

The Effect of Board Games on Speaking Skills of Thai EFL Primary Students

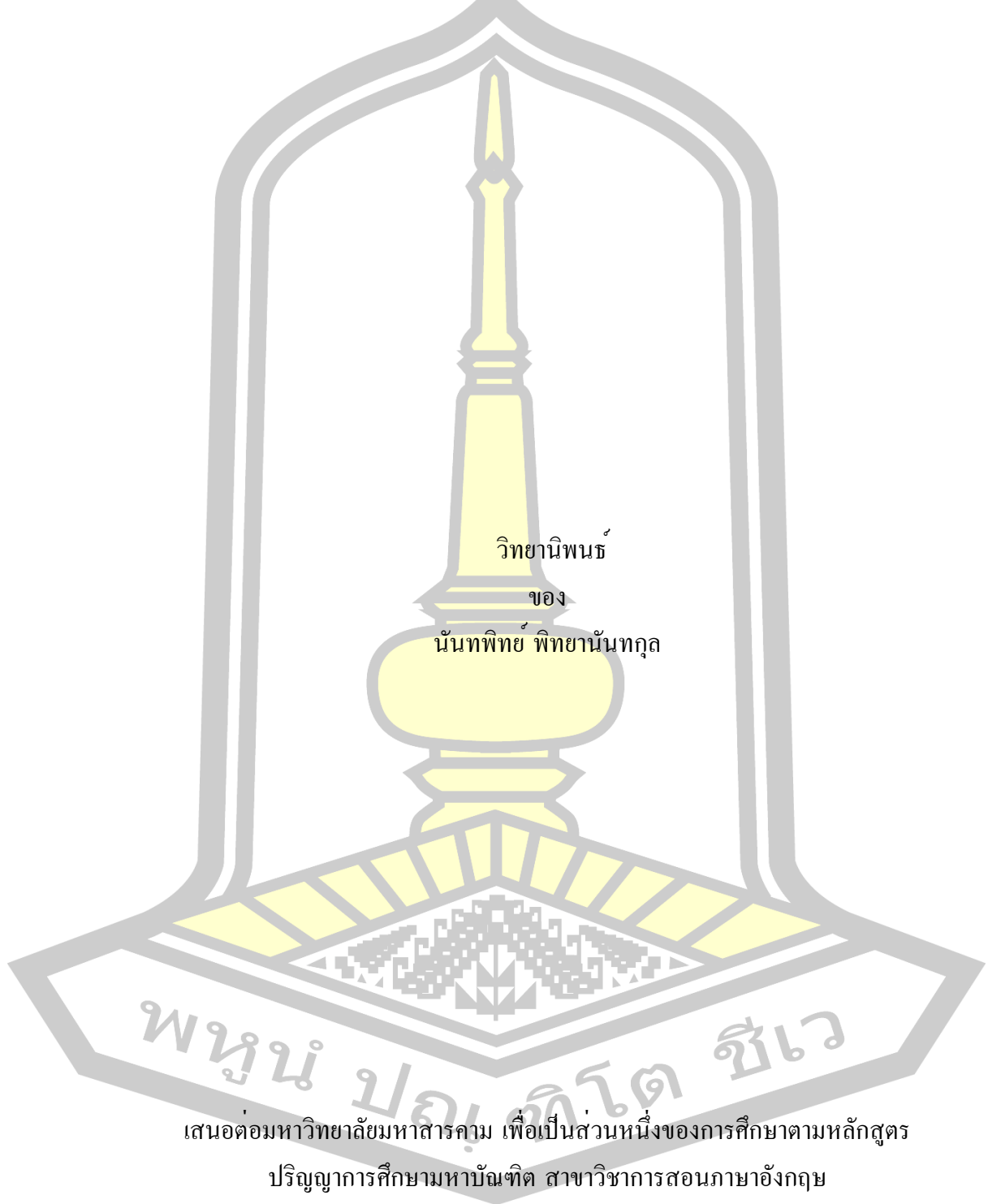
Nantapit Pittayanantakul

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
degree of Master of Education in English Language Teaching

June 2024

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ABSTRACT

Speaking skills are considered one of the most crucial skills in learning English as they lay the foundation for effective communication and language acquisition. Proficiency in speaking enables young learners to express themselves, convey ideas, and communicate effectively. This quasi-experimental research aims to investigate the effect of board games on Thai EFL primary students' speaking skills and examine their perceptions regarding the use of board games in enhancing speaking skills. The study included 86 sixth-grade students from two intact classes and assigned them to a control group and an experimental group. The speaking pre-test and post-test were administered to collect data before and after a six-week treatment period. A semi-structured interview was conducted with six participants to examine their perceptions regarding board game instruction. The quantitative data collected from the speaking pre-test and post-test were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including means, standard deviations, paired-samples t-tests, and independent-samples t-tests. The qualitative data from the semi-structured interview were analyzed using thematic analysis. Data analysis revealed that the experimental group that received board game instruction obtained higher scores on the speaking tests compared to the control group. The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups at the 0.05 level. In addition, the data from the semi-structured interview revealed participants' positive perceptions regarding board game instruction as it created a positive classroom atmosphere and enhanced both the functional and emotional benefits for the participants. In summary, this study yields practical pedagogical implications for teachers and recommendations for future studies.

