

**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**USING LANGUAGE GAMES TO PROMOTE LITERACY SKILLS  
IN THE ESL CLASSROOM AT PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that with the exception of the references and quotation from other sources which have all been duly acknowledged, the entire thesis is the result of my own original research and no part of it has been presented for another degree in the university or elsewhere.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my family, and to the Glory of God Almighty.

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## ABSTRACT

This study was carried out in St John Bosco`s Basic school in Navrongo in the Kassena-Nankana Municipality in the 2012/2013 academic year. Thirty Pupils in Class 3 were used for the Research. The purpose of the study was to experiment the use of language games to promote literacy skills among primary school pupils in rural schools, where teaching and learning resources are woefully inadequate. The focus of the study was on the following aspects of literacy skill; speaking, reading and writing. Given the difficult nature of teaching and learning literacy skills, especially in areas where teaching and learning resources are inadequate, this research employed the use of language games such as board games as an innovative way to promote literacy development in the primary school. This study used the experimental design. Pre-test and post-test were used to measure the literacy level of pupils before and after the experiment respectively. Both the experimental and control groups were randomly selected. It was only the experimental group that was taken through the use of language games. The general outcome of the results indicates that the experimental group benefitted from the use of language games in the classroom as compared to their colleagues in the control group. This shows that the use of language games in the English as a Second Language classroom can significantly improve the literacy skills of pupils in the primary school. As a result, it is recommended that efforts should be made to take pragmatic measures to incorporate language games into the national literacy programme, starting from the lower primary level. This will go a long way to improve the literacy skills of learners in the country

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

The main focus of this research is introduced in this chapter; "Using Language Games to Promote Literacy in Primary Schools". The background to the study, problem statement and purpose of the study are stated. Also included in the chapter are brief discussions on: the concept and teaching of literacy, the importance of the three basic curriculum materials as well as the quality of teacher training in Ghana. These are briefly stated in order to bring the topic into perspective. The chapter further outlined the significance of the study, theoretical framework, research questions, hypothesis of the study, Scope of the study, definition of terms and a chapter summary.

#### **1.2 Background to the Study**

Attaining an appreciable level of literacy is a process and not an event. It can actually take a life time to achieve (Elkin, 2007:3; Wright et al.1984). Literacy is a skill that is a very essential pillar of every child's development, if the child will succeed in his/her education and contribute to the growing population of literate society. In fact, literacy forms the fundamental building blocks of every child's academic life. The rate at which pupils acquire these requisite skills is clearly known to be a strong indicator of the future success in pupils` academic implication for society as a whole (Chen, 2005). In English speaking countries like the United Kingdom, poor literacy level has become a growing concern. According to Elkin (2007:4) pupils in United Kingdom (UK) were scoring

minimum levels in the National Curriculum Test and this was attributed to the low level of pupils' literacy.

This implies that if the foundation of literacy is weak, then no other subject can be effectively taught and learnt. This, according to Elkin (2007:6) necessitated the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) in 1998 to improve upon the teaching of literacy in Britain.

In Ghana, the situation is worrying as it appears not much is being done to promote the acquisition of literacy in schools, especially the rural ones, where teaching/learning resources as well as textbooks are hard to come by. This is clearly evident in the present state of our Public Basic School system. While there have been some interventions to increase enrolment in the primary school level, like the School Feeding Programme, the same cannot be said for the promotion of the learning and teaching of literacy, and for that matter an effort to shore up the quality of primary school education to match up with the increase in enrolment. According to the report of the Teacher Community Assistant Initiative [TCAI] (2010), the current gross enrolment of pupils in primary schools in Ghana stands at 90% with the net enrolment being 80%. However, less than 20% of pupils in Lower Primary school in Ghana achieve proficiency in both literacy and numeracy. Once the foundation is weak, it has ripple effects.

Teacher Community Assistant Initiative (TCAI) is an initiative that was designed to speed up the attainment of Ghana's educational objectives as stated in the Ghana Education Service 2008 Ghana Curriculum which are: that every pupil in primary 1, 2 and 3 achieves good proficiency level in both reading and writing. It is also hoped that in primary 3 pupils should be able to read and understand simple stories write short description and carry out conversation using present, continuous present, simple past and future tenses.

It is worth noting that the initiative was not to create a new system but work within the existing systems. It has its major partners as Ghana Education Service, Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), and National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP).

Literacy development is not automatic. Teachers of the second language must make conscious efforts to help pupils develop good proficiency levels in the language. For teachers to do this, they must employ teaching strategies that integrate the four language skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing among others, in the English as a Second Language (ESL) lessons. In doing this, ESL teachers can employ some innovations that have the capability of transforming challenges faced by ESL learners onto wonderful opportunities for pupils to learn the language in a fun-filled and relaxing atmosphere. One way of doing this is through language games and contests (Lee 1979: 2 - 3, Chen 2005, Elkin 2007: 4 – 6, Wright et al. 1984).

Lee (1979:3) defines language games as having clear beginnings and endings: It is competitive and governed by rules. This competitive aspect of games plays an essential role in the motivation of pupils in the ESL class. It therefore, means that language games come handy as a very powerful tool in promoting literacy skills, especially in rural schools where teaching and learning resources are woefully inadequate or even absent. Quite apart from that they have little opportunity to hear or speak the target language outside the school environment. In this case, using language games becomes one critical innovative way of getting rural school pupils to learn and practice the ESL

in a less stressful classroom environment and even outside the classroom.

According to Lee (1979:2), language is learnt through using it in situations. These situations which bring the second language to life in the classroom include actions, gestures, games and contests among others. Language games actually create the opportunity for pupils to use the second language for meaningful communication.

In recent times, according to Chen (2005), researchers in second language acquisition have shifted their focus from individual language skills acquisition to communicative competence of ESL learners. Teachers of ESL, therefore, need to look out for activities, contests and games that seek to integrate the four language skills to assist ESL learners achieve a good level of communicative competence progressively. Games do have a great potential of developing in pupils speaking, listening, reading, vocabulary acquisition, critical thinking ability among others (Chen, 2005, Lee 1979: 2 - 3). However, ESL teachers in rural primary schools are either ignorant about this fact or see language games as time consuming as well as very challenging to organise, given the efforts it requires.

In summary, language games have huge pedagogical advantages over its disadvantages and therefore must be encouraged but not without the necessary precautions, in order not to defeat its purpose in the classroom.

### **1.3 The Concept of Literacy and Literacy Development**

According to Elkin (2007:1) the meaning of literacy in Victorian Britain or colonial Africa is different from the meaning of literacy today. In the era of Victorian Britain and Colonial Africa, literacy was acquired by unschooled people. "When, at last they found themselves in classrooms they learnt and decipher squiggles on paper became literate" (Elkin 2007:1). Today, literacy is a school subject. Educators now talk about literacy instead of English. It has also attracted attention and people now talk about "Peace Literacy" "Computer Literacy" or "emotional Literacy" (Elkin 2007: 1). In this study, the focus will be on language literacy.

*The Collin English Dictionary* as cited in Elkin (2007:1) defines "literacy simply as the ability to read and write." or "The ability to use language proficiently." Easy as it may be, the acquisition of literacy, if not taken seriously, especially at the early stages of second language learners' life, might pose challenges for them later life, as far as their academic development

is concerned. This fact is supported by the following excerpt from a great philosopher and historian, Plato: "... don't you know that in every task the most important thing is the beginning and especially when you deal with anything young and tender."

It has become common knowledge that the first few years of school is the period that very effective learning patterns are established, and for that matter, "they set the scene for future educational success, with a special emphasis on an early and successful start with reading and writing" (Riley 1996:1). Riley (1996:6) further posits, "It is well documented that a major contribution to a positive start to school is the child's early success with the task of learning to read. The opposite is true, the implications of poor reading ability are far reaching low academic achievement is linked to low reading ability."

There is a lot of literature on the theoretical aspects of literacy as well as a number of publications on the practices of the teaching of reading and writing, but few books actually combine both aspects, and scarcely is the eclectic approach recommended for ESL lessons. It is therefore, necessary that second language acquisition researchers look into the issue of an eclectic approach for the teaching of reading and writing because there exists a strong connection between the two skills (Riley 1996).

Furthermore, Ediger (2001:163 - 165) has suggested a number of strategies to help ESL learners develop good literacy skills progressively. They include:

- 1) exposing students to the many uses of print around them.
- 2) providing opportunities for children to read more extensively on a subject.
- 3) providing authentic purposes for reading and writing.
- 4) providing scaffolding for learning.
- 5) using oral skills to support reading and writing development.
- 6) focusing students' attention on reading and writing strategies.

#### **1.4 Importance of the Basic Curriculum Materials**

The basic curriculum materials are very important in the professional life of every primary school teacher. These curriculum materials include; 1) the syllabus 2) Pupils' textbook and 3) the teachers' manual/guide. These three materials complement each other and the teacher is expected to consult all three in preparing and strategizing for lessons. However, these materials are always unavailable or not enough. In the school where this research work was carried out, students did not have enough of these basic curriculum materials to function effectively. Textbooks for pupils were in short supply compelling teachers to group pupils during reading lessons. This practice makes the teachers' work difficult. Apart from that the class three teachers did not know how to organise the few language games in the pupil textbooks. This is as a result of the fact that the games were mentioned with no direction as to how to use them. What this means is that, if the teacher has no knowledge of how to play those games in the textbook, he/she will simply not attempt using them with the pupils.

#### **1.5 Quality of Teacher Training in Ghana**

Currently, there is a certain disconnection between Ghana Education Services, Curriculum Developers and Teacher Training Institutions. One would expect that in this era of technology there should be little or no difference between what teacher trainees are taught and what happens in the field of practice, but this is far from the case. This is made evident when untrained teachers who are upgrading to diploma teachers come to the colleges for tuition. They complain that if they do what they are taught at the College of Education they will have problems with their superiors. The question therefore is, if there is no collaboration between GES curriculum developers and teacher training institutions like the Colleges of Education what system then are we running?

If teachers are not properly trained to take up the challenges in this technologically inclined world of our time, then, they will not be able to function properly in the not far distant future.

The poor performance of students in the BECE year in year out have left this question on the lips of many Ghanaians: Are the teachers who are churned out of the Colleges of Education worth their sort? While it might be easy to answer no under the current circumstances, it is important to take a number of issues into consideration. According to the Multi-Site Teacher Education Project (MUSTER) report, "Teacher education in Ghana has until recently not attracted much attention by way of intense structural and curriculum reform." The irony of the matter is that many of the curriculum review programmes and projects like Education Reform Review Committee (ERRC), Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) among others have always made some recommendations for "pre-service" and "in-service" teachers. However, much has not been done in this direction. A number of educational reform projects and programmes have come and gone yet little has been done with regard to teacher educators and teacher training institutions. This could possibly be the reason why the public school system seems to have broken down.

### **1.6 Statement of the Problem**

According to Lee (1979:1), it is clear that learning language is primarily by using it. The implication of this is copious repetition of language inputs that bring about weariness. It therefore behoves on language teachers to inject some sense of variety. Hence, the possibility of using language games cannot be ignored; especially in areas where the school is the only place pupils come into contact with the target language. However, not much research has been done in Ghana to explore the great potential games offer in second language teaching.

According to Wright et al. (1984), language learning is a difficult task. The ESL teacher, therefore, has a lot to do to ensure that learners learn the target language in a friendly atmosphere. Naturally, games are enjoyed by children, apart from the great potential they have in the teaching and learning of the target language. Language games have this characteristic of integrating the four language skills that is listening, speaking, reading and writing as well as offering an enabling environment for learning the target language.

Language games therefore, offer great potential in developing the communicative competence of second language learners progressively. Yet teachers complain of the unavailability of teaching/ learning resources for ESL lessons. This has contributed to the low level of literacy among primary school pupils as stated in the Teacher Community Assistant Initiative [TCAI] (2010) Report.

From my observation each time we go out for monitoring of teacher trainees, we have a calibre of teachers who are not prepared to get themselves abreast with current trends or events in the teaching profession. They therefore, have no idea about the current trends as far as methodology and literacy activities are concerned. Teachers also lack the skill of innovation to employ other means of enriching their ESL lessons by making them exciting. Sometimes too, they simply lack the knowhow and the logistics to enable them put in their best. In effect, there is the need for this study to be carried out to advocate and draw attention to the opportunity that language games present for the development of literacy.

### **1.7 Purpose of the Study**

As the saying goes "necessity is the mother of invention." This necessity has compelled second language acquisition experts to find new and exciting methods of promoting the learning of the target language (Myo 1993). Therefore, the main aim of this study is to advocate the use of language games as an innovative means of promoting literacy in the ESL classroom, especially in rural areas.

The specific objectives of this research are:

- 1) to investigate how the use of language games can improve pupils reading spelling and vocabulary skills.
- 2) to assess pupils' confidence and competence in the use of the target language to converse through games.
- 3) determine the effectiveness of the use of language games on pupils participations and interest in the target language

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

Education is an important investment one can give to a child. It is therefore a great satisfaction to see your child in the primary school begin to speak, read and write English. That is an indication that the child is on his/her way to achieving literacy. Games are known to be very effective in promoting literacy. This is because naturally they are full of excitement and fun. Hence, the outcome of this study is essential for a number of reasons:

First of all, this study will help provide teachers with an alternative way of conducting their ESL lessons in a practical and relaxing atmosphere.

Secondly, it will help teachers to select the appropriate games for their ESL lessons.

Thirdly, it will serve as a reference document that will enlighten and urge teachers on to research into and adopt indigenous games in their ESL lessons.

Finally, the outcome of this study will encourage other researchers to explore more about the use of language games in promoting literacy in our Ghanaian classrooms.

## **1.9 Research Questions**

This study will be guided by the following questions:

- 1) What are language games?
- 2) How can language games improve pupils reading skills?
- 3) How do language games improve pupils" participation and interest during ESL lessons?
- 4) To what extent can language games improve the vocabulary bank of pupils in primary three (3)?

## **1.10 Hypothesis**

The study is based on the hypothesis that the reading, spelling and vocabulary skills as well as the communication skills of pupils in lower primary is better enhanced when language games are used.

## **1.11 Theoretical Framework**

The dynamics of modern language researchers and practitioners have redirected their efforts from individual language skill development to efficient language use. The major theoretical frameworks that form the base of this work are the Affective Filter Hypothesis by Stephen Krashen and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The affective filter hypothesis by Krashen entails a number of `affective variables` that play a facilitative but a non-causal role in second language acquisition. The following are the variables: motivation, self- confidence and anxiety. Krashen argues that learners with motivation, self- confidence, a good self-image and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in SLA.

The communicative language teaching emerged in the 1970s. It is based on the theory that the primary function of language is communication. For that matter, its primary goal is for learners to develop communicative competence. Savignon (1998) holds that the key theoretical concept of CLT is “communicative competence”. He defined competence as the ability to express, interpret and negotiate meaning and considers both psycholinguistics and socio- cultural perspectives in second language acquisition research to account for its development.

According to Richards and Rogers (1986: 64-66) the following are some characteristics of the communicative view to language teaching:

- 1) Language is a system for expressing meaning.
- 2) Language is primarily used for interaction and communication.
- 3) Language structure reflects its function and communication.
- 4) Language learning goes beyond grammatical structures to include the various functions and communicative meaning that are demonstrated during conversation.

