

# Language Games and Acquisition of Speaking Skills among Students of Junior High School in Hohoe Municipality, Ghana

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## Abstract

Speaking is one of the basic language skills that students should master in order to communicate effectively and interact with others. Speaking skills are necessary for the social as well as academic life of a person by becoming responsive as well as receptive to information thus forming a favorable impression of oneself. Internationally, there is a debate that several high school graduates cannot properly speak English language and even the bright learners who get high scores in written tests cannot express themselves verbally, despite English being the official language of instruction in these schools Language learning is a hard task and it requires extraordinary efforts to realize the desirable outcomes. Language games are techniques and procedures that may be used by instructors to improve the speaking skills. Accordingly, the main objective of this study was to establish the effect of language games on acquisition of speaking skills among students of Junior High School in Hohoe Municipality in Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to establish the effect of role plays, problem-solving, puzzles, and board race games on acquisition of speaking skills among students of Junior High School in Hohoe Municipality in Ghana. The research was an empirical analysis and thus adopted an empirical research design and content analysis was used in the analysis of the qualitative data. The study revealed that language games significantly influence the acquisition of the speaking skills of the students. The study further found that using language games in teaching enhances the students' achievement and results of speaking skills.

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Students enjoyed their lesson and got more motivation, interest, and confidence when learning is based on the use of language games. Hence, language games should be used as designed activities in teaching speaking skills. The study findings were generalized to students of Junior High School in Hohoe Municipality in Ghana, who like many other students in Ghana, require proficiency in speaking and writing skills, specifically in English which is used in Ghanaian schools to teach subjects such as mathematics, science, social studies, art, and information and communication technology. Yet, English language is a second language to many Ghanaian students irrespective of their level in the education ladder. The outcomes of this study can be useful to Ghanaian schools, researchers, scholars and the Government of Ghana.

**Keywords:** Language Games; Speaking Skills; Role Plays; Problem-Solving; Puzzles; Board Race Games.

## **1. Introduction**

Language is essential in the daily life of individuals because it is the means by which they communicate [30]. Speaking is among the basic language skills that learners should master in order to communicate and interact with other people [11]. Speaking entails an act of making vocal sounds to convey information. For many people, the ability to speak in front of others is synonymous of anxiety, fear, and even painful since it entails knowing about the subject, being known by others, or even being ready for criticism. Speaking skills are very essential to the social as well as academic life of an individual by becoming responsive and receptive to information thus forming a favorable impression of oneself [2]. In the school curriculum, English language has an essential role in the learning process regarding the proficiency of the learners in all the language skills. However, internationally there is a debate that several high school graduates cannot properly speak English language [2,3], and even the bright learners who get high scores in written tests cannot express themselves verbally in English language [28]. Language learning is a hard work and it requires effort every moment and it has to be maintained for a long period of time [23]. Language games are techniques as well as procedures that may be used by teachers to enhance language learning. When using language games, the teachers should fully understand the definitions of games as well as the advantages of the games, and how to use the games appropriately in the classroom. Learning to speak a certain language can sometimes be frustrating and thus well-chosen language games are key as they provide the learners a break as well as allow learners to practice their language skills. However, it should be noted that language games are not activities that are aimed to break the ice between learners or to kill time. There are various language games; Sorting, ordering, or arranging games, information gap games, guessing games, search games, matching games, labeling games, board games, and role play games [31]. According to author in [20] language games include board race, call my bluff or two truths and a lie, Simeon says, word jumble race, Hangman, Pictionary, the mime, hot seat, where shall I go, and what's my problem. As stated by author in [4], the English language for example can be taught using various games; ice breakers, energizers, team building, problem solving, puzzles, debriefing, and physical education games. However, the language games of interest in this study included role play games, problem-solving, puzzles, and board race. A more precise way that educators can use to keep diversity within their classroom is to not be scared of making use of games as a teaching method beside other methods. Games can be an effective teaching method and games, like role playing games, theatrical expression, problem solving activities, and imitation games are particularly appropriate for all periods of language learning [18]. In consonance with the views of