Keyword : Board games, Speaking skills, Thai EFL primary students

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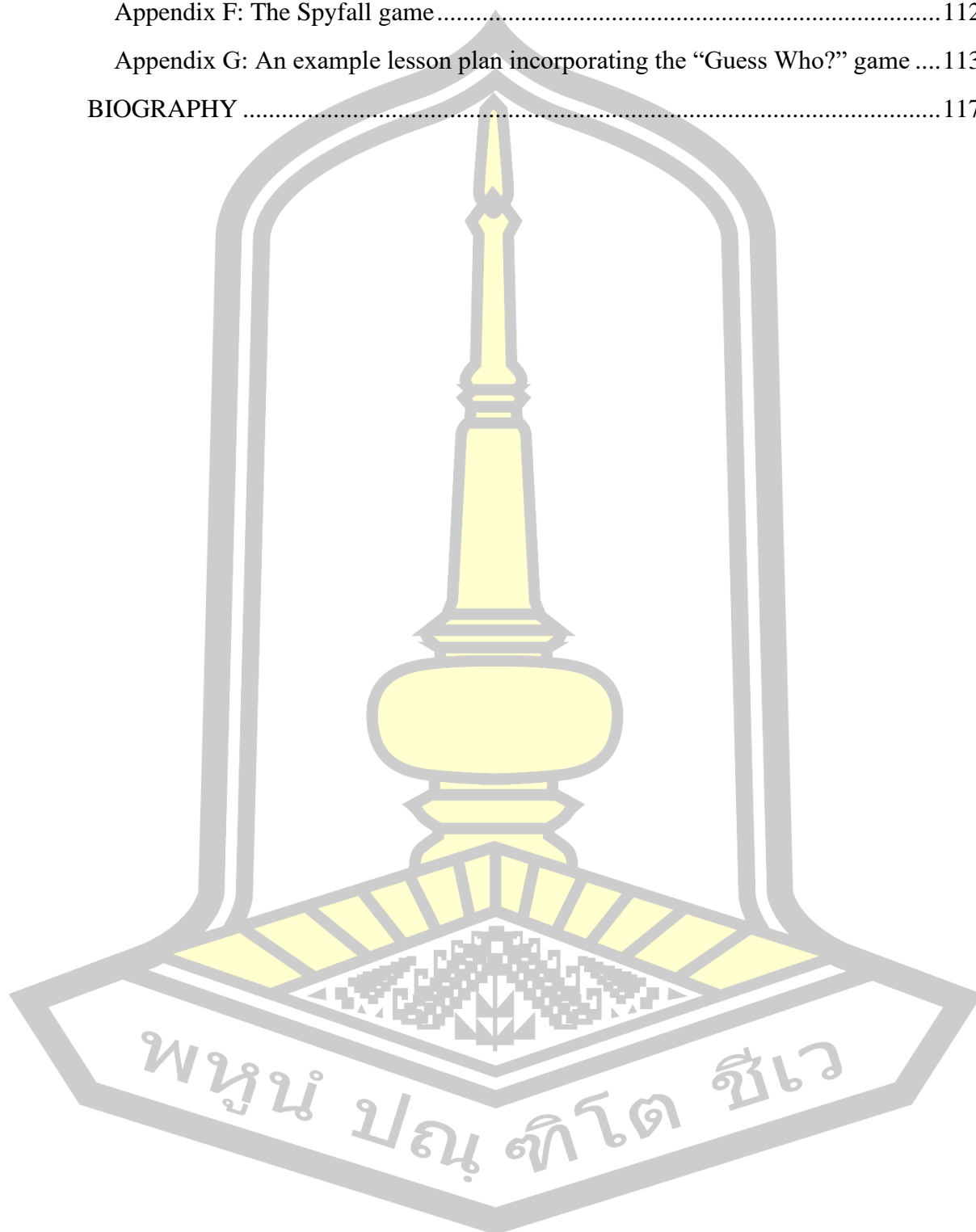
TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	D
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	E
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	F
LIST OF TABLES.....	J
LIST OF FIGURES	K
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the study	1
1.2 Purposes of the study	7
1.3 Scope of the study.....	7
1.4 Significance of the study	8
1.5 Definitions of key terms	8
1.6 Structure of the Thesis	9
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1 Speaking Skills	10
2.1.1 Definitions of Speaking.....	10
2.1.2 Definition of Speaking Skills	11
2.1.3 Importance of Speaking Skills	11
2.1.4 Components of Speaking Skills	13
2.1.5 Factors Influencing Components of Speaking Skills	14
2.1.5.1 Factors Influencing Speaking Fluency	14
2.1.5.2 Factors Influencing Grammatical Knowledge.....	15
2.1.5.3 Factors Influencing Vocabulary Learning.....	17
2.1.5.4 Factors Influencing Pronunciation	19
2.1.6 Teaching Speaking Skills	21
2.1.6.1 The Direct Method	21