He further explained that even though CLT is silent about learning theory, there are some underlying theories that address the condition that aids language learning itself but not the process. They are:

- 1) the communicative principle that stipulates that activities promote learning when they involve real communication.
- 2) the task principle that holds that learning activities where language is used in carrying out meaningful tasks promotes learning (Johnson, 1982) as cited in Richards and Rogers(1986).
- 3) the meaningfulness principle that says that when language is meaningful to the learner, it encourages learning.

According to Piepho (1981) cited by Richards and Rogers (1986: 73) the following are the objectives of CLT:

- 1) An integrative and content level (language as a means of expression).
- 2) A linguistic instrumental level (language as a system of semiotic system and an object of learning).
- 3) An affective level of interpersonal relationship and conduct (language as a means of expressing values of judgments about oneself and others).
- 4) A level of individual learning needs (remedial learning based on analysis).
- 5) A general educational level of extra-linguistic goals (language learning within the school curriculum).

Having considered the Communicative Language Teaching as a modern theory of second language acquisition, this research intends to consider it as the basis of promoting literacy through the use of language games in the ESL classroom. This is because language games and contests lower children's affective filters encourage creative and spontaneous use of language, promote communicative competence, among others. And this is exactly what CLT is all about.

### **1.12 Definition of Terms**

**Language Games:** They are classroom activities organized to help pupils learn some aspects of language. They have competitors, winners and losers as well as clearly defined rules.

**Literacy:** The ability to use language proficiently.

**Rural Schools:** Rural schools are schools in rural areas either with low or high population and normally characterized with high need.

### **1.13 Scope of the Study**

This research work deals with the use of language games to promote literacy in rural primary schools in the northern part of Ghana, Navrongo municipality specifically, St John Bosco's Practice Basic School.

### **1.14 Chapter Summary**

This thesis is made up of five chapters. They include:

Chapter one: Background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, hypotheses, definition of terms, scope of the study, significance of the study, theoretical frame work and limitation.

Chapter two: Review of related literature Chapter three: Methodology of the study include the research design, the population sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, the method of data analysis is also captured. Chapter four: Will focus on results and discussion of findings.

Chapter five: Summary, conclusions, implications for curriculum developers, textbook writers as well as ESL teachers, recommendations and suggestions for further study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1 Introduction

The review of related literature of this study will be done according to the following headings:

- i. Introduction
- ii. Importance of Language Games in the ESL classroom
- iii. Types of Language games
- iv. Language Games and Gaming Concept
- v. Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition
- vi. Learning Theories and Language Games
- vii. Experiential Learning
- viii. Multiple Intelligence Theory
- ix. Cooperative/Collaborative Learning Theory
- x. Summary

According to Richards (2007:2) English is the language of globalization, international communication, commerce and trade and media. There are therefore, different motivations for learning it. English is no longer seen as the property of the English Speaking countries. However, it is an international commodity sometimes referred to as "World English". In Ghana, English is an official language studied at all levels of the educational system.

Learning a second language is quite a difficult task. The ESL teacher therefore, has a lot to do to ensure that learners learn the language in a friendly atmosphere. Wright, et al (1984), concede that language learning is hard work and that it requires great effort at every moment, and it is important that this effort is maintained for a longer period of time. For them, games have the ability to help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work. They also agree that, "games also help the teacher to create contexts to make the language useful and meaningful. The learners want to take part and in order to do so they must understand what others are saying or have written, and they must speak and write in order to express their own point of view or give information."

## **2.2 Importance of Language Games**

In recent times, the use of games has captured the attention of researchers. A number of these researchers have revealed that games have a positive impact on the brain development of young children. This relatively new phenomenon seems to have drawn the attention of second language acquisition researchers to take advantage of this phenomenon to boost second language learning, especially literacy.

Current ESL textbooks for pupils, as well as methodology guides for teachers of English as a second language, have described games as activities that just go beyond time-filling activities. These books hold the belief that games have huge academic values as well. Lee (1979:3) posits that many language games make learners use the language instead of thinking about learning the correct forms. He further argued that games should be treated as central but not peripheral to the foreign language programme.

Chen (2005) argues that games are excellent communicative activities. He believes that games can simply be very powerful tools for learning languages.

He further posits that the main objective of games is to allow pupils to use the target language. This is so because during contest, children engage the target language in persuading and negotiating their way for desired results. He summarizes the vast benefits of language games into nine points. He states that language games are learner centered:

- i. promote communicative competence
- ii. create a meaningful context for language use
- iii. increase learning motivation
- iv. reduce learning anxiety
- v. integrate various linguistic skills
- vi. encourage creative and spontaneous use of language
- vii. construct a cooperative and collaborative learning environment
- viii. foster participatory attitudes of the students.

Action research report by Huyen and Nga (2003) revealed that "Students liked the relaxed atmosphere, the competitiveness and the motivation that games brought to the classroom." On the effectiveness of games, the report revealed that teachers were excited because their students seem to have learnt faster and retained materials better than before.

Fotovatnia and Namjoo (2013) did a study on: "The Effects of Cooperation versus Competitive Word Game on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Gain, Motivation, and Class Atmosphere." The setting of the study is Iran. This was basically an experimental research. The focus of the study was on using word games to enhance vocabulary acquisition of mostly teenagers in Iran. The end result was that word game impacted positively on learners' **vocabulary** acquisition. According to Fotovatnia and Namjoo (2013), word games also increased pupils' motivation and changed their attitude towards their teachers as well as created a positive classroom atmosphere.

Similarly, Yu Shu-yun (2005), carried out a similar study but in Taiwan. He looked at, “The Effects of Games on the Acquisition of Some Grammatical Features of L2 German on Students Motivation and Classroom Atmosphere.” His main objective was to find out the “effects of the use of language games as a teaching strategy for raising the grammatical level of secondary school students of German as a second language in Taiwan. The study was also experimental in nature which falls in line with my study. The findings of the study, was quite interesting, after eight (8) weeks of experimenting with the use of language games, the study revealed no improvement in the area of grammar in German as a second language in particular. However, there was generally a marked improvement that could be traced to students’ motivation as well as classroom atmosphere.

Yu Shu-yun (2005) is therefore, of the view that language games could be included in the teaching and learning of grammar, in that, “learner’s motivation, peer interaction, teacher-student interaction through language games creates a fertile ground for the improvement of grammar gradually.”

Khalid (2011), did a study in Saudi Arabia on, “Utilization of Instructional Game in EFL Teaching; A Case Study of Saudi Intermediate School.” The purpose of his study was to investigate the extent to which Saudi students at the intermediate Level utilize instructional studies. This is basically a quantitative study that sort to find out from teachers whether language games were useful during teaching at the intermediate level in Saudi Generally, teachers agreed that language games were useful classroom techniques. The study revealed that instructional games give ESL learners the opportunity to “share experience and learn from one another, banish boredom and make learners more willing to learn, encourage learners to interact communicate as well as encourage cooperative learning among others.” The focus of my study, though experimental, will be directed towards the pupils.

When pupils use language games, does it have any impact on their literacy development? For that matter my study is qualitative in nature.

Al-Rashid (2010) agrees that the benefits of language games in the EFL classroom are quite enormous. According to him, language games:

- i. are a welcome break from the usual routine of the language class.
- ii. are motivating and challenging, and can lower anxiety.
- iii. help students to make and sustain the effort of learning.
- iv. provide language practice in various skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- v. encourage students to interact and communicate.
- vi. create a meaningful context for language use.
- vii. they give shy pupils more opportunity to express their opinion and feelings.
- viii. they also enhance student's use of English in a flexible, communicative way.

### **2.3 Types of Language Games**

The use of games in the second language classroom is becoming popular in recent times. According to Lee (1980), language games are essential "to all teachers who believe that in foreign language teaching, enjoyment and success go together."

However, there is a genuine challenge out there. Some second language teachers are usually caught in a dilemma as to what type of games to engage young learners in and how exactly children will benefit from such games. Thankfully, the answers to these questions are not farfetched. This is because language games are grouped under various categories. Let me quickly add that games under the various categories most often intersect.

According to Lee (1980), games are categorized under the various aspects of the English Language. For example, we have structure games, vocabulary games, spelling games, pronunciation games, and read-and-do games among others. He also added that games are also categorized under level and age, depending on the level of difficulty of

these games; hence we have games for elementary, intermediate and advanced levels.

He further added that games could also be categorized under Group Size, for example, some games could be suitable for whole class, groups/teams or pairs. But this, to a large extent will depend on the creativity level of the teacher. With regards to this study, vocabulary games, spelling games, reading games pronunciation games among others are employed. Language games have also been categorized by other writers, “Games and Game-like activities” grouped language games using two taxonomies. The first group is made up of linguistic games which focus on accuracy and communicative games with focus on exchange of information and ideas. The second taxonomy has many more categories. They are:

- 1) Movement games: pupils are physically active and care must be taken to monitor them very closely.
- 2) Card games: pupils collect, give away, exchange, sort and count cards.
- 3) Board games: this involves moving markers along a path.
- 4) Dice games: these can have colours, letters of the alphabet- virtually anything you like.
- 5) Drawing games: this span the gap between the key functions of the brain.

Drawing requires creativity and sensitivity towards the world and the children be able to understand instruction and describe their art.

- 6) Guessing games: the main aim is to guess the answer to a question of some kind.
- 7) Role-play games: these are guided activities; the language input here could be prescribed or opened on the language level, curiosity, and confidence of your class. Role plays are said to stimulate a child`s imagination and are tests of true communication.
- 8) Matching games: this involves matching corresponding pairs of cards or pictures, and may be played as a whole class activity, where everyone must circulate until they find a partner with a corresponding card of pictures.
- 9) Team games: require cooperative team work.
- 10) Word game: involve spelling and writing.

## 2.4 Language Games and the Gaming Concept

The use of games is fast gaining prominence in the ESL classroom; there is no doubt about it. The quest for language teachers to make the learning of the second language easy and exciting finds the use of games convenient. This is as a result of the fact that children enjoy playing games. Language games are basically classroom activities with set of rules which guide the pupils` actions and an element of strategy (Games and Game-like activities). According to Klopfer et al (2009:1), there is even a more exciting platform for learning the second language that has emerged - digital games, thanks to technology. In these recent times, one cannot talk about games without mentioning digital gaming. Digital gaming is fast catching up with the younger generation. Klopfer et al (2009) assert that, if industries and organizations like the health sector, road and transport and business among others are taking advantage of digital games, why not the education sector?

According to them, games and digital games for training and learning purposes, to a very large extent have impacted greatly on the current ways people communicate, collaborate, operate and form social constructs. Klofer et al (2009) further stated that research is proving beyond reasonable doubt that technology and digital games are moulding the way, most people think, work and live, especially the younger ones. Interestingly, according to them this phenomenon is completely new to both parents and teachers. Consequently, the need to take advantage of this new and exciting phenomenon by integrating it formally into the school curriculum has become a matter of urgency. This is because digital games are a good resource for literacy development.

Uzun et al. (2013), carried out a study on the following topic, "Developing and Applying a Foreign Language Vocabulary Learning and Practicing Games: The Effect of Vocaword." This study was done in a university.

Though the study was carried out in the university, my interest as far as this work is concerned is the method employed. They employed the pre-test, post-test method. The pre- test conducted constituted a vocabulary quiz from students` curriculum and course book before the experiment was carried out. The results from the study revealed that students from the experimental group exhibited a high level of improvement in vocabulary acquisition as compared to their colleagues in the control group. Their study also revealed that female students performed better in terms of literacy than their male counterparts. In their conclusion, they made very interesting recommendations; these include:

- 1) language games should be developed for the other aspects of the second language and that
- 2) "education philosophies, methodologies and techniques as well as the language curriculum should be rearranged and modified to meet the needs and interests of the new age learners."

Carrying the study of gaming further is the latest School Technology Action Report [STAR] (2013). In their report entitled "The Science of Learning: How Current Brain Research can Improve Education.", they are of the view that video games continue to be a growing phenomenon in our society today, and children have a growing interest in the use of video games to learn. This exciting phenomenon is a wake-up call for universities and neurologists to research into what constitutes a successful educational game. According to STAR report (p:37) when games are well developed and used appropriately, it has the ability of engaging players in a type of learning that is directly related to school curriculum. In this case teachers can then leverage the learning in these games without necessarily disrupting the world of "play" or school. (STAR, 2013 p.37). The report further stated that, games have the capability of enhancing "low level vision of players/learners as well as multi-tasking, task-switching and speed in performing tasks." (pp: 38) One interesting revelation of the STAR report that cannot go unnoticed is the fact that "gamers have better focus and better visually selective attention." (pp: 39).

The STAR latest report (pp: 43) posits that "Games promote understanding, motivation and enjoyment and are terrific at immersing players in complex, feedback-rich problem spaces. And while they are most often not sufficient in and of themselves for a course of study, they can help many students advance beyond the temporary memorization of facts and procedures, attainments that are usually lost when classes stop."

It is significant to note that the STAR report did not specifically talk about language games but rather the importance of games in the learning process and brain development. All these have a direct connection to language games and literacy development, since literacy development equally goes through the same process. The use of language games to promote literacy is therefore not a new venture. However, in Ghana, it appears much is not being done in the area of games and second language acquisition. In countries like Turkey, Malaysia, Poland, India, Taiwan among others a lot of study is being carried out in the use of language games. For instance, Chen (2005), researched into "Using Language Games to Teach Communication Skills." Uberman (1998) did a study on "The use of Games for Vocabulary Presentation and Revision." Arikan et al (2011) also researched into the effectiveness of using Games in Teaching Grammar to young Learners." The major findings of their research work showed that, there was a highly significant improvement in learners' communication writing, spelling and reading skills.

Though I have not come across any study in the use of language games in the indigenous Ghanaian classroom to enhance the learning of the second language, The Teacher Community Assistants Initiative -TCAI have inculcated language games in the training programme for their teaching Assistants. These Teaching Assistants were charged with the responsibility of offering remedial teaching to the weakest of the weak in some selected schools in Ghana to bring them to the level of the rest of the class.

I must add that this intervention is yielding positive results according to their mid-line Report - 2011. TCAI is a programme initiated by Innovation for Poverty Actions an NGO, to help the weakest of the weak pupils in primary school to come up to the level of their peers. This programme is piloted in 500 schools across the country.

#### ***2.4.1 Reasons why games should be used in language teaching.***

Second language teaching experts have outlined a number of reasons why language games could be used in teaching English. Adam (2013) has underscored ten very interesting reasons for using games to teach English. They include:

Games create a context for meaningful communication: Some games do this more obviously than others. According to Adam (2013), all games create a meaningful context for communication to some extent. Though some games revolve around discrete language items such as grammar and spelling, meaningful communication happens because learners need to process how to play the game as well as communicating about the game before, during and after.

This meaningful communication serves as a basis for comprehensible input: Basically, comprehensible input is what pupils understand as they listen and read, interaction to improve comprehensibility such as asking for repetition or giving examples. This leads to comprehensible output as pupils are speaking and/ or writing so that their peers can understand.

