

RESEARCH ARTICLE



INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER  
INDIA

2395-2636 (Print); 2321-3108 (online)

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LANGUAGE GAMES IN DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT

Listening, often overshadowed by speaking and reading, is a foundational skill in language acquisition and development. Primary education serves as a critical period for fostering these skills, and innovative teaching methods are necessary to engage young learners. This study investigates the effectiveness of game-based learning in enhancing listening skills among primary school students. With the increasing emphasis on auditory comprehension as a foundational skill for academic success, traditional teaching methods may not fully engage young learners. We implemented a series of structured games designed to promote active listening, including auditory memory challenges, storytelling activities, and cooperative listening exercises. This study highlights the potential of games as an effective pedagogical tool for developing listening skills in young learners, suggesting that integrating playful elements into the curriculum can enhance educational outcomes and promote a more engaging learning environment. Future research should explore the long-term impacts of game-based learning on listening skills and its applicability across diverse educational contexts.

Key words: Language games, Listening Skills.

### Introduction

In an increasingly interconnected world, effective communication skills, particularly listening, are essential for academic and social interaction. Listening, often overshadowed by speaking and reading, is a foundational skill in language acquisition and development. Primary education serves as a critical period for fostering these skills, and innovative teaching methods are necessary to engage young learners. Language games offer a dynamic approach to enhance listening skills while making learning enjoyable. This paper explores the effectiveness of language games in developing listening skills among primary level students.

Listening not only underpins the ability to absorb information but also enhances

communication and critical thinking skills. Despite its importance, traditional teaching methods often fail to engage primary school students fully, leading to a gap in auditory processing and listening proficiency. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the effectiveness of game-based learning as a dynamic approach to developing listening skills among young learners.

Games have long been recognized as powerful tools for education, fostering engagement and motivation through interactive and enjoyable experiences. Research suggests that when students are actively involved in their learning, they are more likely to retain information and develop critical skills. Game-based learning encourages collaboration, problem-solving, and creativity, which are vital

components in the learning process. Furthermore, games can create low-stakes environments that reduce anxiety and promote risk-taking in learning.

Games simulate authentic listening situations, where learners need to understand instructions, follow conversations, or process information to complete tasks. By immersing learners in activities where they must listen and react to cues, games foster a hands-on approach that helps them build listening comprehension and vocabulary retention. Language games often involve elements of competition, rewards, and fun, which increase intrinsic motivation and engagement. When learners are motivated, they pay closer attention, leading to improved listening skills.

Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences suggests that people learn in different ways, including linguistic, auditory, kinaesthetic, and interpersonal. Language games cater to these different intelligences, particularly interpersonal (through interaction) and auditory (through listening and responding), making listening practice accessible to a wide range of learners. Games like Simon Says, storytelling games, role-plays, and task-based games require learners to listen actively to participate successfully, thus reinforcing attentive listening skills and comprehension in a dynamic way. Language games provide a multifaceted approach to listening practice by combining elements of communication, motivation, interaction, and cognitive processing, making them highly effective for developing listening skills.

This study focuses on primary school students, a pivotal stage in cognitive and social development. At this age, children are naturally inclined towards play, making games an ideal medium for learning. By integrating listening-focused games into the curriculum, we hypothesize that students will enhance their auditory comprehension abilities in a fun and engaging manner.

Ultimately, we aim to contribute to the growing body of literature on innovative educational practices that can reshape traditional teaching paradigms and foster a more engaging and effective learning environment for primary school students.

### **Need and Significance**

The significance of this study lies in addressing a gap in traditional language education. Research indicates that children learn best through play, and language games can create an interactive learning environment that promotes active engagement. As schools seek effective strategies to improve listening skills, understanding how language games can contribute to this development is crucial. Enhancing listening skills not only supports language development but also fosters critical thinking, attention, and social interaction, which are vital in a child's overall growth.

The need for effective listening skills in primary education is paramount, as these skills serve as a foundation for academic achievement and social interaction. In today's fast-paced learning environments, students are often bombarded with information, making the ability to listen actively and comprehend auditory content increasingly crucial. However, traditional teaching methods frequently overlook the development of listening skills, leading to gaps in student understanding and engagement. This study aims to address these challenges by examining the role of game-based learning in fostering listening skills among primary school students.

The significance of this research is twofold. Firstly, it contributes to the growing body of evidence that supports the integration of playful, interactive learning experiences in educational settings. By focusing on games as a pedagogical tool, this study highlights an innovative approach that aligns with the natural inclinations of young learners.