2.1.6.2 The Audio-Lingual Method.....	21
2.1.6.3 Total Physical Response (TPR).....	22
2.1.6.4 The Natural Approach.....	23
2.1.6.5 Content-based Instruction (CBI)	24
2.1.6.6 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).....	24
2.1.6.7 Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT).....	25
2.1.6.8 Game-based Learning (GBL)	26
2.1.7 Teaching speaking skills in Thai primary schools	27
2.1.8 Assessing speaking skills	29
2.2 Game-based learning	37
2.2.1 A brief history and definitions of game-based learning	37
2.2.2 Theoretical rationale of game-based learning	38
2.2.3 Elements of game-based learning.....	44
2.2.4 Types of games.....	45
2.3 Board games	47
2.3.1 A brief history and definitions of board games	47
2.3.2 Elements of board games	48
2.3.3 Roles of board games in improving speaking skills.....	50
2.3.4 Advantages and disadvantages of board games	50
2.3.5 Board Games in the Study.....	52
2.3.5.1 Dream on! game	52
2.3.5.2 Snakes and Ladders game	53
2.3.5.3 Guess Who? game	55
2.3.5.4 Spyfall game.....	56
2.4 Previous studies of board games and speaking skills	57
2.5 Chapter Summary	62
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODS	63
3.1 Research design	63
3.2 Participants and Setting	63

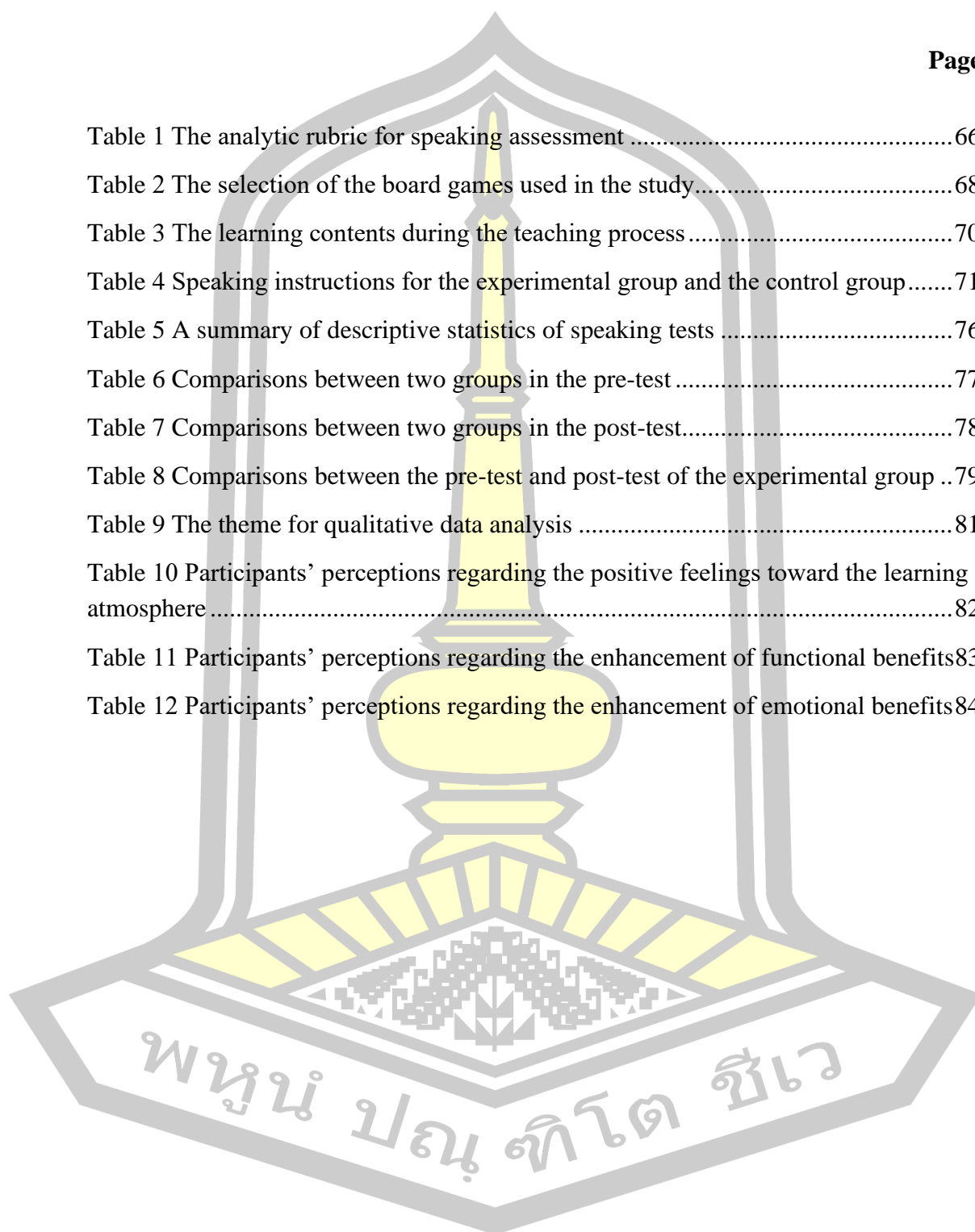
3.3 Research instruments	65
3.3.1 An English-speaking pre-test and post-test	65
3.3.2 A semi-structured Interview	67
3.4 Data collection procedure	68
3.5 Data analysis	73
3.6 Ethical Considerations	74
3.7 Chapter Summary	74
CHAPTER IV RESULTS	75
4.1 The effect of board games on Thai EFL primary students' speaking skills	75
4.2 Thai EFL primary school students' perception of board games to enhance speaking skills	81
4.2.1 Positive Feelings Toward the Learning Atmosphere	82
4.2.2 Enhancement of Functional Benefits through Board Game Instruction	83
4.2.3 Enhancement of Emotional Benefits through Board Game Instruction	84
4.3 Chapter Summary	85
CHAPTER V DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION	86
5.1 The Effect of Board Games on Speaking Skills of Thai EFL Primary Students	86
5.2 Thai Primary Students' Perception of Using Board Games to Enhance Speaking Skills	93
5.3 Implications	95
5.4 Limitations and recommendations for future studies	96
5.5 Conclusion of the study	97
REFERENCES	98
APPENDICES	104
Appendix A: Speaking pre-test and post-test	105
Appendix B: The analytic rubric for speaking assessment	107
Appendix C: The Dream on! game	109
Appendix D: The Snakes and Ladders game	110

