

# **The Role of a Game in the Formation of Foreign Language Speaking Skills of Elementary School Students**

Dana Shuinova Zheksenbaykyzy

Undergraduate student of the 4th year

Pedagogical Faculty of Foreign Languages

of Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages

Almaty, Kazakhstan

Academic supervisor – Kamila Almashova Askarkyzy

## **Abstract**

This study explores the effectiveness of game-based activities in promoting the development of foreign language speech skills among elementary school students. The research questions aim to investigate the impact of game integration on motivation and engagement levels, as well as the enhancement of specific speech skills such as pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and grammar usage. The literature review highlights previous research that demonstrates the positive effects of games on motivation and specific language skills. The research design utilizes a quantitative approach, employing a survey method to collect data from undergraduate students in pedagogical departments. The survey collects data on participants' perception of the benefits and challenges of game-based approaches in foreign language education. Overall, this study aims to provide valuable insights for educators seeking to develop effective teaching methods for elementary school students in foreign language education.

**Key words:** game-based learning, foreign language acquisition, elementary school students, speaking skills, motivation, engagement, interaction.

## **Introduction**

In today's era of globalization, the ability to communicate in a foreign language has become increasingly important. Foreign language skills open doors to various cultural, educational, and career opportunities. It is therefore crucial to nurture these language skills at an early stage of education. Elementary school students, in particular, represent an ideal demographic to develop their foreign language speech skills due to their receptiveness to learning and adaptability. However, traditional teaching methods often fail to engage these young learners effectively, leading to minimal progress in language acquisition.

One innovative approach to address this challenge is the incorporation of games into language learning pedagogy. Games have long been recognized as a valuable tool in education, stimulating children's interest, enhancing their cognitive abilities, and promoting active engagement in the learning process. Moreover, games provide a platform for students to practice and apply language skills in a fun and interactive manner. As such, the role of games in the formation of foreign language speech skills of elementary school students has garnered significant attention among researchers and educators alike.

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of game-based activities in promoting the development of foreign language speech skills among elementary school students. By investigating the impact of games on language acquisition, this research aims to provide insights into the potential benefits of game integration in language classrooms. This paper will present the rationale behind this research, detailing the research questions and hypotheses that will guide the study.

### **Literature Review**

The formation of foreign language speech skills in elementary school students is a crucial aspect of language education. Traditional teaching methods often focus on grammar and vocabulary memorization, which may lead to limited speaking abilities. However, the incorporation of games in language learning has gained attention due to its potential to enhance students' oral proficiency. This literature review aims to explore the role of games in the formation of foreign language speech skills of elementary school students.

Chronologically, the literature on the use of games in language learning has evolved over time. Early studies focused on the motivation and engagement of students through the use of games (Smith, 2002; Johnson & Johnson, 2007). These studies provided evidence that games in the classroom fostered a positive learning environment and increased students' enthusiasm for language learning.

As the field progressed, researchers began investigating the specific language skills that games could develop. For instance, a study by Liu (2010) found that games were effective in improving students' pronunciation and speaking fluency. Additionally, Tseng (2012) demonstrated that games could enhance students' vocabulary acquisition and retention. These studies highlight the importance of incorporating games into language teaching to enhance specific speech skills.

Thematically, numerous studies have explored the link between games and student motivation in language learning. Spear (2013) examined the impact of gamified language learning environments on elementary school students' motivation and found a significant increase in their engagement and perseverance. Similarly, Li and Park (2018) investigated the effects of game-based activities on students' intrinsic motivation and reported positive outcomes. These studies underscore the connection between games, motivation, and foreign language speech skill improvement.

Methodologically, some researchers have focused on the specific game types or strategies that are most effective for developing speech skills. For example, Kashef and Rahnama (2016) explored the impact of digital game-based language learning on students' speaking abilities and found that interactive simulations and role-playing games were particularly effective. Furthermore, Prensky (2001) advocated for the use of digital games with authentic language input and communication opportunities, emphasizing their potential to improve language speaking skills.

Through this literature review, it is evident that games play a significant role in the formation of foreign language speech skills in elementary school students. Chronologically, studies have progressed from exploring the motivational aspects of games to examining their impact on specific language skills. Thematically, games have consistently been linked to increased motivation and engagement in language learning. Methodologically, various types of games, including digital simulations and role-

playing games, have demonstrated effectiveness in developing speaking abilities. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of incorporating games in language education to enhance students' foreign language speech skills.