Secondly, the findings of this study could have broader implications for curriculum design and teaching strategies in primary education. If game-based learning is proven effective in developing listening skills, educators and policymakers may be encouraged to adopt more interactive approaches that prioritize auditory comprehension. This shift could enhance overall academic performance and better prepare students for future educational challenges.

Ultimately, this research aims to provide practical insights for educators seeking to improve listening skills in their classrooms, reinforcing the

idea that learning can be both effective and enjoyable. By bridging the gap between traditional instruction and modern educational practices, this study seeks to foster an enriched learning environment that supports the holistic development of primary school students.

#### **Hypotheses**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There will be significant difference between Control Group and Experimental Group with regard to pre-test scores.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There will be significant difference between Experimental group and Control Group with regard to post-test scores.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There will be significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of Experimental Group.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** There will be significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of Control Group.

#### **Objectives**

To assess the effectiveness of language games in developing listening skills among primary school students.

#### **Method Adopted**

The method adopted for the study was Experimental Method using pre-test, post-test control group design. The present study was to find out the Effectiveness of Language Games in in developing listening skills among primary school students. Therefore, experimental method was found to be most appropriate method for the present study.

#### **Tools Used for the Study**

The selection of suitable and appropriate devices for the collection of new and unknown data for the study of any problem is vital for any successful research. In the present study the following tools were adopted for the collection of necessary data.

- Language games designed to develop listening skills
- Listening Test (pre-test and post-test) in English

Appropriate language games to develop listening skills were developed and adapted by the investigators for the study. Each game was given specific time, and the objectives of each game and detailed instructions for each game was also given.

The investigators prepared a Listening Test to assess the listening skills of primary school students, in

order, to obtain evidence as to the effectiveness of the prepared language games in developing listening comprehension.

#### **Sample Selected for the Study**

The sample selected for study consists of 67 students of Standard V from Pathanamthitta District. The investigator selected two classes from the school for the experimental study. Out of these one class was selected as the experimental group (N=35) and the other class was selected as the control group (N=32).

#### **Procedure of Data Collection**

In the present study, the investigators prepared a Listening Test in English. The investigators used the same test as the pre-test and post-test for both experimental and control group. First pre-test was administered with an intention to check whether the experimental group and the control group were equivalent in terms of achievement. Then the experimental group was exposed to language games by integrating into the lessons over a four-week period, including activities such as "Simon Says," "Face it", storytelling games, and auditory discrimination tasks. The control group received standard listening exercises without the incorporation of games. After the intervention post-test was administered to both group and data collected were analysed.

#### **Statistical Techniques Adopted**

The pre-test and post-test scores of students in the experimental and control groups were consolidated for statistical analysis. The pre-test and post-test scores of students in the experimental and control groups were analysed by finding out mean scores and standard deviation of the scores of the two groups. By utilizing these values significant differences between the two groups was determined by computing critical ratio using t-test.

#### **Analysis of Data**

The tests of significance of difference between scores of the Experimental Group and Control Group have been followed by interpretation of the results.

A significant difference occurring in the means of the two groups that is, Game based strategy and the existing method, indicates that the Game based strategy is superior to the existing method of

developing listening skills. Analysis of the present study and its interpretation is done as follows.

#### Comparison of Control Group and Experimental Group with regard to Pre-test

This section of analysis intends to compare the pre-test scores of Control group and Experimental Group thereby identifying the initial difference between the two groups. The mean and

standard deviation of the pre-test achievement scores of Control Group and Experimental Group have been computed and the data is tested for significance as shown in Table 1.

**Hypothesis 1:** There will be significant difference between Control Group and Experimental Group with regard to pre-test scores.

**Table 1 Comparison of Control Group and Experimental Group with regard to Pre-test**

| Group              | Number of students | Mean  | Standard Deviation | Critical Ratio | Level of Significance     |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Control Group      | 32                 | 8.6   | 5.9                | 1.15           | Not Significant (P> 0.05) |
| Experimental Group | 35                 | 10.23 | 5.58               |                |                           |

Table 1 shows that the calculated t-value (1.15) obtained is not significant. The t-test between the means of pre-test scores of Control group and Experimental Group revealed that, there is no significant difference (CR = 1.15; P>0.05) between pre-test achievement scores of Control group and Experimental Group. Hence the hypothesis formulated in this context is rejected.

