

## ENHANCING SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH GAME-BASED LEARNING

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### ANNOTATION

This research article illustrates how game-based learning (GBL) improves speaking skills of secondary school language learners, especially sixth-grade students. The main aim of this study is to evaluate the impact of GBL on fluency, pronunciation and confidence in speaking. Mixed method approach, which combines both qualitative and quantitative methods, was used to gather the data. Thirty sixth-grade students of school 279 were randomly divided into two groups : experimental group, which utilized game-based activities, and the control group, which followed traditional methods. Pre- and post-tests were applied, as well as weekly observations, to evaluate the effectiveness of GBL. During the research, games such as storytelling, tongue twister, and charades were created to conduct the lesson much more interactive and engaging, to motivate students participate in lessons actively. The findings showed that with statistically significant differences, the experimental group outperformed in all three areas, including pronunciation, fluency and confidence. This research suggests potential of game-based learning as a practical tool for language teaching and highlights its importance in enhancing communication skills.

**Keywords:** Game-based learning (GBL), fluency, pronunciation , traditional games, digital games, interactive learning, student engagement.

### INTRODUCTION

One may come across various difficulties learning a new language, especially when it comes to speaking; it requires a lot of effort and endurance. As effective speaking practice promotes expression and communication, it is much more important for English language learners. According to Harmer (2001), as speech is used in both monologues and dialogues, which are crucial for day-to-day interactions, it is essential for human communication. Offering inspiring speaking practice chances is frequently failed by traditional language learning, which obstructs students motivation and advancement. However, advanced technologies and interactive

teaching methods are leading to game-based learning, which has become a powerful tool for improving ELLs' speaking skills. Teaching specific topics using games is involved in GBL to enhance students motivation through learning. Game-based learning (GBL) uses games in order to create a supportive and engaging environment that encourages students to acquire new skills (Klimova, 2015).

Game-based learning gives learners a lot of chances to experiment, make mistakes, and learn in a stress-free environment. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, online learning became prevalent, and GBL had a strong impact on alleviating students boredom. (Hamid et al., 2020). Additionally, meaningful interaction between teachers and students, as well as among peers, is fostered by GBL. (Madland & Richards, 2016). A variety of games, such as traditional games (Zhonggen, 2018), serious games (Calvo-Morata et al., 2020), and online video games that are adapted for higher education (Barr, 2018), are aimed at enhancing learning skills over various educational levels.

It is known that games have a key role in providing opportunities for students to work together in a team, reducing their anxiety and using language appropriately in a stress-free environment. By the games, it is noted, students engage with other players and make a response to the provided context. Key aspects of speaking skills—grammar, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and content—are improved by the contribution of the games. (Rohdiana, 2017). There are three types of GBL methods: Traditional game-based learning, digital game-based learning, and blended traditional and digital game-based learning.

Traditional games have been a primary part of education for a long time, meeting specific learning objectives by adapting them through the learning process. These games are usually considered low-tech, especially both affordable and easy to implement. As games are so helpful for children to learn to socialize (Mahfud&Fahrizqi, 2020), traditional games have been a staple of education for years, with teachers adapting them to meet specific learning objectives. Digital games have been introduced by advanced technologies as a main component of game-based learning, by providing learners with immersive and interactive skills. These types of games are very effective in remote or hybrid learning environments, as they keep learners attention through interactive and accessible platforms. Various studies' findings show that learning process can be significantly improved by incorporating competition, rewards and feedback in digital game-based learning (Yang, Chung, & Chen, 2022). Digital games such as Duolingo and Quizlet make learning grammar and vocabulary very enjoyable by blending education with entertainment.

## **METHODS**

This research was conducted in order to know how game-based learning can have a positive impact on language learners' speaking skills. So that pre-intermediate level students, especially sixth-grade pupils of school 279, participated in this study. Thirty students took part in this research, and they were divided into two groups at random: the experimental group was to apply

the game-based learning intervention, and the control group was to compare to know the effectiveness of the research. To give a thorough explanation of the significance of game-based learning, quantitative and qualitative approaches were used. In order to measure students' speaking abilities, pre- and post-tests were utilized to obtain quantitative data, and students' experiences with game-based learning were recorded by weekly observation to collect qualitative data. Both thorough (qualitative) and broad (quantitative) explorations of the research subject were provided with the help of the mixed-method technique, as it contributed a more comprehensive view than either method alone. In the preparation stage, I went over worksheets, pre- and post-tests, and varied types of games that are made to improve the speaking skills. In order to conduct the research much more effectively, I designed a lesson plan for each session. Through the implementation phase, twelve 45-minute sessions with game-based learning were held. Each session started with an introduction, a quick assessment, and small talk in order to engage students deeply in the lesson. To increase students' focus and drive, tongue twister exercises were applied as warm-ups. Games including charades, word association, storytelling, interviewing, and others were chosen based on the goals of the class. Learning objectives were introduced, materials were demonstrated, students were randomly split up into experiment and control groups, performances were recorded, and activities were summarized. Both successful and unsuccessful techniques were noted during the observation phase, and I kept an eye on the students performance. As data-gathering techniques, pre- and post-tests, as well as observations, were used. To confirm the goals of the study, the gathered data was written down, set out, analyzed, and interpreted.

### **Study Questions:**

1. What impacts do you have on improving sixth-grade students' speaking skills in school 279?
2. Are there significant differences between the experimental group and the control group in the effects of educational games on improving students' speaking skills?