- 1) Games add interest to what learners find boring: A long term effort is needed in learning language and maintaining interest means sustaining effort. This is usually difficult especially for young learners. It is therefore important to shape a learning task in a form of a game. This piques the interest of learners who see it as different to what they usually do in class.

- 2) Games can be used with all the language skills: games can be tailor made to focus on listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Interestingly a combination of skills can be involved in the same game. They are therefore a good tool for appealing to different types of learners at the same time.
- 3) Games offer a fun experience: games make children excited. The emotions aroused when learners play games add variety to what is often a sterile, serious process of language learning.
- 4) Games encourage participation from all learners: games offer variety and intensity and this lowers the anxiety of learners and encourages introverts to participate, especially when games are played in small groups.
- 5) Games are learner- centered activities: truly, games are learner-centered because learners are not only active when playing games, but are also made to play leadership roles with the teachers being facilitators.
- 6) Games work outside of class: games are used everywhere. It should therefore be no surprise that many games can be played outside of the class. This presents a means for learners to use the language outside of class time.
- 7) Games promote cooperative learning: games work well with small groups thereby creating a setting for pupils to develop their skills in working with others. Other benefits of group games include;
  - Cooperation encourages the building of team spirit and can have a positive knock-on effect in classroom dynamics.
  - Games involve a degree of competition, although this is not always the case. Furthermore, this can be a healthy thing, as long as the stakes aren't too high.

□ Games encourage everyone to take a turn, rather than letting some learners do all the talking. Games therefore encourage egalitarian participation.

8) Games fit into multiple intelligence theory: games relate well to a variety of intelligences.

For example:

- Games which contain a hands-on element, such as cards, spinners, or pieces engage with bodily/kinesthetic.
- Group games always require discussion and therefore involve interpersonal intelligence
- Games tasks with visual input engage with visual/spatial intelligence.

#### ***2.4.2 Disadvantages of using language games in the ESL class.***

Though language games are very good learning tools in the ESL class as stated above, they can have disadvantages. Adams (2013) outlined some disadvantages of using language games in the class.

- i. Physical strain: it is easy for children to get addicted to language games; they can sit at one particular spot for hours playing games. This can have a long term effect on their neck and back. They can also suffer fatigue, mood swings or even strain their eyes if measures are not put in place to closely monitor games sessions.
- ii. Mental effects: pupils can be affected mentally by playing games. For example, pupils may want to play games for as long as they don't win or progress in it this according to studies can cause low self-esteem or aggressive behavior, especially if a child keeps losing a game.

- iii. Lee (1980) is also of the view that planning and organizing language games can be time consuming.
- iv. Complexity of games can be distracting: games by themselves can distract students from its intended purpose in the class. If the game is too difficult for the pupils they can get distracted.
- iv. Games can be viewed as busywork: because games are full of fun and involve relaxed and informal interaction between pupils, they see it as unproductive busywork.
- v. Games require resources to develop: a lot of resources are needed to develop some of these games and availability of these resources can be a factor as to whether to use language games in the classroom or not.

### ***2.4.3 Organizing the ESL class for language games.***

Classroom organization is very important during language games. Lee (1980) is of the view that the success of many games depend to a very large extend on good class organization. He therefore outlined some strategies that can be used during language games to make them successful in the ESL class. They include:

Dividing pupils into teams/groups- it is important to divide pupils into teams. The number of groups/teams will depend on the size of the class however, he is of the view that this should not be done frequently as this can waste a lot of time. He also said that children tend to have a sense of belongingness if they are the same group for long at least for a whole year. Frequent changing of groups could affect their sense of belongingness negatively.

Teams/groups should be named. With respect to names of teams/groups Lee (1980) posits that names for the various teams/groups should be suitable. Names that will excite pupils should be used. He suggested that names like sparrow, robins and skylarks may be pleasing to children in a place where these birds are well known. He also suggested names of popular animals like lions, tigers, etc as well as colours and cardinal points have broader appeal and are widely accepted. He however, thinks that much depends on the age of the children and the country where one is teaching.

One other essential strategy in organizing the classroom for games according to Lee (1980) is that teams/group members should be evenly matched, if there is to any competition or contest. This is to ensure that no team or group is at an advantage over the other. If the above average pupils and the below average ones are unevenly matched some groups or teams will always be at the winning end and the others at the losing end. This can be discouraging for those always at the losing end.

Lee (1980) also argues that teams should be larger than groups. This should be done taking the class size into consideration. This is one way of multiplying language practice. The arrangement should be done in such a way that the teacher or facilitator should be able to move from one group to the other easily and as quickly as possible. Pair activity is also recommended. According to him it can give a greater amount of communication practice, even though this creates less opportunity for pupils to consult each other and do some mutual correction. Teams/groups are preferred in very large classes though pair work is advantageous.

Scoring, the methods of scoring points of competitions during language games should vary. Lee (1980) advised that psychologically it is good to award points for success than to take them away for failure even if this process keeps the scorers very busy.

He suggested images of things which climb or expand are useful as means of visually representing the scores.

#### ***2.4.4 Guidelines for using language games effectively in the ESL classroom***

For language to be effectively used in the ESL classroom proper guidelines must be put in place. Talak (2010) outlined guidelines to ensure that language games are effectively carried out. They are:

1) The learning objectives and purpose for the language game must be clear.

It should be clear what the pupils are learning and practicing in the activities and procedures of the language games.

- 2) Pupils should be assigned to teams. The grouping may depend on a number of factors but ultimately, it should depend to a large extent on the task pupils will be performing. It is essential to form fair teams where above average, average and below average pupils are evenly distributed to give each team a fair chance. Apart from that weaker pupils get to learn from the average and above average pupils. Random grouping is not usually recommended as one group could have an unfair advantage over others. It is also not advisable for pupils to choose their own groups. They may want to work with their friends and this does not promote learning in general.
- 3) It is important to explain very well rules governing the games as well as the procedures involve in playing them. Ensure that every one is listening and at the end understands. It is sometimes necessary to let pupils recap rules and procedures of previously played games.
- 4) Be consistent. Ensure that pupils have equal amount of time to work. Do not begin another round if all the teams will not have a chance to go before the end of the game. Also be sure you are actually rejecting wrong answers and accepting only correct answers to avoid unnecessary anxieties.

- 5) Be prepared. Enough materials, time, questions and the other important things for the games should be available before the start of the games. As a teacher the unexpected may happen but it is the duty of the teacher to take well informed decisions on the spot. Knowledge of the language games is of utmost importance.
- 6) Maintaining a non-threatening environment. Making sure that all standard rules and procedures should be observed during language games. Unacceptable behaviours like name calling belittling and teasing should not be encouraged. During games pupils get over excited and could react negatively when outcomes are unexpected. All these issues should be discussed before starting games.
- 7) Sometimes it is useful to have pupils create their own games. But this should be done when pupil have had enough exposure to language games. This is to ensure that pupils are familiar with the nature of games in general. However, there should be set boundaries for pupils.
- 8) The more you use games, the easier it is to facilitate. Also as you progress, making groups, sharing and implementing rules and procedures, being consistent, dealing with competition and collaboration as well as evaluating the benefits of language games becomes much easier.

#### ***2.4.5 Challenges of using language games in the classroom.***

Language games are obviously very good resources in learning and acquiring the second language. However, there are challengers in using them in the ESL classroom. Talak (2010) identified some challenges during language games, they include:

Games should include everyone. This is one of the difficult aspects of playing language games. When playing games for extrinsic rewards, slow and shy pupils withdraw for fear of name calling should they lose. The smart ones on the other hand who are confident and outgoing may be seen as the heroes.

Again, if the game involves some physical activity safety of pupils could be compromised. The teacher must therefore ensure that safety precaution and that pupil ability and disability is taken into consideration. Also, each pupil brings his/her own personality traits to the class. Ensuring a balance between and among passive and outgoing pupils as well as the geniuses and the average kids can be challenging. This makes the formation of teams and setting of rules for pupils more relevant. Games can be noisy. The ESL class could get too noisy if care is not taken. As a result of the excitement and fun nature of language games pupils can be very noisy and so teachers should ensure that their language games classes are quieter in order not to destruct other learners around. Games should not also be organized to coincide with very important school programme like examination.

Cheating could be a source of worry during language games. When pupils cheat during examination and assignment and nothing is done about it they are encouraged to do it again. For that matter during language games such pupils can easily cheat. The facilitator must emphasize on the rules and ensure that those who break these rules are duly punished for it. This can minimize cheating. Among other things pupils who cheat could be denied a turn, have some points deducted or even end the entire game session.

Rules must be fair to everyone. In setting rules for language games fairness must be a yardstick for the teacher or facilitator. If there fairness during games anxiety is reduced but if there is fairness is there will always be confusion during games and this can defeat the purpose of games in the class.

The element of chance should be minimized and learning emphasized. Games that are involving and motivating certainly have challenges and cannot be won easily. The elements that provide this challenge are skill, chance and endurance.

Some of the language games have some element of chance especially those that involve the use of the dice. If you have same pupils or same groups always on the winning side, then you need to change the dynamics of the game. The winning group could be reassigned the same game but this time with more challenging material, this can heighten their learning experience.

#### ***2.4.6 Characteristics of good language game.***

There are a lot of language games but is not every game that is good. The teacher must take his/her time to select games that are can be used as tools for learning. Talak (2010) has identified some characteristics of good language games that teachers should look out for when selecting language games for the ESL class. They are:

- 1) based on learning objectives.
- 2) give the player control over his own destiny
- 3) include doable challenges
- 4) fun and interesting, thus motivating
- 5) based on reality in order to intrinsically motivate the players to continue to play the game.
- 6) require interaction
- 7) games must include everyone

## **2.5 Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition and Language Games.**

"Acquisition requires meaningful interactions in the target language in a natural-communication in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding." Krashen Though Krashen did not specifically write on language games, his theory of second language acquisition seems to agree with language games and literacy development.

Considering other second language theories, I find Krashen's Monitor Model Hypothesis very interesting, especially with regards my area of study - "Using Language Games to Promote Literacy in the ESL classroom." I particularly took interest in Krashen's theory because it is multi-faceted and interwoven.

According to Schutz (2013: P 1 -2) Stephen Krashen's second language theory consists of five Hypotheses. These include:

- 1) the acquisition - learning hypothesis
- 2) the monitor hypothesis
- 3) the natural order hypothesis
- 4) the input hypothesis
- 5) the affective filter hypothesis

### ***2.5.1 The Acquisition Learning Hypothesis***

The Acquisition-learning hypothesis is the pivot around which the other four hypotheses revolve. (Shutz 2013:2). In other words, acquisition-learning is the most important of the hypothesis. Acquisition, according to Shutz (2013: 2 -

3) is the product of subconscious way of acquiring language. This, he says can be compared to how children acquire the first language. This has to do with interacting with the target language in meaningful situation where speakers focus on the communicative act rather than the form of their utterances.

Learning, on the other hand, is the product of conscious process of learning language. This involves formal instructions in a formal classroom in order to learn the grammar rules of the language. It is important to note that, Krashen concedes that acquisition is more important than learning. If this is the case, it is therefore important that second language teachers create the opportunity for second language learners to interact meaningfully and enjoy natural talk using the target language which will naturally result in the acquisition of the target language (Bilash 2009:2).

### ***2.5.2 The Monitor Hypothesis***

According to Krashen as stated by Shutz (2013:3) **there exist a** relationship between the acquisition and learning hypothesis. The monitor model hypothesis explains this relationship. According to Krashen, "learning has an influence on "acquisition." The monitor serves as an "editor." The role of this editor is to correct errors. This means that the "acquired system" initiates the utterance for the "learnt system" to edit out wrong structures. It is important to note that the use of the "monitor" varies from person to person. There are some category of persons who 'over-use' the 'monitor.' Others too 'under-use' the 'monitor', yet another category use it appropriately. It should be noted that in all this the 'monitor', can be a disincentive, in that, it compels a speaker to slow down and focus on accuracy rather than fluency (Shutz 2013:3).

Consequently, second language teachers must strive to strike a balance between accuracy and fluency in learners. The end result of this is for learners to achieve some competence in communication with the target language (Bilash 2009:2).

### ***2.5.3 The Natural Order Hypothesis***

According to Shurtz (2013:3-4), natural order hypothesis is the part of Krashen's second language theory that says that, learners acquire grammatical rules in a predictable manner. The bottom line of this hypothesis is that some grammatical structures are acquired earlier than others. Krashen further explains that the natural order of acquisition is independent of the learner's age, first language (L1) background, as well as deliberate teaching of grammatical structures. It is therefore, imperative that second language teachers know that, automatically, some grammatical structures are pretty easier to acquire than others. What this means is that teachers of English as a second language, should always make it a point to teach grammatical structures from simple to complex (Bilash 2009:2).

### ***2.5.4 Input Hypothesis***

Input hypothesis is one of Krashen's interesting hypotheses as far as second language acquisition is concerned. Krashen posits that input hypothesis is particularly concerned with acquisition rather than learning (Shurtz 2013:6). According to him Krashen further explains that learners improve and progress along the "natural order" when they receive second language 'inputs' that are a little above their current level of linguistic competence. It is important to note that the objective of every language course is to ensure that learners communicate effectively using the target language. Therefore, the ESL teacher has the responsibility to provide the platform for learners to engage in the use of the target language, thereby leading to the acquisition of second language (Bilash 2009:2).

In creating a platform for learners to engage in the use of the second language in the ESL classroom, language games have a great potential in this direction.

### **2.5.5 *Affective Filter***

"Breaking down the formal walls of the ESL class and allowing Second Language Learners (SLL) to take necessary risk" as far as the use of ESL is concerned is essential for second language development. I think this is the basis of Krashen's affective filter hypothesis. According to Shurtz (2013:6-7), this hypothesis is an embodiment of Krashen's assertion that "a number of affective variables play a facilitative but non-causal role in second language acquisition." According to him, motivation, self-confidence and anxiety constitute these variables. Krashen explains that these variables do not impact directly on acquisition. However, it has the potential of preventing language inputs from reaching that part of the brain responsible for language acquisition. It is said that low motivation and self-confidence as well as high level of anxiety can cause the affective filter to go high, thereby preventing language acquisition. On the other hand, high motivation of learners coupled with high or good self-confidence and low anxiety are fertile grounds for language acquisition because these variables cause the lowering of the affective filter leading to language acquisition (Shurtz (2013, pp. 6 - 7).

Games are generally enjoyed by everyone, especially kids. For this reason, using games in the ESL classroom has the tendency of creating a learner friendly and a less stressful environment while giving learners the opportunity to use the target language in meaningful communication leading to the acquisition of the target language.

## **2.6 Learning Theories and Language Games**

The students' own contribution to their language learning is very essential as far as current approaches to second language learning are concerned. This is because students need to take their own initiative as well as be involved actively.

There is also the need to take charge of their learning in order to enhance their autonomy as students and language users. Apart from that language games are instructional materials that are pupil centered and so pupils must play a central role as far as their literacy development and language games are concerned (Kohonen 2013:1). There are a number of learning theories that offer learners the opportunity to develop the second language. Three of them are discussed below.

