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Implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding Learning Model in Soccer Learning at Junior High School

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Abstrac: This study aims to determine the effect of implementing the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) method on the soccer abilities and skills of eighth-grade students in Class VIII A at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta. The study used a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental method and a one-group pretest-posttest design. The study population consisted of 138 students at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta, while the sample comprised 20 eighth-grade A students selected using purposive sampling. The research instrument was a soccer skill test covering technical execution, ball control, teamwork, understanding of simple tactics, and attitude toward the game. Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics, a normality test, and a Paired Sample t-test. The results showed that the average pretest score of 10.30 increased to 14.95 on the posttest, with a significance value of 0.004 ($p < 0.05$). It was concluded that the TGfU method has a significant effect on improving students' soccer abilities and skills.

Keyword: Junior High School, Learning Model, Soccer, TGfU

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INTRODUCTION

One of the key components of Physical Education and Health instruction at the junior high school level is team ball sports, particularly soccer. Soccer is a team sport that requires mastery of basic techniques, an understanding of tactics, decision-making skills, and cooperation among players to achieve the game's objectives. Mastery of basic techniques is an essential foundation that students must possess in order to play effectively in real game situations.

However, soccer instruction in schools still faces various challenges. Initial observations at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta indicate that students' soccer abilities and skills remain relatively low. Students often struggle to control the ball, make accurate passes, understand their positions on the field, cooperate with teammates, and make the right decisions during the game. These conditions result in less effective gameplay and prevent learning objectives from being fully achieved. Students' poor soccer skills have also been identified in various previous studies. A study conducted by Tristiyanto et al. (2023) showed that students' low soccer skills are influenced by a lack of mastery of basic techniques and a lack of structured training. Additionally, found that students' playing ability, tactical understanding, and decision-making skills are still in the moderate category, thus requiring more effective learning strategies to improve the quality of soccer instruction (Harahap & Hendryanto, 2025).

This problem is closely tied to the teaching methods used by teachers in the learning process. Soccer instruction in schools still largely relies on a traditional, teacher-centered approach that emphasizes repetitive technical drills. This approach tends to cause students to focus solely on mastering techniques without understanding the actual context of the game. As a result, students are able to perform basic techniques during practice but struggle when they have to apply them in dynamic game situations. To address these issues, a learning model is needed that can integrate technical, tactical, and decision-making aspects simultaneously. One learning model widely recommended in physical education is Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) (Chan & Indrayeni, 2018). The TGfU model a game-based learning approach that emphasizes understanding the game before mastering technique. Through this approach, students learn to understand game concepts, solve tactical problems, and make decisions through games that are modified to suit their skill levels.

The TGfU approach is based on a constructivist perspective that places students at the center of learning. In this model, students not only learn how to perform a technique but also understand when and why that technique is used in the game (Ramadhan et al., 2021). TGfU is developed through six stages of learning: game form, game appreciation, tactical awareness, decision making, skill execution, and performance. These stages enable students to gain a more meaningful learning experience because technical skills are learned within the context of real-game situations. Various studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the TGfU model in improving the quality of physical education. A study by Yudha et al. (2018) showed that the implementation of TGfU resulted in a significant improvement in soccer technique learning outcomes compared to conventional methods. A literature review conducted by Doni & Apriani (2025) also concluded that TGfU can improve soccer playing skills, tactical understanding, decision-making abilities, and students' active participation during instruction. These findings indicate that TGfU has great potential for application in soccer instruction at the junior high school level.

Conceptually, the application of TGfU in soccer instruction allows students to learn through modified games so that they can understand game situations firsthand. This understanding then encourages students to develop tactical thinking skills, make sound decisions, collaborate with teammates, and execute technical skills effectively (Astuti, 2020). Thus, the TGfU model is believed to provide a more contextual learning experience compared to traditional teaching approaches that focus solely on technical drills. Based on the above discussion, this study is important because the soccer abilities and skills of students at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta remain low, and the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) model has not yet been implemented in the soccer learning process. This study is expected to provide an alternative solution to the challenges of soccer instruction at the school while also enriching the scientific literature on the effectiveness of the TGfU model in physical education instruction. Based on this

background, the research question for this study is Does the implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) method have an effect on the soccer abilities and skills of eighth-grade students in Class VIII A at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta The objective of this study is to determine the effect of the implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) method on the soccer abilities and skills of eighth-grade students in Class VIII A at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta.