author in [31], language games may include sorting, ordering, or arranging games, information gap games, guessing games, search games, matching games, labeling games, board games, and role play games. Additionally, author in [20] suggests that language games include board race, call my bluff or two truths and a lie, Simeon says, word jumble race, Hangman, Pictionary, the mime, hot seat, where shall I go, and what's my problem. The language games of focus in this study were role play games, problem-solving, puzzles, and board race. Role play games involve the learners playing roles that they do not act in real life [17]. Role play games are used to permit learners to practice speaking in a conversational situation, build speaking confidence and fluency, evaluate progress, and put learning into action. Problem solving involves the participation of the whole group, and the focus is on developing communication, practical group problem-solving, leadership, as well as teamwork skills. Puzzles are specially designed to invite individuals to think creatively and work together to solve a problem. On the other hand, the board race game is a fun game used for revising vocabulary and grammar [20]. Scrabble is one of the most popular board games that specifically highlights language. The Ghanaian education system is classified into three; basic education, secondary education, and tertiary education [10]. Basic education in Ghana is offered at the primary and Junior High School levels. Primary education lasts for six years and is preceded by two years of preschool education. Primary education is followed by three years of Junior High School and another three years of Senior High School education. This study focused on the Junior High School level. The wide usage of English language in official communication in Ghana and as a medium of teaching in schools as opposed to the native Ghanaian languages can be held accountable for the low level of development in Ghanaian's regions. English language is, pointless to say, the language of teaching in Ghanaian schools, colleges and universities and it is the language of all formal professions in the country. In Ghanaian schools all subjects such as mathematics, science, social studies, art, and information and communication technology are taught in English. Yet, English language is a second language to many Ghanaian students irrespective of their level in the education ladder [19]. Ironically, it is similarly a second language to instructors who are supposed to teach that language. Authors in [7] studied the effects of using games on learning English vocabulary and showed that games are helpful in learning vocabulary as they enhance the ability of the students to memorize words, encourage interaction, improve students' communicative skills and enhance their motivation. Therefore, the study sought to establish the influence of language games on acquisition of speaking skills among students of Junior High School in Hohoe Municipality in Ghana, with the specific focus on the effects of; role-play, problem-solving, puzzles and board race games, on acquisition of speaking skills.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by author in [15] theory of second language learning-language acquisition. The theory argues that acquisition of language necessitates neither widespread use of conscious grammatical rule nor tiresome drill but it necessitates meaningful interaction in the target language in which the speakers are concerned with the message being conveyed and understood rather than make utterances. Thus, the theory suggests that the most effective methods to employ in teaching language are those that give comprehensible input in low anxiety situations as well as those that contain messages that the learners want to hear. There is a need of having language input that the audience can understand even if they do not understand all the words and the structures in the language. The theory emphasizes on the silent period in the production of language.

Additionally, it concentrates on exposure to input other than grammar practice as well as emotional preparedness for language acquisition to occur. The theory regards communication as the major purpose of language and thus the focus on teaching speaking skills. Acquisition only takes place when the learners can comprehend messages in the language being taught. Author in [15] theory has three main hypotheses; monitor hypothesis, input hypothesis, and affective filter hypothesis. The monitor hypothesis focuses on the conscious correction and editing of what has been learned. People speak as a result of what they have learned and thus there is a need to acquire more so as to be good speakers. The language games used are effective monitors to sieve the content knowledge that the learner receives and should therefore be used to enhance gaining of speaking competence. The input hypothesis is more related to acquisition than learning. Author in [15] contends that individuals acquire language effectively by understanding input that is slight beyond their current level of competence and comprehensible and relevant input should be provided. The acquisition of a second language should be provided with simple codes to facilitate comprehension of content. Once the content is learnt it goes through sieving and the learners have to consciously attend to the rules of grammar to become fluent speakers and the more the learners practice, the greater the fluency. Affective filter hypothesis holds that the emotional state of the learners can be likened to a filter that can be regulated to easily permit or prevent input essential for acquisition to occur; input has to be achieved in low-anxiety situation as learners with a low affective filter acquire more input and are confident in their interactions. Thus, the study was informed by this theory since it emphasizes on language performance as a result of learning [30]. Speaking results from what people have internalized and understood and for communicative competence to be achieved, the teachers should involve the use of games so that they can monitor the progress of the learners.