- i. Experiential Learning Theory - ELT
- ii. Multiple-Intelligence Theory - MIT
- iii. Cooperative/Collaborative Learning Theory

## **2.7 Experiential Learning Theory**

Experiential learning theory offers second language learners the opportunity to develop second language by experiencing it. According to Kolb, Mainnemeli and Boyazia (1999) experiential learning theory defines learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming of experience." ELT seeks to provide a holistic form of the learning process and multi-linear model of adult development, both of which are consistent with what we know about how people learn, grow and develop. The theory is called "Experiential Learning" because it seeks to place emphasis on the central role experience plays in the learning process-, an emphasis that distinguishes ELT, from other learning theories (Kolb et al 1999:1-2).

Kolb (1984) cited by Kolb et al (1999) takes a look at a more general theoretical model of experiential learning.

According to his model, learning is essentially a process of resolution of conflicts between two dialectically opposed dimensions; the prehension dimension and the transformation dimension.

The prehension dimension looks at the way by which the individual learner grasps experience. The dimension entails two polar ends. They include the ways of knowing, ranging from unconscious intuitive experience to conscious comprehension of the experience. The transformation dimension, on the other hand, is about the transformation of experience through reflective observation and active experimentation. An individual learner with active orientation is more likely to take risks and has no fears for errors and failures. A learner with a reflective orientation on the other hand, is more likely to withdraw from such risks and prefer to transform experience through reflective observation. In effect, the polar ends of the two dimensions results in four orientations to learning (Kolb as cited by Kohonen 2010).

According to Kolb's learning model, concrete experience (feeling), learning should emanate from more specific experiences, and relating to people, as well as being sensitive to their feelings.

Reflective observation (watching), has to do with learning by perception, that is, observing before making judgment by looking at the environment from different perspectives, and looking at the meaning as well.

Abstract conceptualization (thinking), has to do with rigorous thinking. It means logically analysis of ideas and acting on intellectual understanding of a situation.

Active experimentation – (learning by acting), has to do with the ability to get things done by influencing people and events through action. It includes taking necessary risks.

(Kolb cited by Kokohen 2010) further proposes six main characteristics for his learning model:

- 1) learning is best conceived as a process not in terms of outcomes.
- 2) learning is a continuous process grounded in experience.
- 3) learning requires a resolution of conflict between dialectically opposed modes of adaption to the world. Learning is by its nature full of tension.
- 4) learning is a holistic process of adaption to the world.
- 5) learning involves transaction between a person and the environment.
- 6) learning is the process of creating knowledge that is the result of transaction between social knowledge and personal knowledge.

According to him, a learner may enter the cycle at any point depending on the situation but will still learn the new task if all four modes are practiced.

## **2.8 Multiple Intelligence Theory**

"All learners are endowed with different mind sets that they employ while performing various activities in their daily lives." These learning styles or learner strategies are believed by language pedagogues to be essential in deciding the success and failure of language learning (Keid 1987; Oxford 1993; Chamot 2004; Decapuaux Wintegerst, 2005 cited in Kim 2009).

According to Kim (2009, p. 1-3), Garderner propounded multiple intelligence theory in the 1980s. He explains that every individual has a different set of intelligence which is innate. These sets of intelligence of human beings consist of a combination of seven different intelligence types. Namely:

- 1) verbal -linguistic
- 2) logical - mathematics
- 3) visual - spatial
- 4) bodily - kinesthetic
- 5) musical - rhythmic
- 6) intrapersonal
- 7) interpersonal

(Gardner, 1993 as cited in Kim, 2009). Palmberg (2008) posits that linguistic learners are "word smart"; they like to speak and write as well as play with words. They also enjoy jokes and listening to stories. Logical - Mathematical learners are "number/reasoning smart" they have the flair for thinking logically and solving problems. Visual - spatial learners are also "picture-smart". These categories of learners think in pictures and mental images. Illustrations, charts, tables and maps are a fun to learn with. For the Bodily-Kinesthetic learners, they are "body smart". It is said that they experience learning better if they are involved in movements, mimicking, dancing and role play. The musical learners who are "music smart", tend intrapersonal are also "people smart" and "self smart" respectively and learn differently. While interpersonal has the characteristic of interacting with others and learns better from groups and partners, intrapersonal has a reflective nature. They are very analytical and intuitive about who they are and how and what they learn.

Considering the nature of multiple intelligence and how it operates, it is important that language teachers take full advantage of the learning traits to enhance language learning through games. The use of games in the language classroom to promote literacy engages more than one intelligence traits as well as team work.

## 2.9 Cooperative/collaborative Learning Theory

Cooperative learning, according to Johnson and Johnson (2013: 12), is working together to achieve shared objectives. They posit that "cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximise their own and each other's learning."

Panitz (1996:1) also defined cooperative learning as "a set of processes which helps pupils interact together in order to accomplish a specific goal or develop an end product which is usually content specific."

Cooperative learning strategy, which is socialistic in nature, involves small groups of students which are heterogeneous in characteristic. A variety of activities are therefore, employed to improve the understanding of a topic or subject. According to "Daily Learning Tools", cooperative learning strategy allow students to work together for their mutual benefit. The idea behind cooperative learning is that "your success benefits me and my success benefits you." There are a number of benefits of cooperative learning. Below are some of them outlined by "Daily Learning Tools" cooperative learning activities:

- i. promote students learning and academic achievement.
- ii. increase students' retention of material learned
- iii. enhance students' satisfaction with their learning experience
- iv. help students develop skills in oral communication
- v. promote positive race relations and self-esteem.

## **2.10 Summary**

This chapter reviewed related literature on the use of language games to promote literacy. In current approaches to second language teaching, there is a strong advocacy for the use of Language Games in the ESL class especially in areas where the school is the only place where pupils get the opportunity to use the target language. The review highlighted on the types of language games, learning theories and language games and Krashen's second language theory and language games.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The aim of this research was to advocate the use of language games to promote literacy in the primary school. This section is made up of the following:

- 1) Description of location of the research
- 2) Materials and Games
- 3) Description of Materials and Games
- 4) Research design and treatment
- 5) Class control and management practice
- 6) Data collection
- 7) Data analysis plan

#### **3.2 Description of Location of Research**

I am a teacher at the College of Education, carried out this study in class three (3) of St John Bosco's Practice Primary School. The study is an experimental research on the use of language games to promote literacy. St John Bosco's Practice Basic School is located on the compound of St John Bosco's College of Education in the Kassena-Nankana Municipality of the Upper East Region. Even though the school is a practice school for the college, it is exclusively under the control of Ghana Education Service, making supervision of the activities of the practice school quite challenging.

According to the 2010 population census, the people of Gongnia, the community where the school serve are mainly peasant farmers and petty traders.

Because of the high level of illiteracy in the area, education for their children is not a priority. This has reflected in the attitude of pupils towards school attendance and homework given to them. The school is located on the compound of St John Bosco's College of Education in the municipality. One would have expected that the school should have being a model school in the municipality but unfortunately this is far from the case.

The school has a staff strength of thirteen (13) teachers and seven (7) teacher trainees during the period of the study. One of the thirteen teachers is an untrained teacher but the rest are trained. The population of the school as at the time the research was carried out stood at 402 pupils. 185 pupils representing 46% are boys and 217 pupils representing 54% are girls.

### **3.3 Materials/ Games**

A number of materials and games in the form of teaching and learning resources were used to undertake this study. They include:

#### **Materials**

- 1) Journals
- 2) Exercise books
- 3) Pencil
- 4) Ludu dice and colour pebbles
- 5) Bottle tops
- 6) Attendance Register
- 7) Scoring sheets

## **Games**

- 1) Board game
- 2) Picture reading games
- 3) Flash cards
- 4) Video game (DVD)

### ***3.3.1 Description of Materials/ Games***

Materials and games that were used to carry out the study are described below.

### ***3.3.2 Board Game (4 in a Row)***

This is a game that helps pupils to acquire sight vocabulary. The boards are in levels, from simple to complex, as the game progresses. A ludo die and colour pebbles are used to play this game. This is how it is played:

- 1) This game is played in a team of four members.
- 2) Each member has a turn to roll the die.
- 3) You then read the word with a number that corresponds with the number that has been rolled.
- 4) If this team member is able to read the word correctly, then s/he places his/her colour pebble on the said word. On the other hand, if the team member is not able to read the word s/he loses out on that round.
- 5) The winner is the one who has four of his/her coloured pebbles in a row in a form of a line vertically, horizontally or diagonally. Below is an example.

6) Between 2 to 4 pupils in a team can play this game (Adrian, 2013). A sample is provided in the appendix A.

**Figure 3.1: Pupils playing the 4 in a row game.**



Source: Fieldwork 12/06/2013.

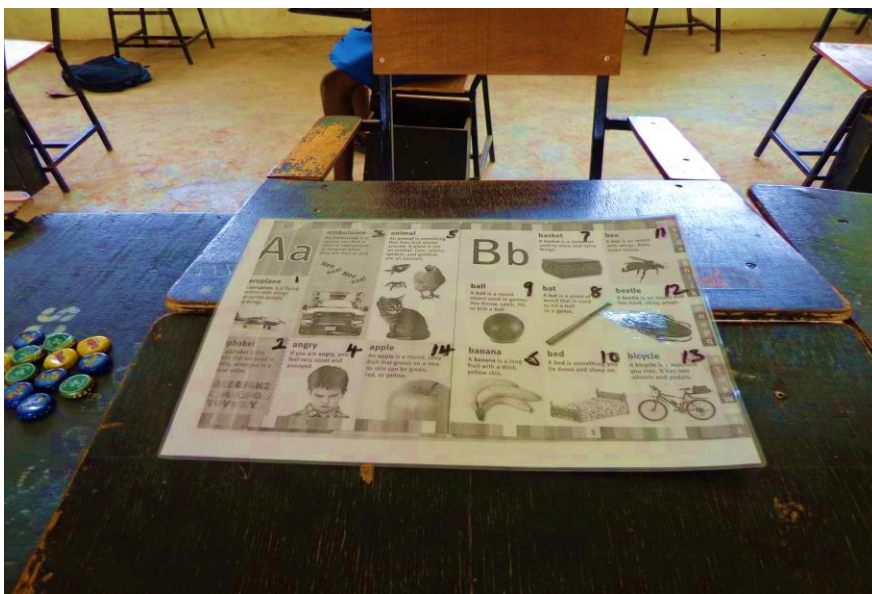
### **3.3.3 *Picture Reading Game***

From a picture dictionary, this game was developed out the researcher's own innovation and creativity.

The pictures have their descriptions or definitions underneath them. The pictures in each square are then numbered. This game was design to help pupils develop pronunciation and reading skills through collaborative efforts in a team spirit. It will also help pupils to tolerate each other; above all the weaker ones will be pulled along. It was extremely exciting. This is how it is played:

- 1) Bottle tops are numbered to correspond with the numbers of the pictures.
- 2) Each team is expected to choose a team member to pick a lucky number written on a bottle top; the numbers on the bottle tops are concealed to avoid confusion.
- 3) The team, with combined efforts then read the picture definition that corresponds with the lucky number picked.
- 4) If the team is able to read the picture definition correctly they win a point by keeping the bottle top. If on the other hand a team member is not able to read, he/she returns the bottle top picked, they are then mixed together again for the next team.
- 5) The winners are those who earn the highest point or have the highest number of bottle tops. A sample is provided in the appendix B.

**Figure 3.2: Picture reading game ready to be played.**



Source: Fieldwork 16/07/2013

### **3.3.4 Flash Cards**

The flash cards contain sight vocabulary which is meant to compliment the board game. The ability of a child to read a lot of sight words goes a long way to improve upon the reading ability of a child. The cards were used to carry out a number of activities and contests to enhance pupils' pronunciation, spelling as well as reading skills. For example;

- 1) The cards are displayed on a table.
- 2) Pupils are then made to come in turns and pick a card, read the word on it and spell it.
- 3) If the pupil is able to read and spell his/her word he/she the picks a bottle top, which represents a point.
- 4) On the other hand, if a pupil is not able to read the word he/ she will drop it back and give the chance to another pupil.
- 5) The winner is the one with the highest number of bottle tops. Samples are in appendix C.

Alternatively, pupils are assigned words, and are made to form as many words as possible from the individual letters of the word. The winner is the one with the highest number of words. This game is popularly known as the "mother- child."

### **3.3.5 Diaries**

These are note books for pupils to keep record of new things learnt. For example, the new words that they learn. All pupils in the treatment group were provided with a notebook which served as diaries. Pupils recorded any new thing or words they have learnt or anything they find exciting to them.

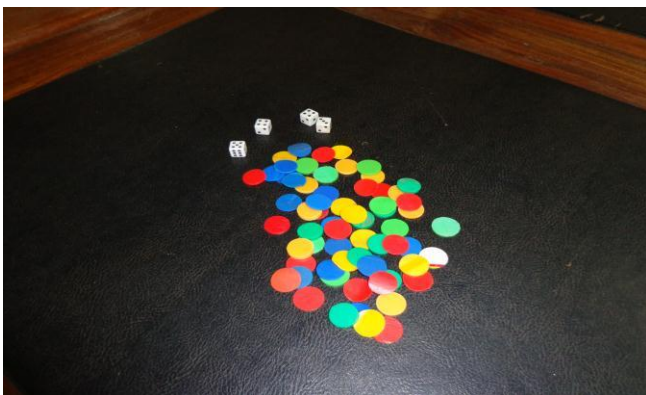
### ***3.3.6 Exercise Books and Pencils***

Each of the treatments was also provided with an exercise book and a pencil. This was to ensure that they did their exercises and tests without complaining of lack of these materials which was actually the case at the beginning. It was also another form of motivation for them.

### ***3.3.7 Ludu Dice and Coloured Pebbles/ Counters***

Ludo dice were provided for teams to enable them play their games. Coloured pebbles or counters were also on hand to help determine winners of some of the games. The pebble had unique colours for a team or each member of the team as the case may be. These were mostly used for the “4 in a row” game and the picture dictionary reading game. Below is a picture of the pebbles and ludo dice.

**Figure 3.3: Colour pebbles and ludo dice used for the games.**



Source: Fieldwork 16/06/2013

### 3.3.8 *Video Game*

The video game contains letters and their corresponding sounds as well as phonic activities such as blending of consonants and vowels to form two letter, three letter or four letter words and beyond. Basically, the game is played like this: when a consonant or two are given for pupils to determine the appropriate vowel to click to form a correct word. This game has full of fun, it also helped pupils to learn letters and their corresponding sounds which is a major weakness of pupils in this school. The knowledge of phonics helps to improve the pronunciation skills of learners.

### 3.3.9 *Bottle Tops*

Bottle tops were used to play the picture reading game and as well as the flash cards activities. They were used to represent points just to break the monotony of using numbers. A team which wins in a round will pick a bottle top and this represents a point. At the end of the game, the team that has more of the bottle tops is declared the winner. Below is a picture of bottle tops ready to be used. Below is an example of bottle tops used for the games.

**Figure 3.4: Bottle tops ready to be used**



Source: Fieldwork 12/06/2013.

### **3.3.10 Attendance Register**

An attendance register was used to monitor the class attendance of treatments during the period of the experiment.