The TGFU method emphasizes learning through modified games so that students can learn to understand game concepts, decision-making, and technical skills in an integrated manner. Through the application of the TGFU method, students are expected to understand when and how soccer techniques are used effectively in a game. This approach is also considered appropriate for junior high school students, who tend to be active and enjoy game-based learning. Therefore, the implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding method in soccer at SMPN 2 Tanta is expected to improve students' skills and create a more meaningful and enjoyable learning experience.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental method and a one-group pretest–posttest design. This study employs a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental research design. A pre-experimental design is a research design that involves a group or class in which pre-tests and post-tests are administered. This study is considered a non-true experiment because there are still external variables that influence the formation of the independent variable (Sugiyono, 2022)

Participants

The study was conducted at Tanta State Junior High School No. 2, located at Jl. Penghulu Soegoeng RT.06, Warukin Village, Tanta Subdistrict, Tabalong Regency, South Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. The study consisted of six sessions, scheduled in accordance with the Physical Education and Health (PJOK) class schedule. While the sample comprised 20 students from Class VIII A from the population in this study consisted of all 138 students at State Junior High School No. 2 Tanta, Tabalong Regency, South Kalimantan Province. The research sample was selected using purposive sampling, which involves selecting a sample based on specific criteria. The sample consisted of one class, Class VIIIA, with a total of 20 students.

Instrument

In research on soccer instruction using the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) approach, the assessment tools used evaluate not only individual playing skills but also students' ability to apply techniques in game situations. The TGfU model emphasizes tactical understanding, decision-making, and the application of skills in a game context; therefore, assessment is conducted through game skill tests and observations of performance during play (Saputri et al., 2025). One instrument that is also frequently used in game-based learning research is the Game Performance Assessment Instrument, which evaluates several aspects of playing skills, such as decision-making, skill execution, and support within the game. This instrument is used to directly observe students' performance while they play modified games or small-sides games.

In this study on soccer learning, the instrument used was a soccer skill test that assessed understanding of the game, tactical awareness, decision-making, and technical skills. Assessment was conducted through practical tests to determine students' skill proficiency levels before and after the implementation of the TGfU method, using pretests and posttests. In several studies on soccer instruction, soccer skill tests such as understanding of the game, tactical awareness, decision-making, and technical skills have been used as the primary instruments for measuring student learning outcomes. These soccer skill assessment instruments can be designed in the form of skill assessment rubrics or performance tests, developed through research on the development of soccer skill assessment instruments. These instruments are used to measure players' skill levels through scores and indicators of soccer movement (Santosa & Firdaus, 2024).

This instrument is used to measure improvements in students' skills in applying basic soccer techniques in game situations after participating in a learning process using the Teaching Games for Understanding method.

Data Collection

The treatment, which involved the application of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) method, was implemented over six sessions, including a pretest, learning through modified games based on the TGfU stages game form, game appreciation, tactical awareness, decision making, skill execution, and performance, and a posttest. This is a standard assessment tool that measures a player's understanding of the game, tactical awareness, decision-making, and technical skills during gameplay. Its purpose is to assess technical skills, understanding of the game, precision in executing movements, and the ability to make decisions when executing movements. In soccer learning research, the instruments used consist of soccer skill tests that cover game understanding, tactical awareness, decision-making, and technical skills. Assessment is conducted through practical tests and observation sheets used to evaluate students' ability to perform basic soccer techniques correctly. These instruments can be used in pretests and posttests to determine improvements in students' skills following the learning process.

Data Analysis

The research instrument used an observation sheet for soccer playing skills covering five indicators: technical execution ability, ball control, teamwork, understanding of simple tactics, and attitude toward the game. The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics, the Shapiro–Wilk normality test, and a paired-sample t-test with a significance level of 0.05 to determine the effect of the TGfU method on students' soccer abilities and skills.

RESULT

The table below shows that each participant was given the opportunity to play a simple soccer game using techniques in accordance with the indicators. There are five indicators, each with a value range of 1 to 4. The scores for each of these five indicators will then be summed. Once data collection in the field is complete, the data will be tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results of these calculations are shown in the following table:

