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## | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Minimal Pair Bingo: Enhancing English Pronunciation among Japanese ESL Students

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### **ABSTRACT**

The current study examined the effectiveness of integrating minimal pair bingo into oral English instruction for Japanese ESL students at Cebu Doctor's University (CDU) in the academic year 2017-2018. The study examined various sub-problems, encompassing the pretest and post-test performances of both the control and experimental groups and the notable disparities observed between these performances. Furthermore, the study investigated the noteworthy gap in both groups' pretest and posttest performances. The study utilized a quasi-experimental methodology, incorporating rubrics to assess and evaluate the participants' performances. The research consisted of a sample size of fifty (50) students who were registered in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. The participants were divided into two distinct categories: the control group and the experimental group. The assessment tool utilized for the pretest and posttest evaluations was the minimal pair pronunciation instrument. The findings suggest that many students in both subject groups exhibited moderate performance levels during the pretest. Both groups improved their performance, as indicated by the scores obtained in the post-assessment. A notable disparity is observed in the post-test outcomes between the control and experimental groups. A significant difference is evident in the pretest and posttest performance of the control and experimental groups. The subject that employed rigorous minimal pairs discussions as a pedagogical strategy in their oral English courses enhanced their overall performance. The study's outcomes underscore the potential effectiveness of incorporating minimal pair bingo as a valuable enhancement to oral English instruction for Japanese learners. By leveraging minimal pairs, educators can provide a concise method for explaining distinctions between similar English sounds, enabling learners to focus on specific sound refinements.

### **KEYWORDS**

Minimal pairs, pronunciation, English language learners

## | ARTICLE INFORMATION

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## 1. Introduction

English serves as the primary means of global communication. The acquisition of English language proficiency has recently experienced a significant surge, primarily driven by the need for individuals to enhance their international competitiveness and achieve success in various domains such as career, education, entrepreneurship, and marketing.

Cebu City is a renowned destination for international individuals seeking to enhance their proficiency in the English language. Its quality of instruction has led to a rise in the enrollment of international students across various universities within the city. Most individuals are of Korean, Chinese, and Japanese descent.

The acquisition of English pronunciation is a crucial aspect of second language acquisition. Nevertheless, certain scholars posit that it is among the most challenging subjects in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. Throughout the process of acquiring knowledge, learners may encounter a multitude of factors that can impact their progress. These factors may include but are not

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limited to their native language, age, level of exposure, phonetic aptitude, attitude, and identity, as well as their motivation and desire to achieve optimal pronunciation (Kenworthy, 1987). An individual's linguistic background directly impacts their auditory and phonetic proficiency in English. Linguistic learners often struggle to articulate phonemes that are absent in their native language accurately.

Acquiring proficiency in the English language can prove to be a challenging task for individuals who are not native speakers, particularly for Japanese students. There exist notable dissimilarities between the two languages, which result in inadequate mastery of the languages. English and Japanese exhibit a multitude of linguistic distinctions, with the phonological dimension posing the most significant difficulty for learners. Japanese speakers may need to help articulate English due to disparities in sound inventory, phoneme and allophone distribution, syllabic limitations, and prosodic features.

The domain of pronunciation poses a formidable challenge for educators and students alike. Consequently, the issue prompted the researcher to thoroughly examine efficacious techniques for instructing pronunciation.

### 1.1 Research Objectives

This study examined the efficacy of utilizing minimal pair bingo as a pedagogical tool to enhance the English pronunciation skills of Japanese ESL learners enrolled at Cebu Doctor's University ESL in Mandaue City, specifically during the academic year 2017-2018.

Specifically, it aimed to investigate the following research questions:

- 1. What are the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups?
- 2. What are the post-test performances between the control and experimental groups, reflecting their respective improvements in English pronunciation?
- 3. What are the notable disparities among the pretest scores of the control and experimental groups, the post-test scores of both groups and the pretest and post-test scores within each group?

## 2. Literature Review

Incorporating pronunciation into the sphere of communication is highly significant, as it is a crucial component of English language proficiency, including vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing. It plays a fundamental function in facilitating effective listening and speaking.