Appendix E: The “Guess Who?” game	111
Appendix F: The Spyfall game.....	112
Appendix G: An example lesson plan incorporating the “Guess Who?” game	113
BIOGRAPHY	117



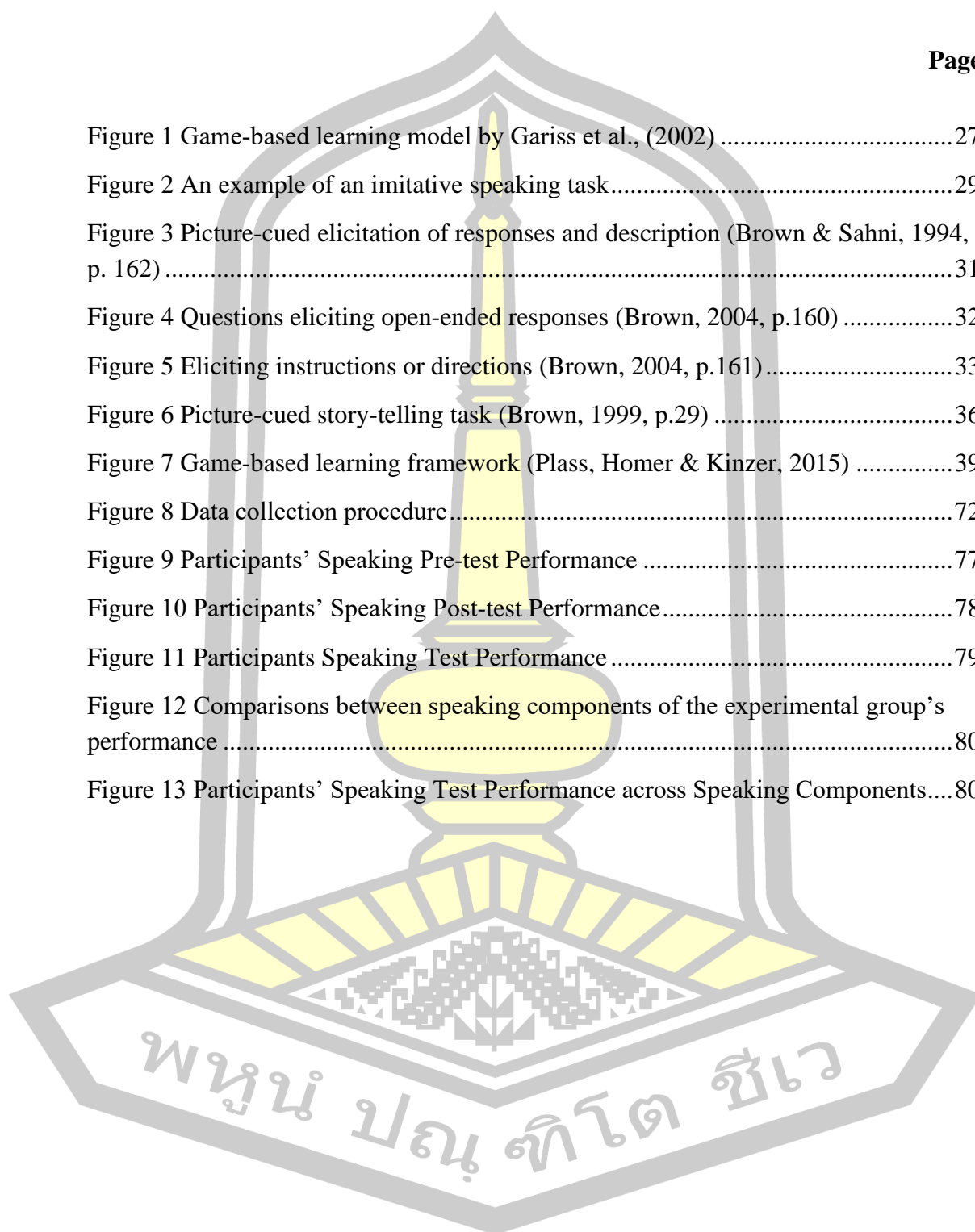
LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1 The analytic rubric for speaking assessment	66
Table 2 The selection of the board games used in the study.....	68
Table 3 The learning contents during the teaching process	70
Table 4 Speaking instructions for the experimental group and the control group.....	71
Table 5 A summary of descriptive statistics of speaking tests	76
Table 6 Comparisons between two groups in the pre-test	77
Table 7 Comparisons between two groups in the post-test.....	78
Table 8 Comparisons between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group ..	79
Table 9 The theme for qualitative data analysis	81
Table 10 Participants' perceptions regarding the positive feelings toward the learning atmosphere.....	82
Table 11 Participants' perceptions regarding the enhancement of functional benefits	83
Table 12 Participants' perceptions regarding the enhancement of emotional benefits	84



LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1 Game-based learning model by Gariss et al., (2002)	27
Figure 2 An example of an imitative speaking task.....	29
Figure 3 Picture-cued elicitation of responses and description (Brown & Sahni, 1994, p. 162)	31
Figure 4 Questions eliciting open-ended responses (Brown, 2004, p.160)	32
Figure 5 Eliciting instructions or directions (Brown, 2004, p.161).....	33
Figure 6 Picture-cued story-telling task (Brown, 1999, p.29)	36
Figure 7 Game-based learning framework (Plass, Homer & Kinzer, 2015)	39
Figure 8 Data collection procedure.....	72
Figure 9 Participants' Speaking Pre-test Performance	77
Figure 10 Participants' Speaking Post-test Performance.....	78
Figure 11 Participants Speaking Test Performance	79
Figure 12 Comparisons between speaking components of the experimental group's performance	80
Figure 13 Participants' Speaking Test Performance across Speaking Components....	80



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the study. It begins with an exploration of the background context and delves into the purposes and research questions driving the inquiry forward. Moreover, the chapter underscores the significance of the study within its field. Furthermore, essential terms central to the thesis are defined to ensure clarity. Finally, the chapter concludes with a structured outline of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Speaking skills are considered one of the most crucial aspects of learning English for EFL primary school learners due to their role in facilitating practical communication, enhancing confidence, and supporting the development of other language skills. According to Goh and Burns (2012), effective speaking skills are foundational for young learners as they enable active participation in the classroom, foster social interaction, and improve overall language proficiency. Furthermore, Bygate (2009) emphasizes that speaking practice helps consolidate grammar and vocabulary learned through reading and writing, thereby creating a more integrated and comprehensive language learning experience. These scholars highlight that fostering speaking abilities in primary school students not only aids in immediate communication but also lays the groundwork for future academic and social success. Speaking has been defined by many scholars. According to Johnson & Morrow (1983), speaking is defined as an interactive process when people participate as speakers and listeners, involving reactions and responses from all participants at high speed. Bygate (1987) defined speaking as the act of producing auditory signals that cause listeners to respond verbally in a variety of ways. Brown (2001) stated that speaking is an interactive process that combines information generation, reception, and processing to create meaning. Similarly, Thornbury (2005) mentioned that speaking is a real-life action wherein the speaker engages in conveying their ideas and interacting with the listeners. In conclusion, speaking can be comprehensively defined as an interactive and dynamic process involving both the generation and reception of auditory signals to create and

convey meaning. It requires the active participation of speakers and listeners, who engage in rapid exchanges of reactions and responses.

To develop effective speaking skills for young EFL learners, it is crucial to consider the fundamental key components of speaking. These skills involve several key components, including fluency, which refers to the ability to speak smoothly and at a natural pace without unnecessary pauses or hesitation. Grammar development is crucial, as effective speaking requires the correct application of grammatical structures and syntax to form coherent and meaningful sentences. Vocabulary is another essential aspect, as it involves acquiring and using a wide range of words and phrases suitable for various contexts and topics. Clear pronunciation facilitates effective communication as it ensures that the speaker's words are easily understood by the listener, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings and enhancing overall comprehension. Confidence is also vital, as it helps learners to speak up and express their ideas in English without fear of making mistakes. For primary learners, developing these speaking skills often involves interactive activities such as role-playing, storytelling, singing, games, and other engaging tasks that encourage practice and build proficiency in a fun and supportive environment.