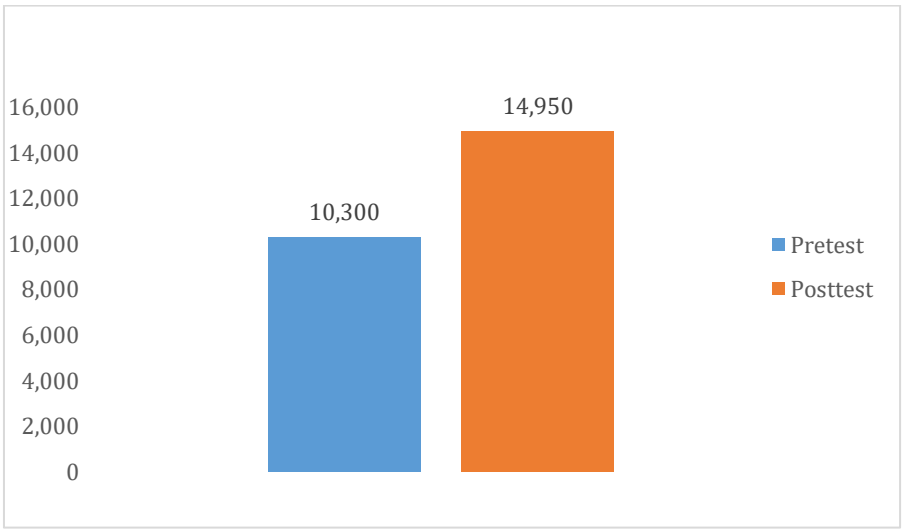

Figure 1. Differences of Mean Pretest and Posttest Result

The results of the soccer skills tests before and after the implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) method for 7th-grade Class VIII students at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta are presented as percentages. Before the TGfU intervention, 8 students (40%) were in the "fair" category, and 12 students (60%) were in the "poor" category. After the intervention, no students

reached the "very good" category; 11 students (55%) were in the "good" category, and 9 students (45%) were in the "fair" category. Based on the percentages in the research results above, a significant change occurred, indicating that the TGfU method had an impact on the students' abilities and skills in playing soccer.

Tabel 1. Descriptive Analysis of Pretest Results

Test Period	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	20	6,00	15,00	10,3000	2,49420
Posttest	20	12,00	17,00	14,9500	1,57196

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the students' initial abilities and skills in soccer are still in the low category. This is evident from the mean pretest scores obtained by the students before the TGFU method was implemented. The table above shows an improvement in student learning outcomes following the implementation of the TGFU method. The mean posttest score indicates that students' soccer skills showed greater improvement compared to their pretest scores.

Normality Test

To determine whether the data in this study are normally distributed, a normality test was conducted using the Shapiro-Wilk test in SPSS. The decision criterion for the normality test is as follows: if the significance value (Sig.) is > 0.05, the data are normally distributed; however, if the significance value (Sig.) is < 0.05, the data are not normally distributed. The results of the normality test are shown in the following table:

Tabel 2. Results of the Normality Test

Test Period	Statistic	Df	Sig	Description
Pretest	,916	20	,082	Ho
Posttest	,965	20	,642	Ho

Based on the results of the normality test above, it is evident that the significance values for the pretest and posttest data are greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the research data are normally distributed, allowing us to proceed with hypothesis testing using a parametric test, specifically the Paired Sample t-Test.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using a paired-sample t-test to determine whether the application of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) method had an effect on students' soccer skills. The decision rule for the t-test is as follows: if the Sig. value is < 0.05, H0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted; conversely, if the Sig. value is > 0.05, H0 is accepted and H1 is rejected. The results of the paired-sample t-test are as follows:

Table 3. Results of the Hypothesis Testing

Variabel	N	Correlation	Sig.	Description
Pair 1 Pretest & Posttes	20	,608	,004	H_1

The results in the table above show a significant p-value of 0.004. Since this value is less than 0.05, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant effect of applying the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGFU) method in soccer games among 8th-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta. The results of this study indicate that the TGfU approach can improve students' abilities and skills in the learning process because, during the learning process, students not only focus on basic techniques but also learn to understand game situations, make decisions, and develop teamwork and sportsmanship.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research results presented, it can be concluded that there were significant changes following the implementation of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) method in soccer for eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta. The TGfU method is a learning approach that emphasizes understanding the game through modified game situations. In this game, students can understand the game, technical and tactical skills, decision-making, and teamwork used in actual matches. This approach makes students more active in the learning process using the TGfU method in soccer because they are directly involved in the game and decision-making. The improvement was evident from the posttest scores, which were higher than the pretest scores, indicating that the TGfU method has a positive impact on students' soccer skills. However, some students still struggled with playing soccer. This finding serves as an important basis for the implementation of the TGfU method in Physical Education instruction at the school. The research results also show the percentage of students who took the soccer skills test before and after receiving the intervention. In the pretest, 8 students fell into the "fair" category 40%, and 12 students fell into the "poor" category 60%; however, after being taught the TGfU method, 11 students fell into the "good" category 11 students 55%, while the "fair" category included 9 students 45%. In general, improvements in students' skills were evident in several aspects: students were better able to identify teammates or opponents during play; their decision-making skills improved for example, when in possession of the ball and using tactics to outmaneuver opponents; students showed improvement as they began to control the ball while moving; their shooting skills improved; their understanding of game tactics increased, enabling them to make decisions more quickly during play; and their engagement during lessons increased.