According to Pourhosein's (2012) perspective, the mastery of pronunciation is a crucial factor in developing learners' communicative competence and overall performance. The ability of learners to produce comprehensible pronunciation is a vital aspect of their general language proficiency. Educators ought to adopt the role of pronunciation coaches, while students must exhibit sufficient motivation when instructing on pronunciation. The emphasis of instruction should be on achieving intelligible pronunciation rather than striving for perfection. In contemporary times, English has emerged as a lingua franca with global usage. Consequently, learners aim to attain intelligible pronunciation and effective communication rather than striving for a native-speaker-like accent.

According to Kutszik (2005), minimal pairs pose a challenge for individuals learning a new language. The linguistic concept of minimal pairs pertains to a pair of lexical items in each language that possess distinct semantic meanings yet differ solely in one phonetic segment. An instance of homophones can be observed in English, where certain words such as "fat" and "hat" share identical pronunciations despite having different meanings. Identifying minimal pairs that pose difficulties for students is contingent upon their phonetic background in their native language and the language they are studying (referred to as L1 and L2, respectively). Distinguishing between phonemes can challenge individuals to acquire a new language regarding auditory perception and articulation.

Challenges encountered with minimal pairs may result in language learners experiencing difficulties in various domains, such as reading and spelling, as they may need clarification on words and their meanings. The issue is that the pedagogical approach must be revised to a more complex process of imparting a rule followed by its consolidation through exercises or assignments. Although minimal pairs are covered in numerous language learning materials, they are typically utilized as a one-time exercise or a basic repetition technique that assists students in enhancing their listening or pronunciation abilities. The identification and differentiation of minimal pairs is a challenge that requires a protracted period of attention and resolution. They pose a more significant challenge than deficiencies in a student's listening or communication abilities.

Games can serve as effective instruments for instructing children on pronunciation, particularly in the context of minimal pairs. According to Brewster et al. (2002), educational games are a source of motivation and entertainment and a valuable tool for enhancing pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and the four language skills. Children utilize recurrent language structures during play, eventually committing to memory.

Gardner (2006) proposed a theoretical framework known as the theory of multiple intelligences, which posits that individuals possess eight distinct forms of intelligence. According to Gardner, teachers should adopt a multi-faceted approach by considering six perspectives to effectively teach a specific subject in an educational context. This approach could increase the probability of effectively involving all students in the classroom. One method employed is "the personal approach," wherein the viability of examining a specific topic is explored through role-playing or other interactive techniques. Furthermore, Armstrong (2000) proposes that implementing bingo games as a pedagogical approach may be particularly suitable for learners with solid interpersonal intelligence, as it offers an optimal environment for fostering student-to-student interaction.

Games are acknowledged for their ability to promote the practical application of information, enhance the process of memorization, facilitate the organization of material, and offer a source of amusement to alleviate the otherwise stressful process of exam preparation. Games possess an inherent quality of being student-centered and interactive, which leads to the generation of enthusiasm, excitement, and enjoyment. Implementing an experimental methodology, such as the utilization of gaming, establishes a context that necessitates the active engagement of a participant in a personally significant undertaking. Furthermore, the enhancement of knowledge acquisition is facilitated by the integration of emotional stimulation, which takes place in a secure and regulated environment and is subsequently followed by a debriefing phase that promotes the development of a cognitive framework for understanding the encountered experience (Lewis, 1985).

Games are typically well-suited for acquiring and refining skill-based knowledge within the cognitive domain while also effectively engaging decision-making processes. Games can be designed to cater to the psychomotor domain, wherein skills such as speed of manipulation, safety on transfers, and knowledge of intervention techniques can be honed through a game-based approach that incentivizes individual or team performance. According to Lewis (1985), games such as crossword puzzles, word searches, and Bingo have been used to review materials and enhance staff attendance and compliance. The visual nature of games has been found to enhance students' learning experiences, increase their interest, and alleviate monotony, thereby adding an element of enjoyment to the learning process.

Using word games has had a noteworthy positive impact on students' academic performance concerning vocabulary acquisition. Using visual and audio materials has motivated students. This approach allows students to engage in self-paced learning inside and outside the classroom.

According to Coco et al. (2001), using the bingo game as a holistic and experiential approach can stimulate individual introspection. Moreover, as per Richardson's (2007) assertion, Bingo is among the most widely played games. Engaging in a vocabulary bingo game allows educators to facilitate word study in a comfortable and informal setting.