### **3. Empirical Review**

#### ***3.1 Role Play***

Author in [25] explored the influence of role play on the English speaking skills of students in the ninth grade of SMP Negeri 9 Bekasi. The research involved a quasi-experimental research and consisted 62 students from two classes and through simple random sampling one class was determined as the experimental group and the other class used as the control group. The study design used posttest only and the test used oral technique of the speaking skill of students in role play. The hypothesis test result with R-square was 0,743 and determined that using the role play technique has the influence of 74,3 %. Thus, it was concluded that using role play contributes significantly to the English speaking skill of students. Author in [17] focused on developing the speaking skills of students through role-play and reported that the implementation of role-play activities enhances the speaking skills of the learners. The research was conducted among one group of sixteen participants aged fifteen, who were in the second grade of a lower secondary school at a pre-intermediate level. The study took place on the days when the teacher had two lessons in a row with the same group of learners. It was observed that role-playing is more appealing to the learners as they find it funny to play the role of someone else. Majority of the respondents (the students) reported that their speaking skills had increased as a result of role-play activities. The teacher conducting the research indicated that initially, students reported that they felt stressed and intimidated when using English during an ordinary lesson, but after implementing role-plays the teacher observed that nearly all the learners were involved in classroom and tried their best to use only English. Some students

however had difficulties sticking to English only and some other students claimed to have overcome fear of speaking since they had much of their time devoted to speaking in the target language. The study concluded that role-play is an efficient speaking exercise and thus instructors need to implement it from time to time. Authors in [8] considered using communicative games in improving the speaking skills of the students using classroom action research based on Kurt Lewin Model. The procedures used were planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The research was conducted using collaborative action research with selected English teachers. The study instruments were questionnaires, interviews, observation, and test. The study showed that it is crucial to note that communicative games have positively impacted teaching the language learning process. Clearly, communicative games enhance the enthusiasm and motivation of learners and it gives positive improvement on the learners' active, confidence, participation, and fluency in the speaking skill. In short it was observed that communicative games create good and enjoyable environments and reduces boredom and stress of learning process. Authors in [12] studied the effectiveness of role play in improving the learners' speaking skills in a large classroom among the tertiary level students in Stamford University Bangladesh. The study was conducted between January 2012 to April 2012 and involved the use of qualitative data collected using group interviews, learners' performance evaluation result, questionnaires, and classroom observation. The participants were 120 students of the department of English at the Stamford University Bangladesh. The results from the study showed that role play improves the students' speaking skills and the students enthusiastically accept role play because it challenges their ability to think critically and creativity and thus being able to speak confidently and logically in the classroom.

### **3.2 Problem Solving**

Authors in [1] focused on the effect of using communicative language teaching activities on English as foreign language students' speaking skills at the University of Jeddah. The research was conducted in two classes of 21 female English foreign language students each, where one class was the experimental group and the other the control group. The class that was the experimental group was taught using three communicative activities; problem solving, role playing, and interviewing while traditional methods were employed in teaching the control group. A quasi-experimental study was adopted using pretest as well as posttest design. Study findings indicate that the experimental group scored higher than the control group. Authors in [5] and [14] respectively, considered the effect of problem-solving tasks on the speaking skill of Iranian Intermediate English as foreign language learners. In this experimental study, two intact groups of 21 intermediate English as foreign language students were involved. A general proficiency test was given to each learner. The research randomly selected two groups and assigned as the control and experimental groups. A first certificate in English pre-test of speaking skill was administered to the two groups to ensure homogeneity before treatment. Accordingly, the two groups were taught for 18 sessions, two months, using different approaches. The audio-lingual method of instruction was used for the control group while the experimental group was taught using problem-solving activities. A post-test of speaking was later administered to the two groups to assess their speaking ability and t-tests for the independent groups conducted. It was revealed that the experimental group performed better than the control group and thus it was concluded that the use of problem-solving tasks significantly causes the improvement of the speaking proficiency of the learners. Author in [22] considered improving the speaking ability of students in expressing opinion through the problem-based learning strategy among eleventh grade