The student's performance and skills in soccer are attributed to the application of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) method, as TGfU provides students with opportunities to learn through small-sided games, make decisions, collaborate, understand spatial awareness, and execute techniques in real soccer game situations. Based on the research results presented by the researcher above, the overall findings from the second hypothesis test indicate that the Teaching Games for Understanding method has a significant effect on improving students' abilities and skills in soccer at school. This improvement is generally attributed to the learning process using the TGfU method, which has increased students' interest and enthusiasm for learning, as this method was new to the 8th-grade students.

The application of the Teaching Games for Understanding method to students enables them to actively engage in soccer; they can practice basic soccer techniques through modified games that make playing soccer fun for them. Field observations show that with these modified games, students do not feel bored, so their interest in learning remains high (Festiawan et al., 2019). They gain motor experience and learn to play soccer using proper basic techniques, better understand ball control and direction, teamwork, and the appropriate attitude toward the game. The game system applied in the TGfU teaching model is not tournament-based, so students are not burdened by winning or losing. The games played by students during soccer instruction are fun, modified games with varying levels of difficulty (Saputri et al., 2025).

This study also employed a play while practicing approach that is, the process of improving basic techniques through group practice. Through this approach, students who still struggle with or make mistakes in performing basic techniques can refine their movements through play and practice, thereby minimizing their errors during actual gameplay. Field observations revealed that among students who had applied the TGfU method in soccer, some demonstrated superior skills compared to their peers. This highlights promising talent in soccer at a young age; with more in depth specialized training, these students could develop into potential professional soccer players.

This study is also consistent with research conducted by Qoahhar (2022) which showed that an instructional approach focused on student''s understanding of soccer through the TGfU method can enhance learning motivation, enabling students to easily grasp how to perform basic techniques correctly during the learning process. The Teaching Games for Understanding approach has also been proven effective in enhancing cognitive learning related to helping

students develop the ability to make sound decisions and solve technical problems within the context of the game (Gandasari et al., 2024)

The study explains that TGfU helps students understand game tactics first before delving deeply into techniques. Consequently, students gain a better understanding of the purpose behind each technique performed in soccer. The implementation of the TGfU method on soccer shooting skills showed that TGfU significantly improved players' shooting abilities (Pauzi et al., 2023; Idrus, 2019). The improvement in student's skills in this study occurred because TGfU learning provided students with direct playing experience. Students learned through real-game situations, making it easier for them to understand the concepts of attacking, defending, finding space, and making decisions during play (Marettini et al., 2024)

In the learning process, teachers act as facilitators who guide students in finding solutions to problems presented in the game. This encourages students to think more actively than in conventional, teacher centered learning. Active and enjoyable learning makes students more enthusiastic about participating in physical education classes at school. (Hidayat et al., 2023). The success of implementing the TGfU method in this study was also influenced by a more enjoyable learning environment. Students did not merely repeat technical drills instead, they immediately applied those techniques in games. As a result, students were able to understand how to use the techniques in game situations more quickly.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study conducted on the application of the Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) method in soccer among 8th-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta, it can be concluded that the application of the TGfU method has a positive effect on the student's soccer abilities and skills. Based on the research results analyzed and discussed in the previous chapter, this study found a positive and significant effect. The application of the TGfU method was demonstrated by the results of the Paired-Sample T-test, which yielded a significant value, indicating an improvement in the students' soccer playing abilities after they were taught using the Teaching Games for Understanding method. This can be seen from the improvement in students' learning outcomes after being taught using the TGfU method. The improvement encompasses several aspects of soccer skills, such as technical skills, decision-making, understanding of game tactics, and teamwork. Through modified games, students can understand game situations directly, making it easier to apply the technical skills they have learned in actual games.

The TGFU method leads to improvements in soccer ability and skills, as this method directly engages students, thereby stimulating their abilities. Through these modified games, children are given more freedom to act, visualize scenarios, and make decisions regarding their movements in soccer such as defensive and offensive maneuvers, passing the ball to teammates, and choosing which technique to use when the ball is near them. Through the interaction between the educator and the students specifically through analysis based on observation and interviews during the question and answer (Q&A) session following the practice the students expressed that this approach led to improvements in their understanding of the game, decision-making, technical skills, tactical understanding, and teamwork. Thus, it can be concluded that the application of the Teaching Games for Understanding method is effective in soccer instruction for eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Tanta.

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