Speaking skills have been widely recognized as essential in English language learning. However, in many countries where English is taught as a foreign language, achieving proficiency in speaking remains a significant challenge. This difficulty is often attributed to students' lack of motivation and engagement and fear of embarrassment (Dewi, Kultsum, & Armadi, 2016). Similar challenges are also evident in the Thai context, as identified by Yuh & Kaewurai's (2021) research. This study highlights common obstacles encountered by Thai EFL learners, including linguistic issues such as insufficient understanding of grammatical structures, limited vocabulary, difficulty applying language skills in various contexts, and challenges in comprehending different accents. In addition, other problems Thai students encounter involve their lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, and being humiliated by their classmates. Interestingly, classroom instruction which is mostly teacher-centered with a serious atmosphere seems to be one of the important factors that lead students to boredom and demotivation to learn to speak because such instruction requires students to perform tasks through their memorization. As a result, this English instruction has encouraged

future researchers to find an alternative way to conduct a suitable practical English class that meets students' conditions and desires.

In the teaching context of the researcher, Thai sixth graders, based on the indicators of the Basic Education Core Curriculum, were expected to be able to exchange interpersonal communication, express needs, and ask for and give information about matters around them using the past simple tense. However, speaking was considered one of the most challenging skills for these students to master. Some students avoided speaking and answering questions because they lacked grammar, vocabulary knowledge, and confidence. Moreover, since the sixth grade was the last year of primary school, students were expected to improve their reading and writing skills in order to take a secondary school entrance exam. For this reason, English classroom instruction was mostly teacher-centered, focusing on memorizing vocabulary and grammar rules, which caused speaking skills to be neglected. Because of inadequate practice in speaking and the classes being conducted in a serious atmosphere, some students were bored, demotivated, afraid to speak, and not engaged in class.

As mentioned above, the target content of this current study was the past simple tense, which was crucial for EFL primary school learners as it facilitated effective communication of past events, enabling narration of stories, recounting personal experiences, and discussing historical occurrences essential for daily life and academic contexts. Proficiency in this tense laid the foundation for understanding more complex grammatical structures and tenses in English. If learners struggled with the past simple tense, they might have faced challenges comprehending written texts, participating in classroom discussions, and engaging in social interactions, potentially leading to academic and social setbacks. Additionally, difficulties with this tense could have impacted learners' confidence and motivation in English language learning, hindering their overall language development and academic progress. Therefore, mastering the past simple tense was vital for EFL primary learners to succeed academically, socially, and personally in English language learning environments. Consequently, the speaking skills in this study focused on the ability to describe events in the past using the past simple tense. These skills encompassed four key aspects: fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Many researchers have proposed many teaching methods to improve EFL learners' speaking skills. Game-based learning instruction (GBL) is one of the teaching methods that has been extensively used by many researchers to improve students' speaking skills. GBL is a language teaching approach that allows students to investigate learning content while playing a meaningful game (Ghazal & Singh, 2016). GBL has been proven to be an effective teaching method that enhances EFL learners' speaking skills in various contexts. Historically, games were first used in education in the Middle Ages. For instance, chess was used to improve strategic thinking, wargames were invented to train the military, and kindergarten game tools were developed in the mid-1800s following Friedrich Froebel's learning through play theory. Today's game-based learning challenges students to work toward a goal by deciding actions and learning the outcomes those decisions lead to. When students make decisions based on the expected learning content, the positive outcome advances them in the game (Perotta et al., 2013). On the other hand, when they make guesses or uninformed decisions, games encourage them to consolidate and repeat information during the game cycle to practice and improve the results in a comfortable environment where speaking anxiety is reduced (Demirel, 2011).

Board games appear to be one of the widely used games in teaching language. It has been defined as an entertaining, engaging, and challenging game on board that requires social interaction to achieve the goal of the game. Board games are quite challenging to play alone since they are designed to be social activities. By playing board games, players have the opportunity to develop their communication skills, arithmetic skills, and strategic planning skills in a fun way (Mardon, Wiebe, Dansereau & Tombrowski, 2020). Today's board games do not always require a board to play. As elaborated by Mardon et al. (2020), board game components include a board, dice, cards, character sheets, chips, makers, miniatures, timers, or tokens depending on the characteristics and types of the games. In addition, board games can be divided into seven types, namely strategic board games, educational board games, mysterious board games, luck-centered board games, creative board games, DIY board games, and movement board games (Johnson & Tiwari, 2021).

Integrating games into learning promotes students' autonomy and deepens their understanding of diverse subject areas (Arif et al., 2019). Undoubtedly, games help

alleviate student anxiety and create an environment where they can engage in meaningful language usage and collaborative work with peers in a relaxed setting. Kapp (2012) reinforced this idea, emphasizing that students interact with one another while adhering to the context provided within the games. Within these board games, students take turns expressing their ideas in line with the provided instructions. Some board games simulate real-life scenarios, subtly aiding students in improving their social skills and adaptability.