### **3.4 Research Design and Treatments**

This research employed the pre-test and post-test system. Simple balloting was adopted to select the two groups for the study- the control and the experimental group. In this design, a pre-test was conducted for both control and experimental group before the intervention for the experimental group. The experimental group was taken through eight (8) weeks of the use of language games to enhance their reading, writing and speaking skills everyday of the week. The intervention process lasted 35 minutes each day. The experimental group was made up of 15 pupils, 8 males and 7 females.

In all there were four teams in the class with each team having four members but the last team had three members. The experimental group was therefore put into teams. Each team had a name and a slogan just to spice up experimental periods. For example:

- MTN- “everywhere you go”
- Vodafone-“power to you”
- Tigo- “express yourself”
- Airtel- “feel free”

There were times pupils played games at the team level as well as individuals but in their respective teams. Time allowed for each team was 10 minutes. The technique of using language games was adopted because games are usually engaging and also have such great potential of improving the communicative competence of learners (Chen 2005).

The control group on the other hand went on with the traditional system. The post-test was administered at the end of the experimental period. The post -test was the same as the pre-test.

### **3.5 Class Control and Management Practice**

#### **3.5.1 Class Room Arrangement**

The appropriate classroom arrangement can go a long way to affect pupils' learning positively especially during activities such as language games. Therefore, classroom arrangement varied from time to time during the experimental period. When pupils were working in teams of four, they sat in such a way that they face each other as illustrated in the picture below.

**Figure 3.5: Pupils seated facing each other for games.**



Source: Fieldwork 12/06/2013.

When pupils were in pairs the two pupils faced each other. When they were to contest individually or writing a test or doing exercises the arrangement was that of horse shoe shape or the “yutong” bus system as illustrated below

**Figure 3.6: Pupils in a horse shoe shape.**



Source: Fieldwork 22/07/2013.

**Figure 3.7: Pupils in the “yutong” bus arrangement.**



Source: Fieldwork 29/05/2013.

### **3.5.2 Teams/Groups**

The following measures were used for assigning pupils for different teams and groups.

**Levels of Pupils:** The intervention or experimental groups were ranked from the highest performance using the pre-test as the grounds for this ranking.

**Number of Teams:** four pupils constituted a team during the study period, however there were instances pupils were paired up. Each team had a unique name and a slogan.

**Mixed Ability Grouping:** To ensure that teams or groups were balanced, the heterogeneous group system was adopted. Each group had a pupil from the low average, average and above average ranking. Gender was also considered make teams well balanced.

## **3.6 Data collection**

### **3.6.1 Pre-test**

The pre-test was conducted as a diagnostic test for both experimental and control groups. This was to confirm the existence of the problem. The pre-test was conducted in three phases.

Phase one: The phase one of the pretest was conducted for experimental and control groups in the classroom. This phase was to test the writing skills of pupils. They wrote an essay on “myself” and this lasted for 30 minutes. The topic was taken from primary three syllabus.

Phase two: This phase was to test the reading skills of the pupils in terms of fluency, pronunciation and punctuations. A short passage was culled from primary three reading book. The passage was divided into four sections. The passage can be found in appendix D. Section 1 was the short passage, section 2 contained simple sentences, section 3 had words and finally section 4 had letters. This was to enable me grade the pupils.

The reading test was done on individual basis, this was to ensure less interference from other pupils around and encourage independent work.

Phase three: This phase was to test pupils speaking skills. A conversation theme was selected from the primary three syllabus- "My best friend." Initially the design was such that pupils will get up and talk about their best friends but this did not work because they would not talk. I decided to put them in groups of four and task them to describe their best friend to their group member. This strategy was meant to get them to talk. Pupils were assessed on fluency, pronunciation and the use of vernacular.

### ***3.6.2 Intervention Process***

During the intervention period tests was the major instrument used in collecting data. Homework and observations were also used. The types of language games used for the intervention were basically reading games, writing games and vocabulary games as stated at the beginning of this chapter. The treatment process lasted for eight weeks. During this period three major parameters were the focus of the study. They are: reading skills, writing skills and speaking skills. These skills are crucial, as far as literacy is concern. Under reading sub-skills like fluency in reading, pronunciation and vocabulary acquisition skills were assessed. For writing, sub-skills such as spelling and handwriting were assessed. And under speaking, fluency in speaking and using and sustaining the use of the target language was also looked at. Data was collected under these areas through tests.

For the first week of the study, pupils were introduced to letters, sounds of letters, consonants and vowels and blending of sounds. This was followed by a video game on blending of sounds. Eg m- t, b-t, c-t etc. This exercise was to help lay a good foundation for the reading and other games pupils were going to be engaged. This was also necessary because pupils had a weak foundation in reading as revealed in the pre-test.

This was followed by language games involving sight words. The board games and the flash card games were used. These kinds of games were in levels, from simple to complex words as the games progressed. Here, pupils contested in reading, word formation and spelling. They contested in teams and at individual level.

From the sight words, progress was made to picture dictionary and other reading games. Pupils were further engaged in reading and vocabulary games. Here, pupils also contested at team level and individual level. At the end of each week pupils were tested to measure their progress in the various skills and sub- skills mentioned earlier. Pupils were given homework each day to practice handwriting. The home work was usually taken from “My Second Copy Book”.

Language games are multi-faceted for that matter, the four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking skills are usually integrated. The drills and repetition practice of these skills during language games go a long way to improve pupils' literacy skills. Post-test was conducted for both experimental and control groups immediately after the intervention process ended. The post-test followed the same procedure as pre-test.

### **3.7 Challenges**

A number of challenges were encountered during the intervention process. Below are these challenges and how they were dealt with.

- 1) There were too many extra-curriculum activities that came up and this affected instructional hours negatively. This challenge, I had no control over it.
- 2) At the beginning of the treatment period it was difficult to get pupils to work in groups. But with encouragement and persuasion through the use of interesting group names and slogans pupils gradually adjusted.

- 3) Again, the boys in the class were not willing to accommodate the girls in their groups at the beginning of the process. Here, counseling was employed to convince the boys to accept the girls in their groups. Eventually there was some improvement. But in groups where the girls were not contributing much to the success of the group, the boys were still disturbing them.
- 4) At the beginning, the language pupils interacted in was their first language. It took a lot of effort to get pupils to use the target language during games because that was the focus of the study. Success was eventually achieved here because pupils were now checking and reminding each other.
- 5) Some two pupils who were among the below average ones were playing truant. Upon observation it was realized that, they were actually not achieving success in their various teams and for that matter they were always a subject of ridicule in their teams and this discouraged them. These two including three others were given some remedial treatment three times a week. These are days that they have free periods after break time. This helped them to improve on their performance eventually but one of the treatments saw very little improvement.
- 6) Finally pupils wanted to stay longer with me because of the interesting nature of the activities and this sometimes affected the next lessons. So I resorted to giving them some activities to take home and this helped.

### ***3.8 Data Analysis Plan***

The data collected has been subjected to analysis of the parameters by the SPSS-version 16 software. Correlation was determined among the parameters and between genders. Frequency tables were also used for the analysis. Diagrams and charts were used to display the data.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

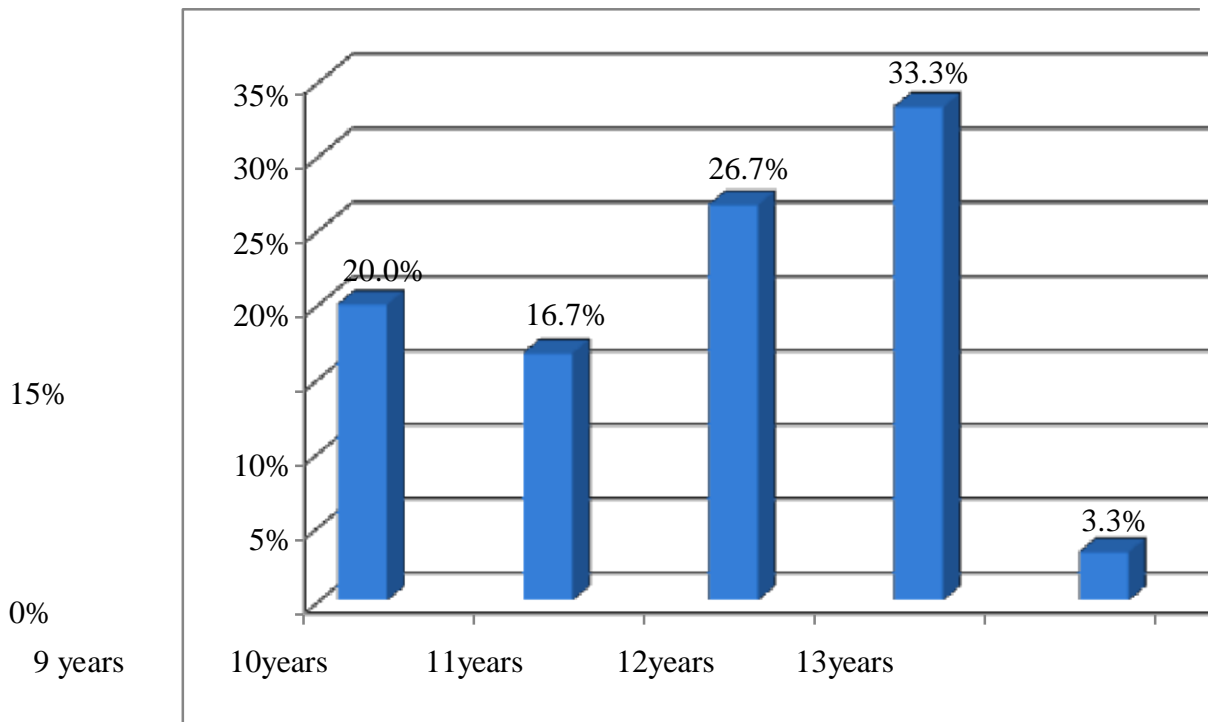
This chapter covers the analysis of data obtained from the study. The analysis was done using the version 16 of SPSS software. A total sample of 30 pupils was used in the study. Specifically, they were lower primary pupils of St John Bosco's Basic School in Navrongo in the Upper East Region of Ghana. The pupils were all in same class, random sampling was employed to arrive at the samples. The two groups were; the control and the experimental groups. Both groups were given the same pre-intervention and post intervention test. Emanating from the core objective of this study, the exercise given the students was meant to obtain data for objective analysis of the variation between literacy skills before and after introducing language games in teaching and learning to ascertain whether using language games significantly promotes literacy skills.

It must quickly be reiterated that the study was based on the hypothesis that reading, writing and vocabulary skills, as well as communication skills of pupils in lower primary, was better enhanced when language games were used. The pupils involved in the study were 30 in number. They comprised of an even distribution of boys and girls (15 each), all at the lower primary level. The pupils were again evenly divided into two groups; first being the control group (denoted by "0") and second, the experimental group (denoted by "1"). This grouping was done to assist in determining whether or not language games significantly promote literacy.

### 4.2 Demographic Data

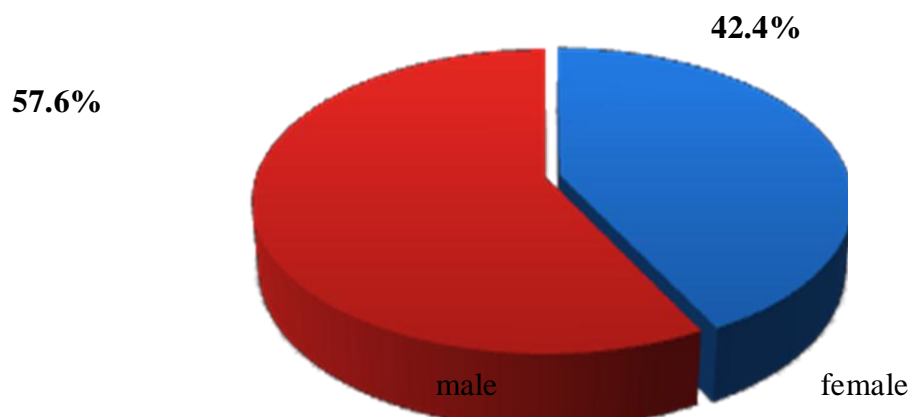
The figure below represents the age distribution of the respondents in the study.

**Figure 4.1: Age of Respondents**



Source: Survey data

Figure 4.1 above indicates that, majority of the respondents representing (33.3%) were 12years old, (26.7%) representing those who were 11years, (20.0%) representing those who were 9 years, (16.7%) and (3.3%) represents those who were 10 years and 13years respectively. In addition the study recorded an average age of 11 years from the respondents.

**Figure 4.2: Gender of Respondents**

Source: survey data.

Also figure 4.2 above confirms that, the call to empower girls through education is yielding good results as females dominated the study with a representation of (57.6%) while males had a representation of (42.4%).

Table 1 below presents the scores obtained by the pupils in a preliminary test (pretest). This implies that the pupils had been given an exercise to perform without prior instruction using language games. The assignment was given for a maximum of 10 points. The test was meant to measure pupils' literacy level in speaking, reading and writing. It was administered soon before the treatment process started. Refer to appendix for test sample.

**Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics (Pre-test)**

|          | N  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|----------|----|---------|---------|------|----------------|
| SPEAKING | 30 | 3.00    | 6.00    | 4.33 | 0.84           |
| READING  | 30 | 2.00    | 6.00    | 3.97 | 1.22           |
| WRITING  | 30 | 1.00    | 6.00    | 3.03 | 1.73           |
| Overall  |    | 3.00    | 6.00    | 3.78 | 1.26           |

Source: Test Scores

From Table 4.1, both groups scored a minimum of 3.00 and a maximum of 6.00 in speaking. In reading, a minimum of 2.00 was obtained and a maximum of 6.00. And in writing both groups obtained a minimum of 1.00 and a maximum of 6.00. The overall maximum score obtained in the preliminary exercise was 6 out of 10 points whereas the minimum obtained was 3 points away from zero. The scores obtained averaged 3.78 out of a maximum of 10 points.

In Table 4.2, the group statistics shows that there were no significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ) between the mean scores obtained by the control group (denoted by “0”) and the experimental group (denoted by “1”) except for the ‘speaking’ exercise that recorded a significant mean difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) in which case the experimental group outperformed (mean = 4.67) the control group (mean = 4.00). These results only go to show that left to their own instincts (without prior instruction using language games), the pupils would not vary significantly in their reading and writing performances, except there may be tendencies for the experimental group to be slightly better than the other in speaking exercise.

**Table 4.2: Group Statistics (Pretest)**

| Test     | Group | N  | Mean | Std. Deviation | T      | Sig. (p) |
|----------|-------|----|------|----------------|--------|----------|
| READING  | 0     | 15 | 3.73 | 1.33           | -1.052 | 0.302    |
|          | 1     | 15 | 4.20 | 1.08           |        |          |
| WRITING  | 0     | 15 | 2.67 | 1.76           | -1.167 | 0.253    |
|          | 1     | 15 | 3.40 | 1.68           |        |          |
| SPEAKING | 0     | 15 | 4.00 | 0.76           | -2.320 | 0.028*   |
|          | 1     | 15 | 4.67 | 0.82           |        |          |

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

Source: Test Scores

### 4.3 Test of Hypothesis

It is hypothesized in this study that reading, writing and vocabulary skills as well as communication skills of pupils in lower primary can improve if language games are used. In order to test this assumption the experimental group (1) was taken through instructive language games and afterward a post-test was conducted and scores from same obtained for the individual pupils.

