotional development as well as linguistic competence. The analysis also identifies several instructional strategies that have proven effective in supporting the teaching of greetings and introductions. Among these, role play is frequently cited as one of the most impactful methods, because it allows students to practice real-life scenarios, such as meeting new friends, introducing themselves, or greeting the teacher. Similarly, language games—including greeting races, introduction bingo, or “Find Someone Who...” activities—create a fun and dynamic learning atmosphere and have been shown to increase student participation. Audiovisual media, such as songs, videos, and animated stories, also play an important role in reinforcing comprehension, as young learners typically respond well to visual and auditory stimuli. These activities encourage repetitive practice without causing boredom, making them suitable for lower-grade elementary students.

Despite these advantages, the literature also reveals several challenges commonly faced in teaching greetings and introductions. Many students struggle with pronunciation, limited vocabulary, and shyness when speaking English. Cultural differences may also influence how students perceive greeting norms, as English expressions of politeness may differ from those used in their mother tongue. Additionally, the limited duration of English lessons in many Indonesian elementary schools reduces opportunities for consistent practice. Teachers may also lack sufficient training or resources to create interactive and communicative lessons. These constraints often hinder students’ ability to internalize and apply greetings and introductions naturally.

However, the findings suggest that these challenges can be addressed through the strategic use of supportive teaching approaches. Providing consistent modeling, offering positive reinforcement, and giving students multiple opportunities to practice through guided and free activities are essential. Furthermore, integrating greetings and introductions into daily classroom routines—rather than teaching them as isolated vocabulary items—has been shown to significantly enhance retention and practical use. Teachers are encouraged to create communicative situations that allow students to use English authentically, such as classroom jobs, peer interviews, or small-group conversations. By embedding English into natural interactions, students gradually build automaticity and confidence.

Overall, the results highlight that greetings and introductions serve not only as foundational speaking skills but also as a gateway to broader communicative competence in English. When taught effectively through interactive, meaningful, and engaging methods, they contribute to cognitive, linguistic, and social development. The findings align with the broader consensus in young learner pedagogy that meaningful communication should be prioritized over rote memorization. Thus, integrating greetings and introductions into elementary English instruction is a crucial step toward cultivating confident and communicative young English learners.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that greetings and introductions play a fundamental role in developing young learners' communicative competence in English. As basic yet essential components of everyday interaction, these expressions help students build confidence, participate actively in classroom communication, and understand the social norms of conversation. Through effective instructional strategies—such as role play, language games, audiovisual media, and the communicative approach—students are able to practice and internalize these expressions in meaningful and engaging ways. Although challenges such as limited vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties, and restricted instructional time may arise, these obstacles can be addressed through consistent modeling, supportive classroom environments, and routine integration of English into daily activities. Overall, the teaching of greetings and introductions provides a strong linguistic and social foundation that prepares young learners for more advanced English communication. Strengthening this area of instruction is therefore essential for fostering confident, interactive, and communicatively competent elementary learners.

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