Previous studies in the global context have consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of board games in improving students' speaking skills, encompassing aspects such as vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency. Utilizing the Pick and Speak board game, a study conducted by Ng et al. (2021) in Malaysia reported the positive outcomes of the game which enabled the students to describe their daily routines using the present continuous tense. In China, Wang & Han (2021) used the "Liulishuo" mobile app to improve complexity, accuracy, and fluency in monologic oral production among second-year undergraduates. Besides, Wong and Yunus (2023) introduced the "Flippity" online board game to fifth-grade students in Malaysia, resulting in enhanced speaking abilities and a preference for using "Flippity" for language learning. In Taiwan, the integration of game-based learning with the flipped classroom model by Hung (2023) has been reported to reduce anxiety associated with speaking English and increase motivation among second-year undergraduates. Finally, Xiao and He's (2023) quasi-experimental study in China showcased the effectiveness of the "Digital Game-Virtual College" software in enhancing various aspects of college students' oral communication abilities, including vocabulary, oral expression, social skills, emotional expression, language-related awareness, and cognitive skills.

Global studies also highlight the positive impact of game-based learning on interaction, student engagement, motivation, and willingness to communicate, concurrently reducing student anxiety. For instance, Viray's quasi-experimental research (2016) involved 87 undergraduate students in the Philippines, revealing that board games improved speaking session enjoyment and reduced errors. Additionally, Yeh et al.'s study (2017) focused on a digital game-based learning program, "Digital Game-Virtual College," with second-year undergraduate students in Taiwan. This approach,

combined with supplementary materials, effectively motivated students to actively participate in speaking activities and improved the speaking skills of those with lower proficiency. Furthermore, Chao & Fan's quasi-experimental study (2020) explored the impact of ice-breaking board games in reducing English learning anxiety among fifth-grade students in Taiwan. The findings showed that these board games created a positive and enjoyable learning atmosphere, reducing students' apprehension about English communication and boosting their speaking confidence.

In the Thai context, board games are commonly used to evaluate their impact on vocabulary acquisition and grammatical knowledge. For, example, Pakginnon, Phongploenpis & Mahimuang (2020) conducted a quantitative study with secondary school students, employing various vocabulary games. Results showed high student engagement and English vocabulary achievement. In addition, Boonprawes (2020) conducted an experimental study with first-year undergraduate students, comparing two groups—one using game-based learning in class and the other incorporating feedback. Both groups demonstrated improved learning scores, with the game-based teaching group showing greater effectiveness in enhancing listening and speaking skills. Furthermore, Sotthikun, Dibyamandala & Mangkhang (2022) explored the impact of digital board games on English vocabulary skills and collaborative abilities among secondary students, revealing the association of Digital Game-Based Learning (DGBL) with the zone of proximal development (ZPD). In a primary school study, Khansorn, Siripipattanakul & Diteeyont (2022) investigated the effectiveness of a multimedia game on English vocabulary memorization. The results showed significantly higher achievement scores and high student satisfaction. Similarly, Oyibochia & Waewchimplee (2022) conducted a quasi-experimental study with primary school students, comparing game-based learning with traditional methods. The use of game-based learning effectively improved English vocabulary learning. Lastly, in Southern Thailand, Da-Oh et al. (2023) assessed the impact of game-based learning on grammatical knowledge and satisfaction levels of secondary school students, revealing a statistically significant improvement in English grammar knowledge, with students expressing high satisfaction with the learning experience.

Existing research has emphasized the benefits of using board games to enhance speaking skills, boost engagement, reduce anxiety, and increase student satisfaction. However, most studies have focused on secondary, high school, and undergraduate levels, primarily improving vocabulary and grammar. Little attention has been given to board game use among primary school students for developing their speaking skills. Furthermore, the combination of board games, including the Dream On! game, the Snakes and Ladders game, the Guess Who? game, and the Spyfall game, which was the focus of this study, had not yet been examined in the Thai context in terms of their effectiveness on the improvement of speaking skills among primary school students. Additionally, there remained a research gap regarding structured teaching procedures for implementing games into the speaking class, which could further enhance the understanding of the effect of board games on speaking skills in this context. Therefore, this study set out in order to address these research gaps by investigating the effect of board games on the speaking skills of primary school students and examining students' perceptions of the use of board games.

1.2 Purposes of the study

The current study aimed to improve the speaking skills of sixth-grade Thai EFL students through the combination of four board games, including the Dream On! game, the Snakes and Ladders game, the Guess Who? game, and the Spyfall game. Moreover, this study investigated students' perceptions regarding the use of board games in their English classroom. The research questions formulated to guide this study are as follows:

1. To what extent do the board games affect sixth-grade Thai EFL learners' speaking skills?
2. What are students' perceptions regarding the use of board games in enhancing speaking skills?