students of Man 2 Semarang in the academic year 2018/2019. The research used classroom action research. The study was conducted in two cycles and the mean scores for the post-test were higher than the pre-test scores in the two cycles;  $72.72 > 63.96$  and  $84.06 > 77.13$  respectively. Thus, it was concluded that the implementation of the problem based learning strategy successfully improves the speaking ability of learners. Author in [24] study aimed at developing speaking skills through three communicative activities that included role-playing, problem-solving, and discussion and findings showed that the abilities of the students to speak English were significantly better than before using the three communicative activities. It was observed that the attitude of the learners towards teaching English speaking skills using role-playing, problem-solving, and discussion were rated as good. The sample population consisted of 49 students at a secondary school in Udon Thani in Thailand and the study adopted a mixed method design. The quantitative data was obtained from a speaking test as well as the attitudes of students towards teaching English speaking while qualitative data were obtained from a semi-structured interview, learning log, and a teacher journal. Additionally, a one group pretest-posttest design was used. It was concluded that the three communicative activities (role-playing, discussion, and problem-solving) is an essential method that focuses on learner-centeredness to improve the speaking skill.

### **3.3 Puzzles**

According to authors in [26] the traditional activities for instance repetition of words, memorization of long vocabulary lists, transition, derivations, and fill-in-the-blank are boring for the learners and make no guarantee that the learners will remember what they learn. The authors further point out that the use of language games makes learning to be more valuable and vocabulary learning becomes more enjoyable and thus students can retain target words more quickly. The study aimed at exploring applying games in getting the learners of and English for specific purpose course of vocabulary involved in learning activities. Forty learners of English as a second language majoring in nursing in Shahrekord Azad University were randomly chosen and assigned into two groups using Nelson Test of mental maturity. For a five-week treatment the first group benefited from relay word building games, crossword puzzle games and guessing games while traditional teaching methods were used for the second group. There were two vocabulary tests administered to collect data and a covariate analysis done on the pretest-posttest vocabulary test scores. Questionnaires were issues to the students to assess their attitudes towards learning vocabulary and it was evidenced that the group that benefited from games had a fairly effective tendency as well as positive performance than that observed in the traditional group. Authors in [13] explored the effectiveness of using puzzles in developing vocabulary achievement as well as retention in tenth graders. The study chose 80 tenth graders from Abdul Kareem Al-Aklook secondary School for boys in Dair Al Balah for the experiment purposively and two classes for the tenth graders were chosen randomly and each class had 40 students. One of the classes was used as the experimental group where educational puzzles were employed in teaching while the control group was taught through traditional methods. The experiment lasted for six weeks and after two weeks a delayed test was administered to the experimental group in order to measure retention. The research results showed significant differences in the mean scores of vocabulary in favor of the experimental group in the post application. It was also observed that there were no significant differences in the mean scores between the post-test and delayed tests of the experimental group due to the method of using puzzles in vocabulary teaching. The study thus recommendation the importance of using puzzles in teaching English language for vocabulary achievement and retention. Authors in [6] provided an account of learning

arithmetic skills through the puzzle game. Eighty-three students in three classes in Grade 4 were required to solve arithmetic problems with three different methods: through playing an adapted "cross number puzzle" game on Group Scribbles collaboratively, through playing the same game on Group Scribbles individually, and through the traditional method of teaching and learning, that is, with no games at all. Analysis of the pre and post learning success data indicates that the two classes who played the game performed better than the control class, with the collaborative class students attaining better than the individual class students. By playing the game, low-ability students, in particular, made the most significant progress in arithmetic capability and in building up their confidence in doing arithmetic calculations significant progress in arithmetic capability and in building up their confidence in doing arithmetic calculations