### **Hypotheses of the Study:**

1. Game-based learning will significantly improve secondary school language learners speaking skills compared to traditional teaching methods.
2. Game-based learning will have a positive impact on speaking skills, such as fluency, pronunciation, and confidence in communication.

### **RESULTS**

During the implementation phase, I worked hard to apply interesting and interactive games that were appropriate for the students level, age, and interests. These games were so successful

as they utilized different types of strategies for the content of the lesson, in addition to using activities that enabled students to practice speaking in groups and pairs for different purposes related to the topic. In order to know whether game-based learning can improve students speaking skills and help to make their language learning journey more practical in general, I have collected crucial data for this research. While the control group had been taught by traditional teaching methods, the experiment group had been trained with game-based approaches that included student-centered activities and tasks. The main aim of this research is to compare the performances of control and experimental groups.

Based on the result, we can make sure that students of the experimental group score higher in the posttest.

**Table 1**

Post-test results of experiment and control groups :

#### Independent Samples T-Test

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	<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
total	- 2.765	28	0.010

*Note.* Student's t-test.

Comparing post-test results between a control group and an experimental group, the data is analyzed and represented by independent samples t-test.

The result illustrates that there is a significant difference between post-test results between the experimental group and the control group, because p-value (0.010) is less than general significance of 0.05.

**Table 2**

**Descriptive Statistics**

	<b>total</b>	
	<b>Control group</b>	<b>Experiment group</b>
Valid	15	15
Mode	16.000	24.000
Median	19.000	24.000
Mean	19.867	23.733
Std. Deviation	3.871	3.788

<sup>a</sup> The mode is computed assuming that variables are discreet.

The experimental group's score was higher than the control group's with less fluctuation.

**Table 3**

**Descriptive Statistics**

	<b>fluency</b>		<b>pronunciation</b>		<b>confidence</b>	
	<b>Control group</b>	<b>Experiment group</b>	<b>Control group</b>	<b>Experiment group</b>	<b>Control group</b>	<b>Experiment group</b>
Valid	15	15	15	15	15	15
Mode	7.000	8.000	6.000	9.000	5.000	7.000
Median	7.000	8.000	6.000	8.000	6.000	8.000
Mean	6.467	7.733	6.533	8.000	6.200	8.000
Std. Deviation	1.187	1.280	0.915	1.363	1.146	1.512

**Table 4**

**Independent Samples T-Test**

**Independent Samples T-Test**

	<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
fluency	-2.810	28	0.009
pronunciation	-3.460	28	0.002
confidence	-3.674	28	<.001

### Independent Samples T-Test

t	df	p
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*Note.* Student's t-test.

The data focuses on the results of an independent samples t-test and descriptive statistics for the experimental group and the control group through fluency, pronunciation and confidence.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. What impacts do game-based learning have on improving sixth-grade students' speaking skills in school 279?

The results illustrate that game-based learning can significantly improve sixth-grade pupils speaking skills. The experimental group, which studied with game-based learning techniques, performed better than the control group in each observed speaking skill category (fluency, pronunciation, and confidence). It means that educational games can have a positive impact on language learners speaking skills.

### 2. Are there significant differences between the experimental group and the control group in the effects of educational games on improving students' speaking skills?

Indeed, t-test results confirm statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups:

Fluency:  $p = 0.009$ ,  $t(28) = 2.810$

Pronunciation:  $p = 0.002$ ,  $t(28) = 3.460$

Confidence:  $p < 0.001$ ,  $t(28) = 3.674$

These findings suggest that game-based learning (GBL) enhances secondary school students speaking skills.

## Study Hypothesis and Investigate Theories

### 1. Game-based learning will significantly improve secondary school language learners speaking skills compared to traditional teaching methods.

Supported: With statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ), fluency, pronunciation, and confidence scores were perpetually higher in the experimental group than in the control group. This shows how GBL works well to improve language learners speaking skills.

**2. Game-based learning will have a positive impact on speaking skills, such as fluency, pronunciation, and confidence in communication.**

Supported: Based on the post-test results, it is clear that all three speaking categories were improved with the help of game-based learning:

Fluency: mean for the experimental group = 7.733 against mean for the control group = 6.467

Pronunciation: The experimental group mean is 8.000, while the control group mean is 6.533.

Confidence: mean of experimental group = 8,000 against mean of control group = 6,200.

**Methodological Recommendations for Future Research in Game-Based Learning (GBL)**

Future research should take into consideration of expanding the sample size, conducting long term research and exploring various games type to enhance the understanding and the effectiveness of game-based learning to improve English language learners speaking skills.

**CONCLUSION**

This research delves into the significance of game-based learning (GBL) to improve speaking skills of sixth-grade students at school 279. Utilizing mixed-method approach, it was noticeable that experimental group, taught by GBL activities, recorded higher performance in assessed skills such as fluency, pronunciation and confidence. Independent samples t-test analysis confirmed highly significant differences between these two groups. The hypothesis that GBL can improve students speaking skills (fluency, pronunciation and confidence) compared to traditional teaching methods are supported by the findings of the research. Different types of games such as story telling, interview and charades encouraged students to participate actively during the lesson and created interactive and student - centered learning environment. This research highlights the benefits of game-based learning in English language learning process, especially for speaking skills. It also gives methodological recommendations for the future researches for GBL by emphasizing needs including samples size, long-term studies and various games types. Game-based learning helps students develop necessary communication skills in an effective and engaging manner while teachers significantly enhance teaching strategies by adopting game-based llearning.

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