Bingo is a game that involves probability, whereby the participant utilizes a scorecard or an electronic medium to mark off numbers as they are called out. According to Kavaliauskiene (2000), when a player's mark or cover numbers match the numbers drawn by chance and announced by a caller, manually or electronically, it is considered a winning outcome. Bingo is a game that involves multiple players and utilizes numerical values. The participant must align the numerical values on the card the announcer has selected.

Richardson (2007) posits that the game of Bingo offers numerous advantages. Bingo is a versatile activity that individuals of all ages can enjoy. It provides various benefits, including enhanced motivation through learning gameplay mechanics, facilitating vocabulary retention, and promoting cooperative group dynamics. Additionally, Bingo encourages quick thinking and fosters creativity and activity among participants. Furthermore, as Remko (2014) argues, Bingo is a highly pleasurable game to engage in as a communal endeavor. The activity exhibits traits of simplicity and versatility, enabling its application in various subjects such as language acquisition, mathematical operations, and historical events. Furthermore, this game is a pleasurable and engaging activity for the participants. Moreover, it enhances an individual's linguistic vocabulary and is suitable for individuals involved in acquiring language skills.

Competition plays a significant role in the game of Bingo as it motivates students to engage in the activity, as they are inherently driven to outperform their peers. During gameplay, students can unwind, engage in physical activity, and engage in playful banter with their peers. The fundamental constituents of games encompass objectives, regulations, obstacles, and social exchanges. Typically, the games entail a combination of cognitive and physical stimulation. Numerous games facilitate the enhancement of

practical skills, provide a means of physical activity, or offer an educational simulation or psychological function. Using bingo games enables an immersive experience for students, simulating real-life scenarios.

Furthermore, the game of Bingo enhances students' memory retention and fosters an inclination toward acquiring new vocabulary. Bingo has been observed to induce relaxation and enjoyment among students, facilitating learning and improving the retention of newly acquired language. Sri (2011) states that measures will be taken to prevent student boredom.

Using the bingo game as an instructional tool for teaching minimal pairs is intended to allow students to engage in exercises that facilitate the differentiation between phonemes commonly confused with consonant sounds, such as /l/ and /r/. This exercise is designed to enhance the student's ability to distinguish between similar-sounding words, such as "lip" and "rip," among others.

Tuan (2010) conducted a study on the English consonant phonemes /r/ and /l/ with a sample of Japanese participants. The study utilized minimal pairs to introduce phonetic differentiations between the two consonant phonemes. Furthermore, the participants underwent a pre-test and post-test to assess the effectiveness of the intervention in improving their pronunciation skills related to the sounds /r/ and /l/. The results of the study suggest that a considerable number of Japanese individuals demonstrated an improved ability to produce the English consonant sounds /r/ and /l/, as evidenced by their performance in the post-test. The coexistence of a shared consonant phoneme representing both /r/ and /l/ in the Japanese language has been identified as a notable obstacle for Japanese speakers in English communication.

The study centers on utilizing minimal pairs in the context of Bingo games. The objective is to mitigate challenges in pronunciation of the target language, thereby enhancing the comprehension of English among learners by identifying perplexing phonetic elements. This thesis addresses the need for a formal study by examining relevant theories and related studies.

### 3. Research Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

This study utilized the quasi-experimental type of research using bingo games in discussing minimal pairs.

### 3.2 Research Setting

The present investigation was conducted at the ESL Center of Cebu Doctor's University, in the North Reclamation Area of Mandaue City, Cebu, Philippines. The institution provides educational services specifically designed for individuals from foreign countries who are interested in acquiring proficiency in the English language. CDU ESL is an educational institution comprising a faculty of one hundred instructors. The academic schedule for the class commences promptly at 8:00 am and concludes at 5:00 pm, encompassing the weekdays from Monday through Friday. A designated period of one hour is allocated for a midday reprieve, commonly referred to as the lunch break.

## 3.3 Participants of the Study

The study included students enrolled in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program at Cebu Doctor's University. Two classes were selected to serve as the control and experimental groups. The individuals in question were Japanese students with a proficiency level of 2 in English. Level 2 is designed for individuals who possess a basic understanding of the English language but have limited proficiency and can only utilize commonly used words or engage in brief conversations centred around simple topics. The control group consisted of twenty-five (25) subjects, while the experimental group also consisted of twenty-five (25) subjects.