### **3.4 Board Race**

Author in [29] sought to explore the various reasons to play games in an English language class by focusing on a group of 30 fourth semester beginner English Foreign Language university students studying to become elementary school teachers. The research sought to find out classroom games intrinsically motivate, advance English language learning, and promote various learning styles when the learners do not have a preliminary want or understanding of the necessity to acquire the language other than the point that it is a compulsory subject in the school. Data was gathered using questionnaires. The teachers used games throughout the course to enhance vocabulary and grammar, promote multiple skill learning while employing diverse teaching styles to create an environment which independently motivated learners to not only want to learn but also to internalize language. The games tested were famous name game, board game, Board Rush, and Charades. It was observed that games assisted learners to increase their speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills and at the same time increased their motivation to desire and appreciate learning English. Author [18] focused on the influence of board race on students' vocabulary mastery and the objective of the research was to establish whether there exists a significant as well as positive influence of board race on students' vocabulary mastery at the Civil Engineering study program in Muhammadiyah University of Metro in the academic year 2017/2018. The research design was a quasi-experiment. The research involved 62 students who were grouped into two classes, 31 students in the experimental group and 31 students in the control group obtained through simple random sampling. Data was collected through pre-test and post-test and data analysis used non-parametric formula. The results of  $t_{\text{count}}$  is 3,09 and  $t_{\text{table}}$  2,00 (on criterion 1) and 2,69 (on criterion 2). This implies that  $t_{\text{count}} > t_{\text{table}}$ , then the criterion of  $t_{\text{count}}$  is  $H_a$  is accepted if  $t_{\text{count}} > t_{\text{table}}$ . Therefore, there is significant influence of adopting board race game on students' vocabulary mastery at Civil Engineering Students in Muhammadiyah University of Metro academic year 2017/2018. Author in [27] investigated the use of board game to improve grammar mastery among students, a classroom action research on the eighth grade of SMP N 1 academic year 2014/2015 using 33 students. The research involved three cycles and each cycle included two meetings to give the learners added opportunities to enhance their understanding about grammar. Research results indicate that the grammar mastery improves significantly for students. The T-calculation results show that the T-calculation of cycle I is 5, 1, cycle II is 8, 3 and cycle III is 6, 5, which means that using board game can significantly improve students' grammar mastery.

#### 4. Methodology

The study adopted an empirical research design. It was based on secondary data collected from prior research studies and other published materials. The research involved empirical analysis of various studies focusing on different types of language games such as role-plays, problem-solving, puzzles, and board race games and their effects on speaking skills. The participants in these studies shared characteristics with Junior Secondary Schools in Hohoe Municipality Ghana. The results of the reviewed secondary data were used to support the objectives of the study. The participants in these studies shared characteristics with Junior Secondary Schools in Hohoe Municipality Ghana. The procedure of data collection involved the identification of the various language games to be investigated and which were used to craft the study objectives. Consequently, analysis of the relevant literature as per the objectives was carried out. Data was analyzed by use of content analysis, as the data collected were largely qualitative. Content analysis involves a research tool that is used to establish the presence of certain themes, words, or concepts within some given qualitative data [16]. Content analysis makes replicable as well as valid inferences by interpreting as well as coding textual material. Using content analysis enables the quantification and analyzing of the presence, meanings and relationships of words, themes, or concepts.

#### 5. Results

The study focused on investigating whether language games influence the acquisition of the speaking skills among students of Junior High School in Hohoe Municipality Ghana. The findings of this study have shown that the use of language games increased the speaking skill of the learners. The results of this study were as presented as per objective as in table1 below.

**Table 5.1: Results**

Variable	Author & Year	Title	Findings
<b>Role-plays</b>	Puspitorini (2018)	The influence of role play on students' english speaking skill of nine graders SMP Negeri 9 Bekasi.	The hypothesis test result with R-square was 0,743 and determined that using the role play technique has the influence of 74,3 %; role play contributes significantly to the English speaking skill of students.
	Kusnierek (2015)	Developing students' speaking skills through role-play in Lower Secondary School number 1 in Leszno.	Implementation of role-play activities enhances the speaking skills of the learners.
	Dewi, Kultsum, & Armadi (2017)	Using communicative games in improving students' speaking skills.	The pretest mean score reached 60.42 to 69.02 and posttest's score reached up to 78.77. It is important to describe that there is a significant improvement of 13.9% to 41.7% in posttest 1 and 83.33% in posttest 2.
	Islam & Islam (2012)	Effectiveness of role play in enhancing the speaking skills of the learners in a large classroom: An investigation of tertiary level students.	In the pretest, the first, second, third, and forth students scored 30 %, 33%, 37%, and 45% while in the second test the students had improved by 15%, 17 %, 17%, and 20% respectively.