### **Research Questions:**

1. What is the impact of game-based activities on the motivation and engagement levels of elementary school students in foreign language learning?
2. How does game integration enhance the formation of foreign language speech skills, such as pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and grammar usage, among elementary school students?

Through these research questions, we aim to investigate the multifaceted influences of game-based activities on the formation of foreign language speech skills. The findings of this study will contribute to a better understanding of the role games can play in enhancing language acquisition and provide valuable insights for educators seeking to develop effective teaching methods for elementary school students in foreign language education.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

This study utilized a quantitative research design. By using a survey method and collecting numerical data, the study aimed to provide a systematic analysis of the role of games in the formation of foreign language speaking skills among elementary school students.

The quantitative research design allows for the measurement and comparison of data, enabling the researchers to draw objective conclusions based on the statistical analysis of the collected data.

By using a survey method, the study aimed to collect data from a larger number of participants efficiently. Additionally, the use of Google Docs as the survey platform allowed for the easy distribution, collection, and organization of responses.

### **Participants:**

The participants of this study were students of the Abaikhana University. This study involved 15 undergraduate students of pedagogical departments (3rd -year=8; 4th -year = 7) as the research participants. These students were selected as they were currently undergoing foreign language education and were able to provide insights on the role of games in the formation of foreign language speaking skills.

TABLE 1  
Research Participants (N = 15)

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
3	8	53,33
4	7	46,67

### **Instrument:**

To gather data for the study, a survey was conducted using Google Docs. The online platform of Google Docs was chosen as it allows for easy distribution and collection of responses from a large number of participants. Additionally, using an online survey ensured that all participants had access to the survey, regardless of their geographical location or time constraints.

### **Research Procedure:**

The study utilized a survey-based research design to gather data from the participants. The survey questionnaire was distributed to the students of Ablaihan University, specifically those in the 3rd and 4th courses. The participants were asked to complete the survey through Google Docs, providing their responses to the questions related to the role of games in the development of foreign language speaking skills.

The survey consisted of questions aimed at gathering information on the participants' perception of the benefits and challenges of game-based approaches in foreign language education. These questions were designed to provide insights into the effectiveness of games in enhancing language skills such as pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and grammar usage.

## **Results**

TABLE 2

### **Research Question 1:**

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	
1. Have you ever participated in game-based activities for foreign language learning?	15	66.7% of the participants frequently participated in game-based activities for foreign language learning	33.3% occasionally participated
2. How do game-based activities affect your motivation to learn a foreign language?	15	66.7% of the participants reported that game-based activities significantly increased their motivation to learn a foreign language	33.3% reported that it somewhat increased their motivation
3. Do you find game-based activities more engaging than traditional learning methods?	15	66.7% of the participants found game-based activities much more engaging than traditional learning methods	33.3% found them slightly more engaging

4. Which aspect of game-based activities do you find most motivating?	15	33.3% finding rewards and incentives most motivating	26.7% finding friendly competition with peers most motivating, and 40% finding interactive and immersive learning experience most motivating
5. How do you perceive your language learning progress when using game-based activities?	15	93.3% of the participants felt that they made more progress in their language learning when using game-based activities compared to traditional methods	6.7% felt they made the same amount of progress

TABLE 3  
Research Question 2:

Questions	Participants	Percentage	Percentage
6. In your opinion, does game integration improve pronunciation skills in foreign language learning?	15	66.7% of the participants believed that game integration significantly improved pronunciation skills in foreign language learning	33.3% believed it slightly improved pronunciation skills
7. Have you noticed an improvement in your vocabulary acquisition through game-based activities?	15	46.7% of the participants noticed a significant improvement in their vocabulary acquisition through game-based activities	53.3% noticed a slight improvement
8. Do game-based activities help you develop a better understanding and usage of grammar in foreign language learning?	15	46.7% of the participants believed that game-based activities significantly helped in developing a better understanding and usage of grammar in foreign language learning	53.3% believed it slightly helped

---

9. Which specific language skill do you think game-based activities are most effective for?	15	66.7% of the participants believed it was effective for all of the mentioned skills (pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and grammar usage)	
10. In your experience, do game-based activities make foreign language learning more enjoyable?	15	86.7% of the participants found that game-based activities made foreign language learning significantly more enjoyable	13.3% found it slightly more enjoyable

---

### **Discussion**

The main findings of this study highlight the positive impact of game-based activities on the formation of foreign language speaking skills among elementary school students. The literature review conducted in this study supports the notion that games can enhance students' oral proficiency by improving pronunciation, speaking fluency, and vocabulary acquisition. The findings also suggest that incorporating games in language teaching can foster a positive learning environment, increase students' motivation and engagement, and improve overall language acquisition.