Table 1. Subjects of Both Groups

CRITERIA			CONTROL		EXPERIMENTAL		
Gender	Age	Nationalit y	Level of English Competen ce	No. o f Students	Percentag e	No. Of Studen ts	Percentage
Male/Female	20- 35	Japanese	2	25	100	25	100
	TC	TAL		25	100	25	100

The class comprised fifty students and was divided equally into two groups. The two groups of subjects, control and experimental, were grouped comparably based on their age and English competence level.

#### 3.4 Research Instrument

The present study employed a pronunciation assessment developed by the researchers, which was derived from a lesson on minimal pairs emphasizing consonant sounds. The instrument functioned as a tool for both pretest and posttest assessments. The assessment evaluated the level of accuracy in pronunciation among Japanese students. Before administering the pretest, the instructional material was submitted to two speech trainers for review and validation. The pronunciation assessment underwent a pretesting phase conducted by individuals not included in the study.

To assess the efficacy of minimal pairs in teaching the consonant phonemes of English pronunciation, the researcher employed the subsequent rubrics as descriptive interpretations of the participant's performance in the minimal pair pronunciation test. The performance was evaluated using a rating scale consisting of four categories: very good (46-60), good (31-45), fair (16-30), and poor (1-15).

## 3.5 Data Collection

A formal written correspondence was submitted to the Academic Manager of the ESL Center at Cebu Doctor's University, seeking authorization to implement a study and include CDU ESL students as participants in the research.

Before administering the pretest to the two groups of subjects, namely the control and experimental groups, a questionnaire was administered to a cohort of students who were not directly involved in the present study. This step aimed to conduct a pretest and pilot study of the research questionnaire before its implementation for data collection.

The individuals involved in the study were allocated into two groups: the experimental and control groups. To ensure comparability between the two groups, a pretest was conducted to assess the accuracy of L2 pronunciation. This pretest utilized a minimal pair pronunciation test. Each student from both groups was allotted one minute to peruse the words that encompassed the minimal pairs (/l/ /r/, /s/ /ʃ/, /b/ v/, / $\theta$ / /t/, ð/ /d/, /h/ f/, /n/ /  $\eta$ /,/t/ /t ʃ/). Subsequently, the performance of the students was meticulously documented.

On January 3, 2018, the control group started a lesson on minimal pairs. Copies containing consonant phonemes were distributed, and the discussion about the target consonant sounds followed. The instructor introduced a diagram on the proper articulation of sounds, modeled the words, and did some pronunciation practice.

During the second session, which took place on January 10, 2018, the instructor proceeded to recite a selection of sentences and requested the students to listen attentively. The sentences presented minimal pairs, and the student successfully discerned the appropriate word by underlining the chosen answer, as exemplified by the ruling (The ash/ass was grey). The instructor reviewed the answers, and proper feedback was provided. On the third meeting, which took place on January 17, 2018, worksheets were employed that included activities involving minimal pairs. These activities consisted of matching exercises, identification tasks, and pair practice exercises.

In contrast, the experimental group received an identical lesson on minimal pairs, albeit supplemented with bingo games, on January 4, 2018. Following a demonstration and practice session on distinguishing between various sounds, the researcher distributed copies of consonant phonemes to the participants for further reading and study at their respective homes. Please refer to Appendix F for further details. During the subsequent meeting on January 11, 2018, the instructor conducted a comprehensive review of the lesson and incorporated the utilization of bingo games as a pedagogical tool within the class. Each student was provided with bingo cards that included minimal pairs. The instructor instructed the students to place each word within a square on the card without specifying a particular court. As an illustration, the examples mentioned above include terms such as lice, rice, light, right, glass, grass, wins, wings, sheet, seat, sip, ship, base, vase, three, tree, dare, there, thin, tin, fold, hold, true, and through.

The instructor read the particular words in the class and asked the students to cross them out. Once the student has crossed out a complete row of five (5) consecutive squares (either vertically, horizontally, or diagonally), that player should yell out, "Bingo!" He or she is the winner. Another bingo card containing different minimal pair lists was distributed until the class was finished.

On the last meeting, January 25, 2018, the same activity was utilized but differently. The students were divided into pairs. One student received bingo sheet A, and the other received bingo sheet B. The instructor let the students dictate their words to each other (taking turns) until they have completed sixteen (16) minimal pairs. After writing all the words on their sheets, the instructor corrected them and gave the necessary feedback.