<b>Problem-solving</b>	AL-Garni & Almuhammadi (2019)	The effect of using communicative language teaching activities on EFL students' speaking skills at the University of Jeddah.	The mean, median, and standard deviation of the experimental group in pre-test and post-test was 3.48, 3.00, 1.030 and 4.238, 4.500, 1.136 respectively. In the control group the values were 3.29, 3.00, 1.347 and 3.714, 3.00, 1.401 respectively.
	Bakhshizsdeh & Alaie (2017)	The effect of problem-solving tasks on the Iranian Intermediate EFL learners' speaking skill at a private English language institute in Sharekord.	In the pre-test, there was not a significant difference in the scores for the control group (Mean = 13.87, standard deviation = 1.19) and the experimental group (Mean = 14.66, standard deviation = 1.01); $t(40) = -2.3, P = 0.23$ . In the post-test there was a significant difference in the scores for the control group (Mean = 14.09, standard deviation = 1.51) and the experimental group (Mean = 16.95, standard deviation = 1.11); $t(40) = -6.9, P = 0.000$
	Mir'atus (2018)	Improving the students' speaking ability in expressing opinion through problem based learning strategy for the eleventh grade students of Man 2 Semarang in the academic	The post-test were higher than the pre-test scores in the two cycles; $72.72 > 63.96$ and $84.06 > 77.13$ respectively.
	Oradee (2012)	Developing speaking skills using three communicative activities (discussion, problem-solving, and role-playing) at a secondary school in Udon Thani, Thailand.	The English speaking abilities of the students after using the three communicative activities were significantly higher than before their use. (Pretest = 60.80; Posttest = 85.63).
<b>Puzzles</b>	Riahipour & Saba (2012)	ESP vocabulary instruction: Investigating the effect of using a game oriented teaching method for learners of English for nursing in Shahrekord Azad University	The pretest mean score of the game group was 14.80; and in the traditional group, the pretest mean score was 14.08. But the posttest mean score indicated a greater difference after the treatment. The greater posttest mean score belonged to the game group (M =16.65), and it was 14.42 for the traditional group.
	Keshta & Al-Faleet (2013)	The effectiveness of using puzzles in developing Palestinian tenth graders' vocabulary achievement and retention.	The mean of the post-test in the experimental group reached (18.60), whereas the mean of the control group was (12.27).
	Chen and his colleagues (2012)	A collaborative cross number puzzle game to enhance elementary students' arithmetic skills.	Pre and post test results of Class A, B, and C. Students in Class A have the highest average score in the post-test. Their average increased by 13.00, from 50.29 in pre-test to 63.29 in posttest ( $p=0.002$ )
<b>Board race</b>	Sevy-Biloon (2016)	Different reasons to play games in an English language class	Games assisted learners to increase their speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills and at the same time increased their

		at UNAE in Ecuador.	motivation to desire and appreciate learning English.
	Kusumawati (2017)	Board race to boost students' vocabulary mastery at the Civil Engineering study program in Muhammdiyah University of Metro.	The results of $t_{count}$ is 3,09 and $t_{table}$ 2,00 (on criterion 1) and 2,69 (on criterion 2). This implies that $t_{count} > t_{table}$ , then the criterion of $t_{count}$ is $H_a$ is accepted if $t_{count} > t_{table}$ .
	Saraswati (2015)	The use of board game to improve students' grammar mastery	T-calculation results show that the T-calculation of cycle I is 5, 1, cycle II is 8, 3 and cycle III is 6, 5 thus using board game can significantly improve students' grammar mastery.