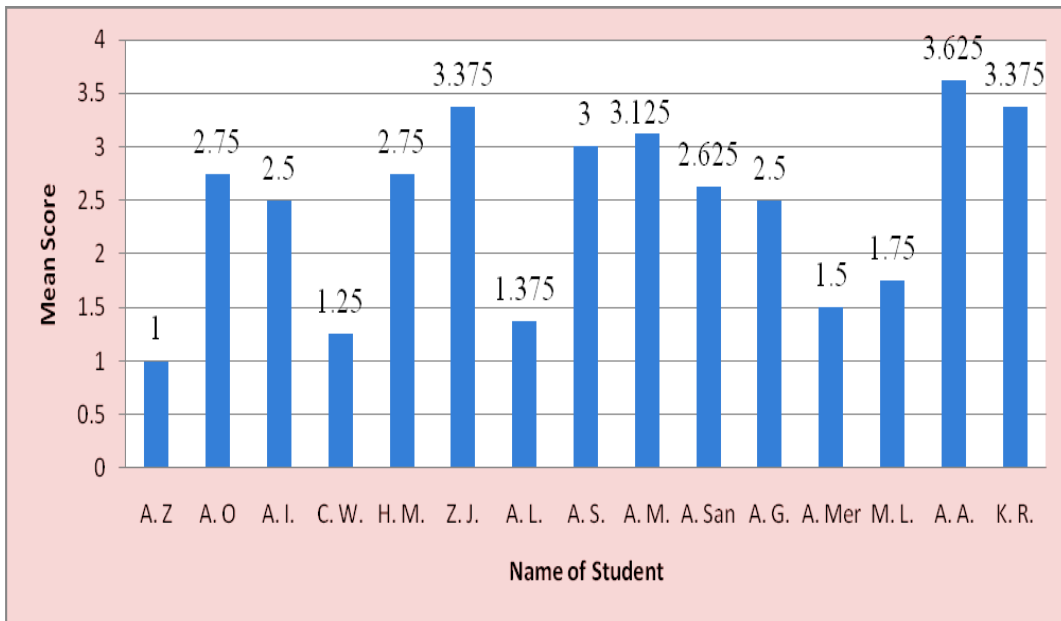
### 4.4 Progress Test Results for the Individual Pupils

During the intervention period of the eight (8) weeks, individual progress was monitored through test as well as the group or team contests. The individual progress test results were recorded under the three aspects of writing, reading and speaking. These aspects were further broken down into sub-aspects. Under writing skills, spelling and handwriting skills were considered.

Fluency in reading, punctuation, and pronunciation were looked under reading skills and lastly, use of English during treatment period and fluency in speaking the English language were also considered under speaking skills.

### Writing skills

**Figure 4.3: Progress test results in Spelling.**



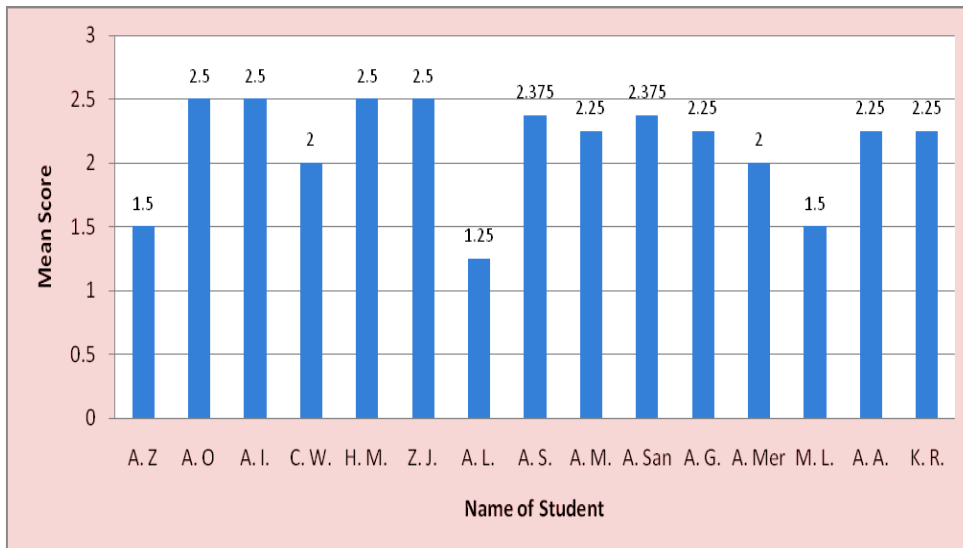
Source: Progress test.

Figures 4.3 above represent the progress test results for the experimental group for the eight (8) of treatment in writing skills. Each of the fifteen (15) pupils coded, are represented with their respective mean scores on the bar chart above. Spelling was one of the exciting aspects pupils took interest in because it was very competitive.

This is probably because it was quite familiar to pupils; they did spelling in class quite often. Quite apart from that they had their diaries to write down new words and other exciting things they came across. This was a new experience and they embraced it. Looking at fig. 4.3 the general performance of pupils was good. Though the lowest means score is (1) by A.Z, the highest means score is (3.625) obtained by A.A. Again, from a cursory look at fig. 4.3 the girls did better than their male counterparts in the area of spelling.

The highest mean score is (3.625), and this was obtained by pupil A.A is a girl. Interestingly, the second highest score of the girls is the overall highest mean score of the boys. The score is (3.375) scored by K.R. The lowest mean score of the girls (1.5) obtained by A.Mer is higher than lowest mean score of the boys which is (1) by A.Z.

**Figure 4.4: Progress test results in Handwriting**



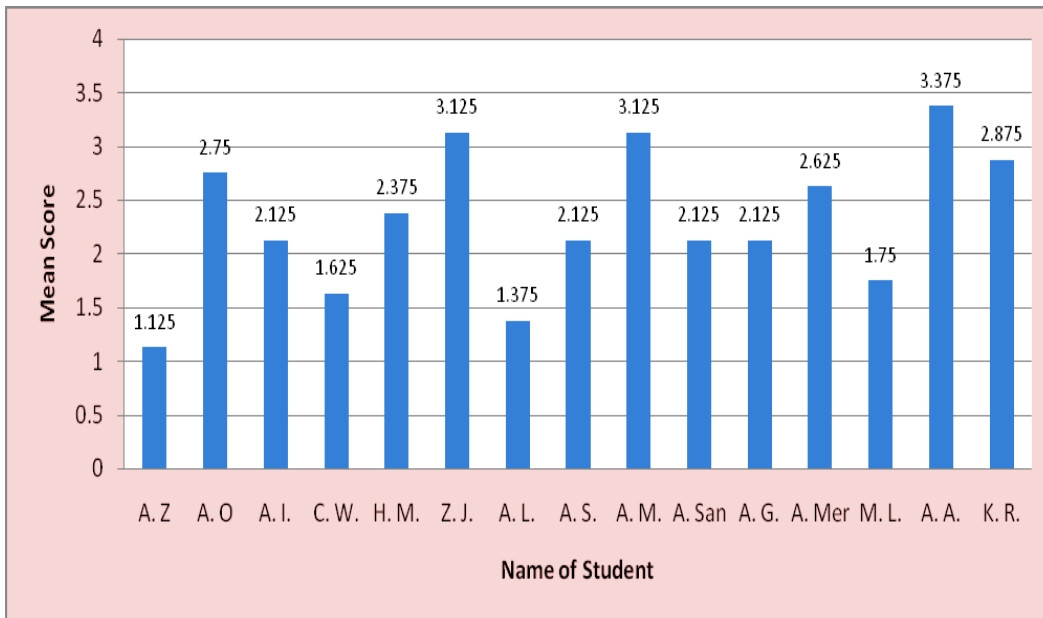
Source: Progress test results

Fig. 4.4 on the other hand, shows that the boys did better than the girls in handwriting skills. Judging from the figure, it is clear that the boys are in the lead. Four (4) of the boys got a mean score of (2.5) they are A.O, A.I, H.M, and Z.J which is the highest mean score as compared to that of the girls whose highest in this category is (2.375) obtained by only two (2) girls – A.San and A.S. For the lowest mean score for both boys and girls, they both obtained the same score of (1.5) A.Z and M.L.

It is worth noting that, though the lowest mean score of spelling is lower than that of handwriting, the general performance of pupils in spelling is better than handwriting. This therefore indicates that future researchers may want to focus on some more handwriting games.

## Reading skills

**Figure 4.5: Progress test results for fluency in reading.**

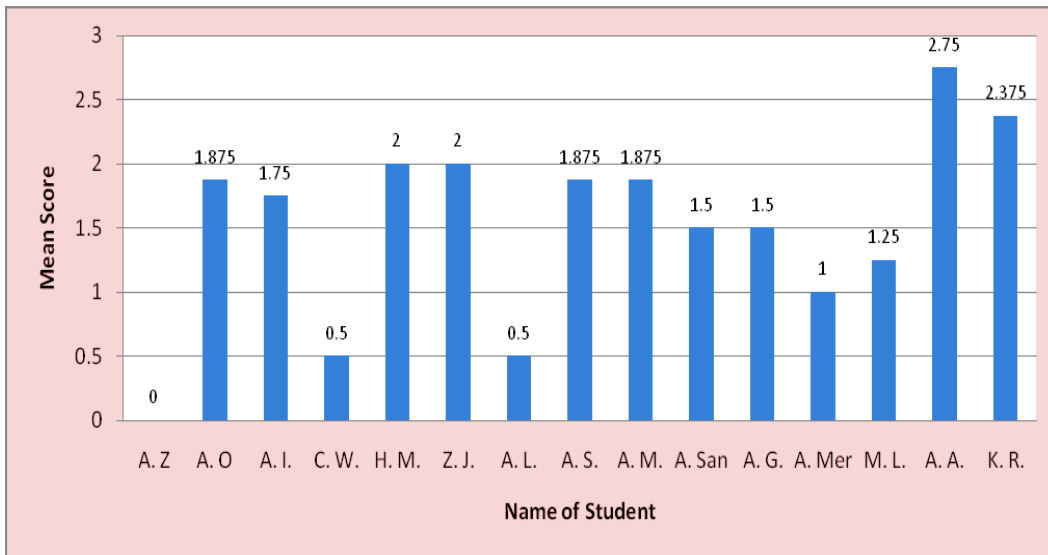


Source: Progress test

Under the reading skills three (3) sub-aspects were considered; fluency in reading, punctuation and pronunciation. Judging from fig.4.5 the results or the general performance of pupils in the area of fluency in reading has been good. From a closer look at the mean scores and comparing the performance of boys against the girls in the group, one will observe that the girls have outperformed their male counterparts. The interesting observation here is that, the margin is quite wide. Whereas the highest mean score for the girls is (3.375) by which was scored by A.A as indicated on the bar chart, the highest for the boys stand at (3.125) which is also scored by Z.J.

Then again, the lowest mean score of the girls is (1.75) obtained by M.L and the lowest for the boys is (1.125) scored by A.Z. In the area of respecting basic punctuation marks during reading, the girls have again outperformed their male colleagues. Though this particular sub-aspect was generally difficult both girls and boys, the girls managed to performed better than the boys.

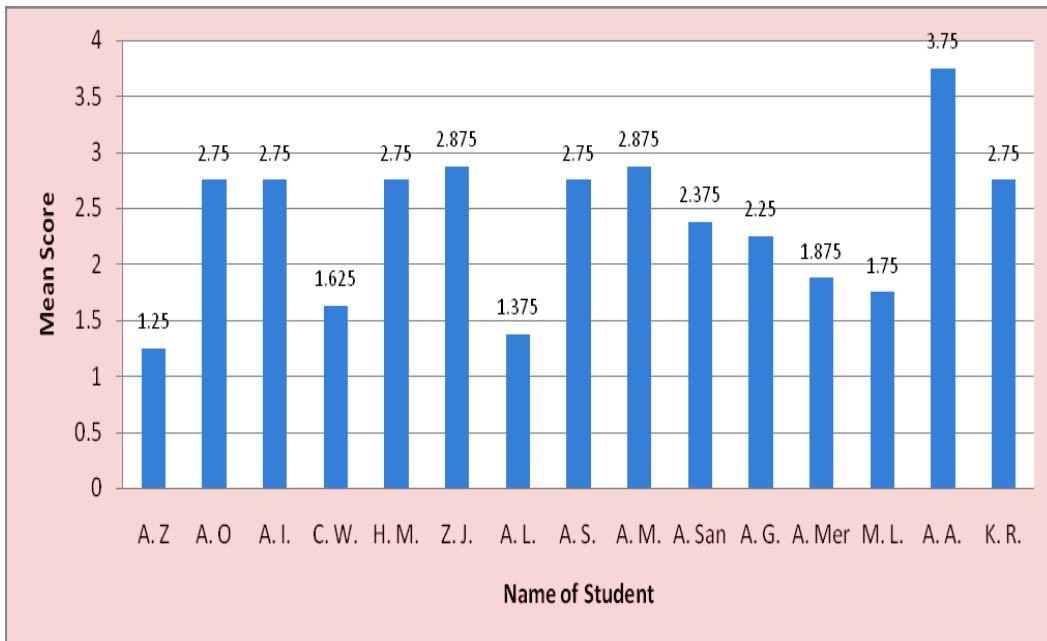
**Figure 4.6: Progress test results for punctuation.**



Source: Progress test results.

From fig.4.6 the second highest of the girls is the highest score of the boys, (2.75) and (2) respectively. This is clear that the girls are still ahead of their male counterparts. It is worth noting that, the highest mean score for punctuation could not hit (3). This means that it was a difficult area for the pupils and this also went a long way to affect pupils reading skills. Though a good number of the pupils could read, they could not make meaning because could not respect basic punctuation marks like the full stop and the comma. It is therefore an indication that ESL teachers need to do a lot more work when it comes to punctuation marks.

**Figure 4.7: Progress test results for pronunciation.**

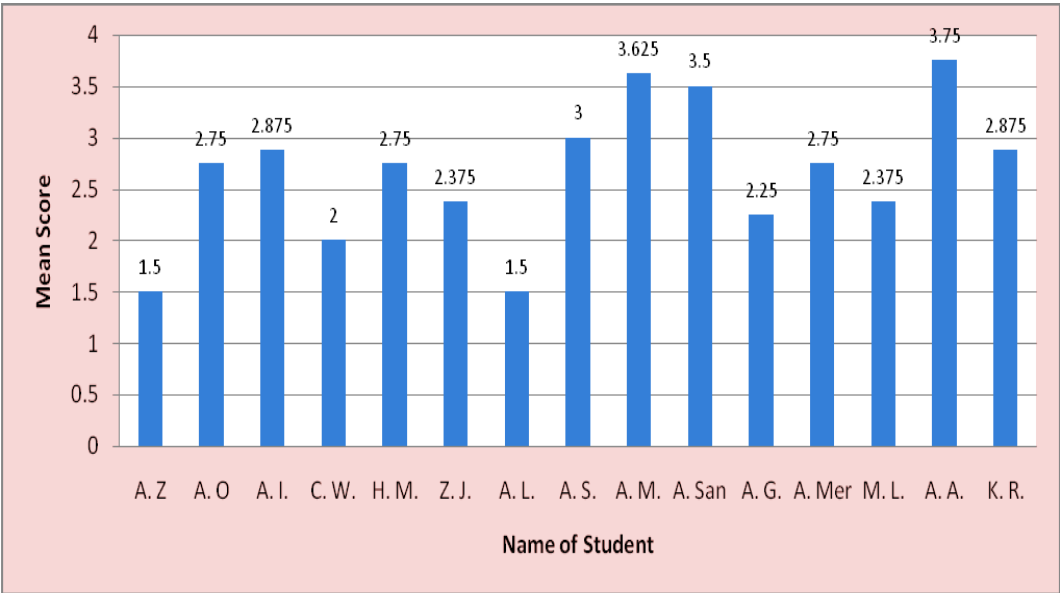


Source: Progress test results.