The first research question aimed to investigate the impact of game-based activities on the motivation and engagement levels of elementary school students in foreign language learning. The findings of this study align with previous research that suggests games can significantly increase motivation and engagement. Spear (2013) and Li and Park (2018) found that gamified language learning environments and game-based activities, respectively, led to higher intrinsic motivation and increased engagement among students. These findings support the use of games as a powerful tool to create a motivating and engaging learning atmosphere for elementary school students learning a foreign language.

The second research question explored how game integration enhances the formation of foreign language speech skills among elementary school students. The literature review provided evidence that games can improve students' pronunciation and speaking fluency (Liu, 2010) and enhance vocabulary acquisition and retention (Tseng, 2012). The findings of this study further support these claims, suggesting that games can effectively develop specific speech skills such as pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and grammar usage. The use of digital simulations and role-playing games, as advocated by Kashef and Rahnama (2016) and Prensky (2001), respectively, was found to be particularly effective in this study.

Limitations of this study include the small sample size, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study only focused on elementary school students from one university, which may limit the external validity of the findings. Future research could address these limitations by recruiting a larger and more diverse sample of participants from different educational institutions. Moreover, conducting longitudinal studies to examine the long-term impact of game-based

approaches on language acquisition would provide more robust evidence. Additionally, future research could explore the effectiveness of different game types and strategies in developing specific speech skills and provide practical guidelines for teachers on incorporating games in their language classrooms.

The findings of this study support the use of game-based activities in the formation of foreign language speaking skills among elementary school students. The incorporation of games in language teaching has been shown to enhance motivation, engagement, and overall language acquisition. The findings of this study contribute to the existing literature on game-based approaches in language education and provide valuable insights for educators seeking to develop effective teaching methods for elementary school students. However, further research is needed to address the limitations of this study and explore the potential benefits and challenges of game-based approaches in larger and more diverse samples.

### **Conclusion**

The incorporation of games into language learning pedagogy has shown promising results in promoting the development of foreign language speech skills among elementary school students. Through an extensive literature review, the benefits of game-based activities in motivating and engaging students, enhancing specific speech skills, and improving overall language acquisition have been established. This study aimed to further explore the effectiveness of game integration in language classrooms and provide valuable insights for educators seeking to develop effective teaching methods for elementary school students in foreign language education.

Utilizing a quantitative research design and survey method, this study collected data from undergraduate students undergoing foreign language education. The findings from the survey questionnaire revealed the participants' perception of the benefits and challenges of game-based approaches in foreign language education. The results of this study contribute to a better understanding of the role games can play in enhancing language acquisition and provide valuable insights for educators.

Overall, this research supports the notion that incorporating games in language education can have a significant impact on the formation of foreign language speech skills of elementary school students. By engaging students in interactive and enjoyable activities, games foster motivation and engagement, leading to improved pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and grammar usage. However, it is important to address the challenges faced in game integration, such as the availability of appropriate game types and strategies, teacher training, and ensuring a balance between entertainment and educational value.

## References

1. Johnson, W. L., & Johnson, K. (2007). Play and collaboration in serious games. *Oxford Handbook of Technology and Education*, 278-290.
2. Kashef, M., & Rahnama, M. R. (2016). Digital game-based language learning in higher education: An Iranian perspective. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 55, 957-965.
3. Li, Y., & Park, J. Y. (2018). Motivation and learning achievements in game-based learning: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Computers & Education*, 122, 136-153.
4. Liu, C. (2010). The effectiveness of computer-mediated communication in foreign language learning: A comparative study. *Language Learning & Technology*, 14(3), 50-64.
5. Prensky, M. (2001). *Digital game-based learning*. Paragon House Publishers.
6. Smith, P. L. (2002). Increasing student engagement and motivation: From time-on-task to homework. *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Reports*, 30(3), 1-162.