Following the implementation of the intervention, a post-test was administered to both the control and experimental groups. The pretest and post-test performances of the two subject groups were meticulously recorded, thoroughly evaluated, and assessed by two speech experts utilizing rubrics.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

This chapter dealt with the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data gathered.

### 4.1 Pretest Performances in Minimal Pair Pronunciation of the Control and Experimental Groups

This section showed the performances of the control and experimental groups in the pretest of the minimal pair pronunciation test.

Table 2. Pretest Perform	mances in Minimal Pair Pro	onunciation of the Control	andExperimental Groups

Pret	est	Contro	Control		Experimental	
Score Range s	Category	Frequency	Per Cent (%)	Frequenc Y	Per Cent (%)	
46- 60	Very Good	0	0	0	0	
31- 45	Good	2	8	3	12	
16- 30	Fair	20	80	19	76	
0-15	Poor	3	12	3	12	
7	otal:	25	100.0 0	25	100.0 0	

Table 2 shows that twenty-five (25) students represented each of the two groups of subjects. When comparing the results of the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups, the following were observed: almost all respondents in both groups belonged to the fair category, precisely 80% control and 76% experimental. There were identical results in both groups that fell under the poor category, which was 12%. More students from the experimental group with a frequency count of three (3) fell under good on the performance scale, while two (2) were from the control group. The observable low performances of the two groups could be explained by the fact that no practice took place before the test was conducted. Moreover, it indicated that the two subjects were valid samples. The pretest results added the urge to execute formal research.

This finding is corroborated by Kutszik (2005), who asserts that minimal pairs pose a challenge for language learners. Minimal pairs are a linguistic phenomenon wherein two words within a given language possess distinct meanings yet differ solely in a single phonetic segment. An illustration of this phenomenon can be observed in the existence of numerous words in the English language that share similar phonetic patterns, such as "fat" and "hat." The presence of minimal pairs can pose challenges for students, which can vary depending on their phonetic system in their native language (L1) and the language they are studying (L2). Language learners often encounter challenges distinguishing between sounds, both in auditory perception and in their attempts at pronunciation.

## 4.2 Post-test Performances in Minimal Pair Pronunciation of the Control and Experimental Groups

This section analyzes the post-test performances exhibited by the two groups of subjects. The obtained scores demonstrated the disparities in the versions of the control and experimental groups after the implementation of an experiment examining the effects of utilizing bingo games in the instruction and acquisition of English pronunciation.

Table 3. Post-test Performances in Minimal Pair Pronunciation of the Controland Experimental Groups

Posttest	Posttest			Experimental	
Score Ranges	Category	Frequency	Per Cent (%)	Frequency	Per Cent (%)
46- 60	Very Good	5	20	18	72
31- 45	Good	20	52	7	28
16- 30	Fair	0	0	0	0

0-15	Poor	0	0	0	0
Total:		25	100.00	25	100.00

Table 3 clearly shows the advantage of utilizing bingo games in language class. The two groups showed increased performance in pronunciation tests based on the scores earned in the posttest. Seventy-two percent of the experimental group showed very well in the performance scale test, and twenty (20) percent from the control group. There was a preponderance of good results in the control group and only twenty-eight (28) percent in the experimental group, considering that the rest belonged to the very good category. Both groups performed fair and reasonably in the posttest, unlike in the pretest, which got a high percentage of students who completed fairly. The experimental group, which incorporated bingo games as a tool for effective pronunciation improvement, showed a high increase in performance.

According to Remko (2014), bingo is a game that provides entertainment when played in a group setting. The utilization of vocabulary reinforcement techniques fosters language acquisition and cultivates emotional engagement among students in the process of language learning. Intense emotional states, such as happiness, excitement, amusement, and suspense, can foster an optimistic outlook among students regarding their learning environment, potentially positively influencing language acquisition.

## 4.3 Significant Difference between the Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups

This section showed the significant difference between the pretest performances in the minimal pair pronunciation test of the control and experimental groups.

Table 4. Significance of the Difference between the Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups

Pretest Scores	Mean	p-Value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Control Group	25.88	0.357	Do Not Reject Ho	No Significant Difference
Experimental Group	25.56		110	Difference

As presented in the table above, the p-value is greater than 0.005, and it indicates that there is no significant difference in the pretest performances of the control and experimental groups.