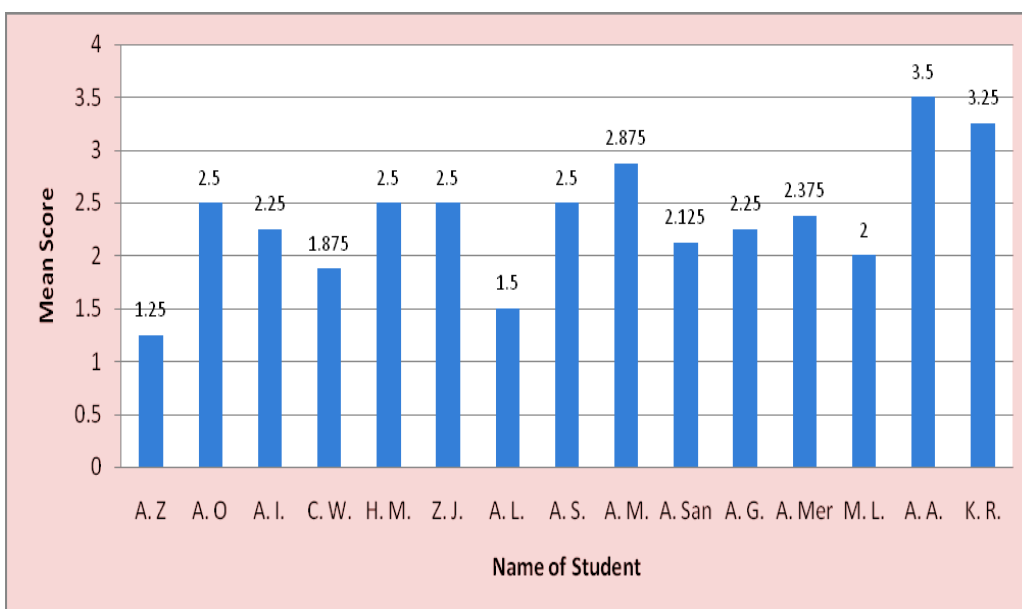
From a cursory look at fig.4.6, the girls are obviously in the lead. The first seven names are the boys- A.Z, A.O, A.I, C.W, H.M, Z.J and A.L. The last eight names are the girls- A.S, A.M, A.San, A.G, A.Mer, M.L, A.A and K.R. The highest mean score of (3.75) by a girl-A.A, the second highest mean score of (3.125) was also scored by K.R who is a girl. Comparing these scores to the boys, you will notice that the highest score of the boys is (3.125) which is the second highest of the girls. For pronunciation, the girls performed better than their male counterparts. The highest mean score of the girls is (3.75) as compared the boy which is (2.875).

### Speaking Skills

Figure 4.8: Use of English Language.



Source: Progress test results.

**Figure 4.9: Fluency in speaking.**

Source: Progress test scores.

Looking at the scores on fig.4.7 and 4.8 the results are not different from the other aspects. The girls are again ahead of their male counterparts with A.A and K.R with (3.5) and (3.5) mean scores respectively, that is, in the area of fluency in speaking. Interestingly, this time around the highest mean score of the boys is (2.5), obtained by A.O H.M, and Z.J is the third highest mean score of the girls. This is a very significant margin of difference in the performance of the boys and the girls. From the two figures above, the results represented are very similar, with respect to pupils interest in the use of English language the highest mean score for the boys is (2.875) which is the fourth highest score of the girls in the group.

**General observation from all the seven (7) figures**

Judging from all seven figures, one would notice that the girls have shown an appreciable level of progress during the eight weeks for all the aspects and sub- aspects. Though some of the girls like M.L and A.G had low scores in some aspects, they did well in some other aspects. This I personally think is normal for average students. Standing tall among both boys and girls is A.A. She was a very serious student in class, and also very consistent in her performance in all the aspects. A.A was particularly very active during treatment period, always punctual and missed treatment just twice. It therefore came as no surprise that she topped in all the aspects and sub-aspects that was tested.

The boys on the other hand, did not fare too well as compared to their female counterparts. However, the boys were in competition among themselves, judging from the figures above, A.Z, C.W, and A.L are constantly behind the rest of the boys in the group. They are always scoring low marks. It is worth noting at this point that A.Z was the least progressed pupil among the rest of the pupils in the group, both boys and girl. A.Z was generally a weak student; he was also a truant as well. He could come to school and refuse to come for treatment but most often he was absent from school It is also interesting to mention that among the boys they did not allow any of their colleague boys to be in the lead for long and in all the aspects.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics (Post-test)**

| Test     | N  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|----------|----|---------|---------|------|----------------|
| READING  | 30 | 2.00    | 8.00    | 4.80 | 1.67           |
| WRITING  | 30 | 1.00    | 9.00    | 4.83 | 2.44           |
| SPEAKING | 30 | 3.00    | 9.00    | 5.70 | 1.90           |
| Overall  |    | 2.00    | 8.67    | 5.11 | 1.84           |

Source: Test Scores 2013

From Table 3, an overall minimum score of 2.00 out of 10 points was obtained with the maximum score being 8.67. There was a comparatively high average score of 5.11 out of 10 which represents an improvement over that of the pre-test scores. It is realized from Table 3 above that, compared with the pre-test scores, there was an improvement in the post-test (test with prior instruction using language games) scores obtained by the pupils.

Table 4 presents the group statistics and the associated mean comparisons for the two study groups. It can be observed that, the post-tests scores in the aspects of reading, writing and speaking recorded significant mean differences between the control group (0) and the experimental group (1). It is the results of the experimental group that has impacted on the entire post-test for both groups.

**Table 4: Group Statistics (Post-test)**

| Test     | Group | N  | Mean | Std. Deviation | t      | Sig. (p) |
|----------|-------|----|------|----------------|--------|----------|
| READING  | 0     | 15 | 4.20 | 1.78           | -2.078 | 0.047*   |
|          | 1     | 15 | 5.40 | 1.35           |        |          |
| WRITING  | 0     | 15 | 3.40 | 2.03           | -3.951 | 0.000**  |
|          | 1     | 15 | 6.27 | 1.94           |        |          |
| SPEAKING | 0     | 15 | 4.07 | 0.88           | -9.610 | 0.000**  |
|          | 1     | 15 | 7.33 | 0.98           |        |          |

\*\*significant at  $p < 0.01$ ; \*significant at  $p < 0.05$

Source: Test Scores 2013

From Table 4, the experimental group (1) had performed significantly better (mean = 5.40) in the reading exercise than the control group (mean = 4.20) ( $t = -2.078$  and  $p < 0.05$ ). Further, the experimental group had significantly higher scores (mean = 6.27) than their control group counterparts (mean = 3.40) in the writing exercise given in the post-test ( $t = -3.951$  and  $p < 0.01$ ). Again, there was a significant mean difference between the scores obtained by the experimental group (mean = 7.33) and that of the control group (mean = 4.07) wherein the former significantly outperformed the latter ( $t = -9.610$  and  $p < 0.01$ ) in the speaking test.

Notably, on all the post-test events, there was a significant mean difference in the scores obtained by the experimental group and the control group that goes to strengthen the assumption that the use of language games enhances literacy among pupils. This therefore confirms what Chen (2005) discovered in his findings, that language games have the tendency of promoting good communicative skills as well as integrating the various linguistics skills among second language learners.

From Table 5 below, it is clear that in terms of Reading test, there is an association between the group of the pupils and how well they performed ( $F=4.32$  and  $p<0.05$ ). Specifically, the mean scores show that pupils in the experimental group had scored higher than those in the control group. This essentially means that pupils introduced to language games perform better in reading than their counterparts who have not had the privilege of language games. The adjusted R square of 0.103 gives indication that being introduced to language games determines up to 10.3% of the variance in performance at reading test.

**Table 5: Analysis of Variance (Post-test)**

| Test     | Group | Mean | Std. Deviation | R Square | Adjusted R square | S.E. of Estimate | F      | Sig (p) |
|----------|-------|------|----------------|----------|-------------------|------------------|--------|---------|
| Reading  | 0     | 4.20 | 1.78           | 0.134    | 0.103             | 1.581            | 4.32   | 0.04*   |
|          | 1     | 5.40 | 1.35           |          |                   |                  |        |         |
| Writing  | 0     | 6.27 | 1.94           | 0.350    | 0.335             | 1.987            | 15.613 | 0.00**  |
|          | 1     | 3.40 | 2.03           |          |                   |                  |        |         |
| Speaking | 0     | 4.07 | 0.88           | 0.767    | 0.759             | 0.931            | 92.346 | 0.00**  |
|          | 1     | 7.33 | 0.98           |          |                   |                  |        |         |

\*\*significant at  $p<0.01$ ; \*significant at  $p<0.05$

Source: Test Scores 2013

Similarly, there is a significant association between the grouping of pupils and their performance in writing test ( $F = 15.613$  and  $p < 0.01$ ). Pupils introduced to language games performed better than those who were not. The adjusted R square of 0.335 indicates that being introduced to language games determines 33.5% of the variance in performance in writing.

Lastly, there is also a significant association between the grouping of pupils and their performance in speaking ( $F = 92.346$  and  $p < 0.01$ ). The group of pupil introduced to language games outperformed those to whom it has not been introduced. The adjusted R square of 0.759 shows that being introduced to language games determines 75.9% of the variance in performance in speaking exercises. For an overview of the results, see Table 5. This level of success was achieved as a result of the kind of language games used, how they were organized and the frequency and quality of interaction with language games by pupils. This level of success can also be attributed to the nature of games. The use of games in the ESL class tends to lower the affective filter of learners, thereby motivating them to learn better (shurtz 2013:6-7) and the kind of learning environment it created for the learner. It offered the learners a cooperative and collaborative learning environment which allowed learners interact together to maximize their own and each other`s learning (Johnson and Johnson 2013:12). A closer look at the above findings reveals that, even though there is an improvement in all three literacy skills, the level of improvement varies. Speaking skills saw the greatest of improvement with reading being the least. This, to some extent disagrees with Chen (2005) who is of the view that the use of language games integrates the various linguistic skills. The likelihood of overemphasizing on one of the skills to the disadvantage of the others is very high.

However, the findings conform to the assertion of Lee (1980). For him there are specific games for the various aspects of English, this helps the learner to focus on one skill at a time. For example, we have structure games, spelling games and reading games among others. This might have accounted for the reason why most second language researchers focused on one aspect of English. E.g. Uberman (1998) researched into language games and vocabulary, Arikan et al (2011) did something on language games and structure.

From the foregoing findings, it is clear that the experimental group (pupils who had the privilege of language games) had performance advantage over their counterparts in the control group (pupils to whom language games had not been introduced). It could not have been the case that language games could not enhance communication, reading and writing skills of pupils in lower primary level. The findings, therefore support the claim as stated in the hypothesis that reading, writing and vocabulary skills as well as communication skills of pupils in lower primary is better enhanced when language games are used.

#### **4.5 Observations**

During the intervention process, a number of observations were made which I did not set out to measure but they are worth noting. They are as follows:

- 1) Motivation; I observed a very high level of motivation among pupils during the intervention process. This was reflected in their attendance. According to the attendance register, their attendance to lessons was very good. Punctuality to the venue for our meetings, and good class participation were good signs of motivation exhibited by pupils. There were occasions pupils requested to stay longer with me or even come for weekend classes. The kind of games and the way they were organized might have accounted for this level of motivation. This also goes a long way to agree with the findings of Chen (2005) who reported that language games motivate ESL learners in the classroom.

- 2) Groupings and group work: Putting pupils into groups and getting them to work together was my major challenge at the beginning of the intervention process. Initially, the boys didn't want to work with the girls.

The reason being that the boys thought they could do better than the girls and that the girls could not contribute much to the success of their respective teams. One other reason that could be responsible for their attitude is that, it was not a practice in the class to work in groups and so it was an entirely new experience for them. This, the class teacher confirmed but was quick to add that “no time for group work.” I also observed that some pupils were rejected by their group members because they felt they were not academically strong to support the group. But gradually, I got them working together and they enjoyed it to the extent that they wanted a reshuffle of groups. In an attempt to make group work exciting and attractive to pupils, catchy names with interesting responses were used. E.g. Vodafone – “power to you”, MTN – “everywhere you go”, Tigo – “express yourself” and Airtel – “feel free.” This made the group work very competitive because every group wanted to win. This is clearly a reflection of Johnson and Johnson's (2013:12) collaborative/cooperative learning where pupils work together to achieve shared results as well as learn to co-exist and respect each other's opinions. It also agrees with the multiple intelligence theory of Kim (2009) who explained that, every individual has a different set of intelligence which is innate.

- 3) The use of digital games: At the beginning I resorted to use digital games in phonics to help them with their reading and pronunciation skills. The interest level was very high and participation was good and they learn very fast as well. Though the computers were few, each pupil was determined to have his or her hands on. This conforms to the attitude of people who belong to generation X. Very manipulative in nature.

#### **4.6 Summary**

This chapter dealt with the data obtained from test conducted, a summary of comparison of the control and experimental groups as well as the progress test for eight (8) weeks. The data was subjected to analysis using SPSS software. The findings and observation were discussed. The general outcome of the results indicates that the experimental group benefitted from the use of language games in the classroom, though some aspect of literacy didn't see that much improvement. This I believe will reflect in the recommendations and suggesting for further research in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from the study. The chapter first looks at the study in summary, and then derives conclusions and makes recommendations based on the findings of the study. The study was meant to achieve the objectives and test the hypothesis stated in the introductory chapter.

#### **5.2 Summary of Findings**

The study took off from the hunch that attaining an appreciable level of literacy is a process and not an event and that literacy is a skill that is a very essential pillar of every child's development. The study highlighted that in Ghana, the situation is worrying as it appeared not much had been done to promote the acquisition of literacy in schools commensurate with the high level of attendance, due to interventions like the school feeding programme. The study, thus, gave cognizance to the view that using language games could be a critical way of getting school pupils to learn and practice the ESL. The use of language games as a way to improve pupils reading, writing and vocabulary skills was experimented, and the effectiveness of the use of language games made clear. The study was, therefore, hinged on the hypothesis that reading, writing and vocabulary skills, as well as the communication skills of pupils in lower primary, is better enhanced when language games are used.