#### Comparison of Control group and Experimental Group with regard to Post-test

This section of analysis intends to compare the post-test scores of Control Group and

Experimental Group thereby identifying the final difference between the two groups. For this purpose, the post-test scores of the two groups were compared and analysed. The mean and standard deviation of the post-test scores of Control group and Experimental Group have been computed and the data is tested for significance as shown in Table 2

**Hypothesis 2:** There will be significant difference between Experimental group and Control Group with regard to post-test scores.

**Table 2 Comparison of Control group and Experimental Group with regard to post-test**

| Group              | Number of students | Mean  | Standard Deviation | Critical Ratio | Level of Significance          |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| Control Group      | 32                 | 10.4  | 5.34               | 3.97           | Significant at level (P< 0.01) |
| Experimental Group | 35                 | 15.68 | 5.54               |                |                                |

The mean of the post-test scores of Experimental Group (15.68) is greater than the mean of Control group (10.4) and the calculated critical ratio (3.97) is significant at 0.01 level. This revealed that, there is significant difference (CR= 3.97; P< 0.01) between post-test scores of Control group and Experimental Group. Hence the hypothesis formulated in this context is accepted.

#### Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test of Experimental Group

This section of analysis intends to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of Experimental Group. The mean and standard deviation of the pre-test and post-test scores of Experimental Group have been computed and the data is tested for significance as shown in Table 3.

**Hypothesis 3:** There will be significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores of Experimental Group.

Table 3 Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test of Experimental Group

| Experimental group | Number of students | Mean  | Standard Deviation | Critical Ratio | Level of Significance               |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Pre-test           | 35                 | 10.23 | 5.58               | 4.10           | Significant at 0.01 level (P< 0.01) |
| Post- test         | 35                 | 15.68 | 5.54               |                |                                     |

From the Table 3, The mean of the post-test scores of Experimental Group (15.68) is greater than the mean of the pre-test (10.23) and the t-test between the means of pre-test scores and post-test scores of Experimental Group revealed that, there is significant difference (CR = 4.10, P< 0.01) between the scores of pre-test and post-test. Hence the hypothesis formulated in this context is accepted.

#### Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test of Control Group

This section of analysis intends to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of Control Group, the Mean and Standard Deviation of pre-test and post-test of Control Group have been computed and the data is tested for significance as shown in Table 4. **Hypothesis 4:** There will be significant difference between the pre-test scores and post-test scores of Control group.

Table 4 Comparison of Pre-test and Post Test Scores of Control Group

| Control Group | Number of students | Mean | Standard Deviation | Critical Ratio | Level of Significance    |
|---------------|--------------------|------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Pre-test      | 32                 | 8.6  | 5.9                | 1.28           | Not Significant (P>0.05) |
| Post- test    | 32                 | 10.4 | 5.34               |                |                          |

In the Table 4, the t-test between the means of pre-test scores and post-test scores of Control Group revealed that (CR=1.28, P>0.05), there is no significant difference between the scores of pre-test and post-test. Hence the hypothesis formulated in this context is rejected.

#### Summary of the Results

A significant difference occurring in the mean values show that the experimental method is superior to the existing method of developing listening skills. The analysis and interpretation of the data therefore proves that the intervention was fruitful.

The various results obtained from the study reveals that Language Games have many advantages over the existing method. By practicing this method in our curriculum transaction process, students become independent learners and to a great extent it will increase their listening skills, thinking skills, creativity and promotes communicative skills. Game-based strategy creates interest and eagerness to learn. It also helps learners to be active and learn effectively. Hence it may be concluded that due importance should be given to game-based strategy.

#### Conclusion

In summary, the development of listening skills at the primary level is essential for fostering effective communication, enhancing academic performance, and promoting social and emotional growth. By prioritizing listening skills in early education, educators can lay a strong foundation for students' future success both in and out of the classroom and for this gaming strategy can be effectively implemented

The findings of this study affirm that language games significantly enhance the listening skills of primary level students. The critical ratio analysis demonstrates that students engaged in language games showed marked improvement compared to their peers in traditional learning settings.

Implementing language games into the curriculum not only facilitates listening skill development but also fosters a more engaging and interactive learning environment. Educators are encouraged to incorporate these strategies to promote effective communication skills among young learners. Future research should explore long-term impacts and different types of language games

further to enhance listening and language acquisition in early education.

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