Source: Author (2019)

## 5. Discussion

The study aimed at establishing the influence of using language games on the acquisition of the speaking skills among students of Junior High School in Hohoe Municipality Ghana. To achieve this objective, the research adopted the empirical analysis approach where relevant literature from previous studies was analyzed. Various games can be played in a language class to enhance the speaking skill as author in [9] holds that language games are necessary in an English language class. This study was based on four language games; role plays, problem-solving, puzzles, and board race games. Role plays involved activities ranging from highly controlled guided conversations at one end of the scale, to improvised drama activities at the other; from simple rehearsed dialogue performance, to highly complex simulated scenarios. The study established that role play contributes significantly to the speaking skills of the students. Most studies reported increased mean scores in the post-tests following the use of role-plays and this supports findings from authors in [21] that using games as classroom energizers and short warm-up activities not only sustain attractiveness to learning but also brings real life learning. Also, the findings are in line with author in [24] that the speaking skills of the students are significantly higher after using communicative games because they may encourage interaction among students in the classroom. Problem solving includes the participation of a group, and the focus is on developing communication, practical group problem-solving, leadership, as well as teamwork skills. It is ideal for groups of young people and adults, as well as new and existing teams. The study established that problem-solving significantly influences the speaking skills since the experimental group always scored higher than the control group. This finding support authors in [5] that the experimental group gives better performance than the control group and thus the use of problem-solving tasks significantly causes the improvement of the speaking proficiency of the learners. Puzzles are specifically designed to invite students to think creatively and work as a team to solve a problem. Normally passive in nature, the puzzles provide numerous teachable moments. The study observed that using puzzles is more effective than the traditional method in developing the students' speaking skill. In one case both the experimental group and the control group were given a similar treatment at the beginning and then games were used as the instruction method to the experimental group only and the post-test mean scores were significantly different for the two groups, 18.60 and 12.27 for the experimental group and control group respectively. The study findings are in line with authors in [13] that puzzles are important in

teaching speaking skills such as vocabulary achievement and retention. Board race games are fun games for revising vocabulary and grammar and the students can be asked to write fixed number of words from a given category. The teachers used games to enhance vocabulary and grammar, promote multiple skill learning while employing diverse teaching styles to create an environment which independently motivated learners to not only want to learn but also to internalize language. The study established that games assisted learners to increase their speaking skill. The study findings support author in [18] that there is significant influence of adopting board race game on students' vocabulary mastery and author in [27] findings that that using board game can significantly improve students' grammar mastery.

## 6. Conclusion And Recommendation

### 6.1 Conclusion

The study established the effect of language games on acquisition of speaking skills among students of Junior High School in Hohoe Municipality in Ghana. The use of games increased the students' achievement. Used as classroom energizers and short warm-up activities, games not only sustain attractiveness to learning but also bring real life learning. They enhance speaking skills of the students which significantly become higher after using communicative games because of interaction among students in the classroom. Games can involve all the basic language skills, i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and a number of skills are often involved in the same game. Games can motivate learners, promote learners' interaction, and improve learners' acquisition. Specifically the study concluded that:

**Role play** as a language game contributes significantly to the English speaking skill of students. Its activities which range from highly controlled guided conversations at one end of the scale, to improvised drama activities at the other; from simple rehearsed dialogue performance, to highly complex simulated scenarios, generally enhance the speaking skills of the learners.

**Problem-solving** tasks in class which may include the participation of a group, and the focus is on developing communication, practical group problem-solving, leadership, as well as teamwork skills, significantly cause the improvement of the speaking proficiency of the learners. Problem based learning strategies successfully improve the speaking ability of learners.

**Puzzles** which are specifically designed to invite students to think creatively and work as a team to solve a problem are important in teaching English language for vocabulary achievement and retention. They are more effective than the traditional method in developing the students' speaking skills.

**Board race games** which are basically fun games for revising vocabulary and grammar and the students can be asked to write fixed number of words from a given category. The games assist learners to increase their speaking skill. The use of board games can significantly improve students' grammar mastery

### 6.2 Recommendation

Games, of course, can also be fun, interesting and competitive, in some cases contributing to lack of learning seriousness. In this way, to certain degree, it may contribute to internal barrier to learning and generally interfere with classroom learning atmosphere. Consequently, the researcher recommends a study to be carried out on the *role of language games in creating internal barrier to learning*.

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