### 4.4 Significant Difference between the Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Group

This section presents the significance between the posttest performances of the two groups of subjects in the minimal pair pronunciation test.

Table 5. Significant Difference between the Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups

Posttest Scores	Mean	p- Value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Control	37.88			Cianificantly Different
Group ExperimentalGroup	50.64	0.000	RejectHo	SignificantlyDifferent

Based on the data presented in the table mentioned above, the study's findings indicate a statistically significant disparity in the post-test performances of the control and experimental groups. According to the calculated mean values, the experimental group exhibited a significantly higher mean of 50.64, surpassing the control group's mean of 37.88. This discovery suggests that the experimental group shows superior learning outcomes to the control group, indicating that the researcher's strategy is more efficacious in improving students' performance.

The claim is supported by Howard Gardner, who proposes that individuals have eight separate intelligences and argues that when studying a specific subject in an educational context, it is possible and recommended to utilize six different approaches. This approach aims to maximize the probability of effectively involving all students in the classroom. One methodology, known as "the personal approach," entails investigating the viability of studying a specific topic through techniques such as role-playing or other

types of engagement (Gardner, 2006). Furthermore, according to Armstrong (2000), using bingo games as a pedagogical approach may be particularly suitable for students who possess interpersonal intelligence, as these games offer an optimal environment for fostering student interaction.

## 4.5 Significant Difference of the Pretest and Post-test Performances of Control and Experimental Groups

This section outlines the contrasting performances observed between the control and experimental groups during the pretest and post-test phases. This section encompasses the statistical interpretation, the calculation of the mean, and the decision-making process regarding the hypotheses.

Competition holds considerable importance in the context of a bingo game as it stimulates and fosters student engagement, as individuals are inherently motivated to outperform rival teams. During recreational activities, students can unwind, engage in physical activity, and engage in playful banter with their peers. The fundamental elements of games encompass objectives, regulations, obstacles, and engagements. The games typically contain cognitive or physical stimulation and frequently encompass both domains. Numerous games contribute to the cultivation of practical skills, serve as a means of physical activity, or fulfill an educational or psychological function through simulation.

nicant Difference of the Pretest and Positest Performances of Control and Expeni				
Control Group	Mean	p- Value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Pretest Scores	25.88	0.000	Reject Ho	Significantly Different
Posttest Scores	37.88			
Experimental	Mean	p-	Decision	Interpretation
C				
Group		Value	on Ho	
Pretest Scores	25.66	<b>Value</b> 0.000	<b>on Ho</b> Reject Ho	Significantly Different

Table 6. Significant Difference of the Pretest and Posttest Performances of Control and Experimental Groups

According to the data presented in Table 6, the p-value associated with the pretest and posttest results of the control group falls below the predetermined significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is deemed to be rejected. The observed data indicates a notable disparity in the performance levels of the control and experimental groups, both before and after the intervention. The findings suggest that the teaching methods employed by the researcher in both the control and experimental groups demonstrate effectiveness.

## 5. Conclusion

The findings revealed that integrating minimal pair bingo into oral English instruction for Japanese ESL students at Cebu Doctor's University was effective in improving students' pronunciation. The experimental group, which used minimal pair bingo, showed significantly greater improvement in their pronunciation than the control group, which did not use minimal pair bingo. Thus, this study makes a significant contribution to the existing literature on the effectiveness of this tool for English pronunciation instruction. The integration of minimal pairs can foster dynamic and inspiring learning activities, such as interactive games, melodic exercises, and focused drills.

The findings derived from this research hold significance not only for English language educators but also for the broader realm of educational research. Language instructors can employ minimal pairs in diverse teaching approaches to foster enhanced pronunciation among their Japanese learners. Concurrently, researchers can extend their investigations into the broader utility of minimal pairs for diverse cohorts of ESL learners, thereby broadening the scope of this pedagogical strategy's impact.

## 6. Recommendations for Further Research Studies

As a result of this study, the researchers recommend the following:

- 1.1 The Effect of Minimal Pairs on English Pronunciation Accuracy
- 1.2 Minimal Pairs: A Tool for Teaching Pronunciation and Listening Comprehension
- 1.3 The Use of Minimal Pairs in Different Learning Contexts

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