The literature review highlighted some types of language games that are viewed to provide avenues for teachers to resolve their dilemmas as to what type of games to engage their pupils or the young learners in. Some of these include the structure games, vocabulary games, spelling games, pronunciation games, read-and-do games, among others, of which digital games are a necessary detail.

In order to achieve the objective to ascertain the relevance of language games in the improvement of literacy skills among young learners, the research understudied lower primary learners. Pupils in the same class in the lower primary were engaged in the study and formed the sample that was used in the study. This sample comprised an even proportion of primary 3 boys and girls. The sample was further divided into two: one group served as the experimental group and the other as the control group. The experimental group was very relevant to the study whereas the control group provided the basics to compare findings about the experimental group. Two tests were conducted for the pupils on two different occasions. The first test, named pre-test, was meant to find out the children's aptitude before they have had to be introduced to language games, and the second test, namely, post-test, offered opportunity to assess the pupils after the experimental group has been taken through language games.

The findings were that prior to the language games, the pupils did not have any significant difference in their performance in reading and writing except that the experimental group had a slight upper hand over the control group in speaking. Essentially, the difference between the two groups was not great or was insignificant. After the experimental group had been introduced to language games, however, there were very significant differences between the performances of the two groups in terms of reading, writing as well as speaking. Specifically, the experimental group had significantly outperformed the control group at all levels of the test.

The difference between the mean scores of the groups on each of the test areas was found to be statistically significant in favour of the experimental group. Language games were found to determine 10.3% of the variance in reading, 33.5% of the variance in writing, and 75.9% of the variance in speaking. Notably, the findings attested to the fact that language games improved literacy of the pupils to a significant level. The hypothesis that reading, writing and vocabulary skills, as well as the communication skills of pupils in lower primary, is better enhanced when language games are used is, therefore, upheld.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Generally, there have been positive effects on the use of language games to promote literacy. This is as a result of the important implications that emerged from the research for curriculum developers, textbooks writers as well as second language teachers.

#### ***5.3.1 Implications for Curriculum Developers***

Curriculum developers strive to provide learners with meaningful curricula. It is only rational that language and literacy activities are exciting and motivating enough to capture and sustain learners for a long time. The current generation of learners is much more manipulative than ever. Curriculum developers should cash on this characteristic of learners to generate the type of curriculum that will always keep them engaged meaningfully. Language games are one such activity.

Curriculum developers should make communicative activities such as language games an integral part of the curriculum, given the positive results achieved from using language games. I strongly believe that it is essential to properly integrate language games into the regular school syllabus rather than use them as icebreakers and time fillers.

This will motivate learners to practice meaningfully new structures in the classroom and even outside the classroom.

### ***5.3.2 Implications for Textbooks Writers***

The approach to designing the content of language textbooks should be reviewed to be in consonance with current learning styles. Since textbooks writers produce their books based on the requirement of the syllabus, a revision of the syllabus will go a long way to affect the way textbooks are written. This will compel writers to consciously make language games an integral part of the content. That means there will be a variety of language games for most literacy skills, if not all, as suggested by the literature and also make provision for a lot of them for practice in and out of the classroom.

It has been observed that the current textbooks in the system do not have enough communicative activities such as language games. Just a few games are dropped here and there with no directions or instructions as to how to play them. As a result, teachers do not see them as important tools for learning. If textbook writers are advised to appropriately integrate language game into the textbook production, it will go a long way to help learners personalize the learning of the L2. This will also compel ESL teachers to take the issue of language games seriously.

### ***5.3.3 Implication for the ESL Teacher***

Teachers, on the other hand, must see the need to use language games in the ESL class no matter the challenges they pose. The results of this research have revealed that the advantages of the use of language games far outweigh the disadvantages. As result, a number of pedagogical implications have emerged from this study for the ESL teacher.

First of all, effective group work is achieved through the use of language games. Most games are played in teams or groups and this tend to offer learners the opportunity to interact, that is, exchange ideas and thoughts among all team members, collaborate, tolerate each other and also learn to respect each other`s views. Again, one pedagogical implication of this study is learning by doing. This is one of the sure ways by which pupils retain what they have learnt. According to Dale`s cone of learning, when pupils have hands on experience on activities 70% of what is leant is retained. Language games have proved effective in this direction and teachers are therefore encouraged to use language games in their classroom.

Another pedagogical implication suggested by the results of this research is the excitement and interest language games brings into the ESL class. Because of the competitive nature of games, this excitement and interest is sustained throughout the lesson. Not only does language games whip up the interest of learners, but also goes a long way to improve class attendance because pupils will always be motivated by their little successes. According to the results of this study, language games have the ability to activate a variety of intelligences suggested by Gardener (1993) as cited in Kim (2009). This is manifested in the following ways: when pupils play language games they activate their interpersonal intelligence. Again, the hands-on aspect of games such as board games also activates pupils` kinesthetic intelligence.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Even though this study has outlined positive results from the use of language games to promote literacy skills, the fact that some aspects could not yield very significant results is an indication that there is the need to extend the current level of knowledge in the use of language games.

First of all, the main focus of the study was to use language games to promote literacy skills in English as a second language. Though speaking skills scored the highest mean scores, reading scored the lowest. It is common knowledge that reading skills is one of the skills that is of major concern to both teachers and parents.

It will be good if future research could focus on reading while paying attention to punctuation which makes the reading of text meaningful and understandable. In effect, the use of language games that will promote reading skills will provide useful information on how to improve upon ESL in Ghanaian schools. Then again, just as huge strides have been made to improve pupils' enrollment in basic schools, efforts should be made to take pragmatic measures to incorporate languages games into a national literacy programme, starting at the basic school level, preferably, the lower primary. This will go a long way to improve the literacy skills of learners in the country.

Secondly, teachers should be encouraged to receive refresher courses on how to use language games for effective group work and how to actively engage learners in the ESL class, as well as new modes and techniques for effective teaching and learning.

Future studies ought to be conducted to look at how language games are conducted in the schools so as to provide monitoring avenues to engender discourses and activities to improve upon the use of language games in schools in Ghana.

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**APPENDICES**  
**Appendix A1**

**4 In a Row- Board Game**

4 In a Row - Board 2



|          |          |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1<br>you | 2<br>two | 3<br>go  | 4<br>on  | 5<br>one | 6<br>are |
| 1<br>two | 2<br>we  | 3<br>up  | 4<br>can | 5<br>two | 6<br>on  |
| 1<br>can | 2<br>you | 3<br>me  | 4<br>on  | 5<br>go  | 6<br>can |
| 1<br>me  | 2<br>one | 3<br>are | 4<br>we  | 5<br>up  | 6<br>me  |
| 1<br>two | 2<br>go  | 3<br>on  | 4<br>can | 5<br>you | 6<br>we  |
| 1<br>are | 2<br>we  | 3<br>up  | 4<br>two | 5<br>one | 6<br>on  |

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## Appendix A2

4 In a Row - Board 4



|           |           |           |          |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1<br>has  | 2<br>his  | 3<br>with | 4<br>if  | 5<br>her  | 6<br>of   |
| 1<br>his  | 2<br>get  | 3<br>not  | 4<br>for | 5<br>his  | 6<br>if   |
| 1<br>for  | 2<br>has  | 3<br>they | 4<br>if  | 5<br>with | 6<br>for  |
| 1<br>they | 2<br>her  | 3<br>of   | 4<br>get | 5<br>not  | 6<br>they |
| 1<br>his  | 2<br>with | 3<br>if   | 4<br>for | 5<br>has  | 6<br>get  |
| 1<br>of   | 2<br>get  | 3<br>not  | 4<br>his | 5<br>her  | 6<br>they |

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## Appendix A3

4 In a Row - Board 5



|           |           |           |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1<br>by   | 2<br>said | 3<br>off  | 4<br>him  | 5<br>have | 6<br>do   |
| 1<br>said | 2<br>so   | 3<br>this | 4<br>was  | 5<br>said | 6<br>him  |
| 1<br>was  | 2<br>by   | 3<br>be   | 4<br>him  | 5<br>off  | 6<br>was  |
| 1<br>be   | 2<br>have | 3<br>do   | 4<br>so   | 5<br>this | 6<br>be   |
| 1<br>said | 2<br>off  | 3<br>him  | 4<br>was  | 5<br>by   | 6<br>so   |
| 1<br>do   | 2<br>so   | 3<br>this | 4<br>said | 5<br>have | 6<br>said |

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## Appendix A4

4 In a Row - Board 6



|      |      |      |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    |
| will | did  | some | down | but  | call |
| 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    |
| did  | your | that | come | did  | your |
| 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    |
| come | will | old  | your | some | come |
| 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    |
| old  | but  | call | down | that | old  |
| 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    |
| did  | some | your | come | will | down |
| 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    |
| call | down | that | did  | but  | come |

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## Appendix A5

4 In a Row - Board 8

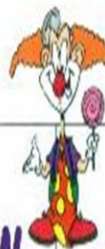


|           |            |            |           |            |           |
|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| 1<br>then | 2<br>over  | 3<br>there | 4<br>now  | 5<br>back  | 6<br>what |
| 1<br>over | 2<br>now   | 3<br>made  | 4<br>well | 5<br>over  | 6<br>were |
| 1<br>well | 2<br>then  | 3<br>just  | 4<br>now  | 5<br>there | 6<br>well |
| 1<br>just | 2<br>back  | 3<br>what  | 4<br>were | 5<br>made  | 6<br>just |
| 1<br>over | 2<br>there | 3<br>now   | 4<br>well | 5<br>then  | 6<br>were |
| 1<br>what | 2<br>were  | 3<br>made  | 4<br>over | 5<br>back  | 6<br>now  |

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## Appendix A6

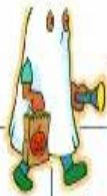
4 In a Row - Board 7



|           |           |           |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1<br>out  | 2<br>them | 3<br>or   | 4<br>new  | as        | 6<br>no   |
| 1<br>them | 2<br>new  | 3<br>from | 4<br>make | 5<br>them | 6<br>had  |
| 1<br>make | 2<br>out  | 3<br>an   | 4<br>new  | 5<br>or   | 6<br>make |
| 1<br>an   | 2<br>as   | 3<br>no   | 4<br>had  | 5<br>from | 6<br>an   |
| 1<br>them | 2<br>or   | 3<br>new  | 4<br>make | 5<br>out  | 6<br>had  |
| 1<br>no   | 2<br>had  | 3<br>from | 4<br>them | 5<br>as   | 6<br>new  |

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## Appendix A7


 4 In a Row - Board 9

|             |            |             |            |           |             |
|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1<br>came   | 2<br>want  | 3<br>been   | 4<br>where | 5<br>more | 6<br>when   |
| 1<br>want   | 2<br>where | 3<br>who    | 4<br>about | 5<br>want | 6<br>their  |
| 1<br>about  | 2<br>came  | 3<br>before | 4<br>where | 5<br>been | 6<br>about  |
| 1<br>before | 2<br>more  | 3<br>when   | 4<br>their | 5<br>who  | 6<br>before |
| 1<br>want   | 2<br>been  | 3<br>where  | 4<br>about | 5<br>came | 6<br>their  |
| 1<br>when   | 2<br>their | 3<br>who    | 4<br>want  | 5<br>more | 6<br>where  |

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## Appendix A8

4 In a Row - Board 10



|            |            |            |            |            |            |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1<br>our   | 2<br>only  | 3<br>could | 4<br>first | 5<br>which | 6<br>went  |
| 1<br>only  | 2<br>went  | 3<br>other | 4<br>must  | 5<br>only  | 6<br>right |
| 1<br>must  | 2<br>our   | 3<br>much  | 4<br>went  | 5<br>could | 6<br>must  |
| 1<br>much  | 2<br>which | 3<br>first | 4<br>right | 5<br>other | 6<br>much  |
| 1<br>only  | 2<br>could | 3<br>went  | 4<br>must  | 5<br>our   | 6<br>right |
| 1<br>first | 2<br>right | 3<br>other | 4<br>only  | 5<br>which | 6<br>went  |

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Appendix B1

A  
B  
C  
D  
E  
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V  
W  
X  
Y  
Z

# Aa

**ambulance**  
An ambulance is a special van that is used to take people to hospital when they are hurt or sick.

*Nee naa! Nee naa!*



**animal**  
An animal is something that lives and moves around. A plant is not an animal. Cats, robins, spiders, and goldfish are all animals.



**aeroplane**  
An aeroplane is a flying machine with wings that carries people and things.



**alphabet**  
An alphabet is the letters that are used in writing, arranged in a special order.



**angry**  
If you are angry, you feel very upset and annoyed.



**apple**  
An apple is a round, juicy fruit that grows on a tree. Its skin can be green, red, or yellow.



2

Source: My First Picture Dictionary (2010).

## Appendix B2

**Bb**

**basket**  
A basket is a container used to store and carry things.



**bee**  
A bee is an insect with wings. Bees make honey.



**ball**  
A ball is a round object used in games. You throw, catch, hit, or kick a ball.



**bat**  
A bat is a piece of wood that is used to hit a ball in a game.



**beetle**  
A beetle is an insect that has hard, shiny wings.



**banana**  
A banana is a long fruit with a thick, yellow skin.



**bed**  
A bed is something you lie down and sleep on.



**bicycle**  
A bicycle is a machine you ride. It has two wheels and pedals.



3

Source: My First Picture Dictionary (2010).

## Appendix B3



Source: My First Picture Dictionary (2010).

## Appendix C1



Source: [www.mes-english.com](http://www.mes-english.com) ESL/EFL Resources for Teachers.

## Appendix C2



Source: [www.mes-english.com](http://www.mes-english.com) ESL/EFL Resources for Teachers.

## Appendix C3



Source: [www.mes-english.com](http://www.mes-english.com) ESL/EFL Resources for Teachers.

## Appendix D1

**Reading Passage.**

| STEP 1 PASSAGE   | STEP 2 SENTENCES  |
|--|---|
| <p>Several thousand Dwarfs dwelt in caves of the Hartz mountains. They were a great trouble to the farmers, for at harvest-time they used to go into the fields, and steal the corn. No one ever saw them, because they were able to make themselves invincible by means of magic caps.</p> <p>One farmer lost so much corn that made up his mind to catch the thieving dwarfs. He placed a rope all around his cornfield, resting it on pegs about three feet above the ground. Then he waited and watched carefully.</p> | <p>The bird is flying above the tree.</p> <p>Amos lives near the office.</p> <p>They are standing behind the tree.</p> <p>Go and sit near the class prefect.</p> <p>Sit between the person on your left and that on your right.</p> |
| STEP 3 WORDS   | STEP 4 LETTERS  |
| <p>Went, sing, write, eat, your, man, Old, year, from, book</p>  | <p>I o h b n f v c d u p y t r w a</p>  |

Source: Pre-test

## **Appendix D2**

### **WRITING COMPOSITION**

Time allowed: 20minutes

Write a simple description of your school. Your essay should be about 10 lines.

### **ORAL COMPOSITION (CONVERSATION)**

Time allowed: 5minutes.

Describe your best friend.

Source: Pre-test