1.3 Scope of the study

Using quasi-experimental research, this study focused on investigating the effect of the combination of board games, including the Dream on! game, the Snakes and Ladders game, the Guess Who? game, and the Spyfall game on Thai EFL primary learners' speaking skills. This study also investigated students' perceptions of the use of board games in enhancing speaking skills. 86 sixth-grade Thai EFL students from a primary school in northeast Thailand were participants in the study. They were assigned into

two groups: 43 students in a control group receiving traditional instruction based on the textbook, and 43 students in an experimental group receiving board game instruction. The instruments used to collect data were a speaking skills pre-test and post-test and a semi-structured interview. The data collection procedure lasted seven weeks in the second semester of the academic year 2023.

1.4 Significance of the study

This research benefit EFL primary school teachers and practitioners interested in instructing speaking classes using board games. By exploring this topic, teachers can gain valuable insights into innovative and engaging teaching methods that foster speaking skills. Understanding how board games can effectively enhance speaking skills allows educators to diversify their instructional strategies and cater to the diverse learning needs of students. Moreover, research in this area provides teachers with evidence-based approaches to creating dynamic and interactive learning environments, ultimately promoting student engagement and motivation.

For Thai EFL primary students, engaging in language learning through board games offers students a fun and interactive avenue to practice speaking English that fosters grammatical knowledge, vocabulary learning, and pronunciation, thereby reducing anxiety and enhancing confidence. Furthermore, by incorporating board games into language learning activities, students can experience increased motivation, improved speaking fluency, and a deeper appreciation for learning English. Ultimately, research on the effect of board games on speaking skills provides Thai EFL primary students with engaging and effective tools to achieve their learning goals and enhance their speaking skills.

1.5 Definitions of key terms

In this study, the term '*board games*' is defined as the interventions for the experimental group. These interventions consist of four specific games: Dream On!, Snakes and Ladders, Guess Who?, and Spyfall.

In this study, '*speaking skills*' refers to the progress in speaking abilities measured through pretest and posttest assessments. Participants from both a control group and an experimental group received distinct interventions. Their proficiency in expressing and describing a picture using past simple tense was evaluated across four dimensions: fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Sixth-grade Thai EFL students refers to eighty-six sixth-graders studying in the Fundamental English class in the second semester of the academic year 2023 in a primary school in northeast Thailand

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is organized into five chapters, each dedicated to a specific aspect of the conducted research, thereby providing a comprehensive elucidation of the study.

Chapter I serves as an introductory segment, establishing the background, context, and significance of speaking skills. The chapter also outlines the research objectives and guiding questions, defines the study's scope and key terms, and highlights the study's significance.

Chapter II provides an in-depth exploration of existing literature and establishes the theoretical framework, encompassing speaking skills and associated concepts. It synthesizes prior research findings on teaching and learning speaking across various methodologies, with particular emphasis on game-based learning, both within Thailand and internationally.

Chapter III provides a comprehensive guide to the research process by offering details of the research methodology covering the research design, participants and setting, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis methods, and ethical considerations.

Chapter IV unveils the research findings in both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative outcomes are showcased via descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. Meanwhile, qualitative findings are elucidated through thematic analysis, utilizing Fredricks et al.'s (2004) framework, supplemented by excerpts from semi-structured interviews conducted with students.

Chapter V discusses the primary findings of the study, providing insights into the effect of board games in enhancing speaking skills. It furnishes valuable information for pedagogical practices, theoretical frameworks, and methodological approaches for future research endeavors. Additionally, this chapter acknowledges the study's limitations and provides suggestions for future study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the theoretical framework underlying the study. Specifically, the chapter first discusses the concept of speaking, followed by teaching approaches and speaking assessment. The concept of board games is also explained. The chapter ends with a review of the existing literature in the global and Thai contexts.

2.1 Speaking Skills

2.1.1 Definitions of Speaking

Speaking is commonly considered an essential tool of communication in everyday life, and is widely seen as a crucial ability that requires regular practice to effectively engage in oral communication. In the authentic communication context, verbal expression serves the purpose of accomplishing certain objectives, such as conveying personal intentions, engaging in negotiation or problem-solving endeavors, and nurturing social connections and friendships, among others.

Speaking skills have been defined differently by many scholars. According to Brown (2001), speaking is a two-way interactive process wherein speakers engage in producing, receiving, and interpreting the information to convey feelings, ideas, and opinions. In addition, Johnson & Morrow (1983) defined that speaking is commonly characterized as an interactive process when people participate as speakers and listeners, involving reactions and responses from all participants at high speed. Moreover, Cameron (2005) claimed that speaking serves as a means of conveying intended meanings to facilitate comprehension by listeners. Besides, Chaney (1998), stated that speaking is the process of exchanging meaning by employing both verbal and non-verbal symbols across various contexts. Furthermore, Thornbury (2005) asserted that speaking is a real-life action wherein the speaker engages in conveying their ideas and interacting with the listeners.

In essence, the acquisition of speaking abilities is considered essential for pupils' language proficiency. Speaking has been generally defined as the act of communicating or conveying information, thoughts, ideas, or feelings verbally through spoken words or sounds. It is a fundamental form of human communication that allows

individuals to interact, share knowledge, express themselves, and engage in conversations with others.

2.1.2 Definition of Speaking Skills

Speaking skills in language teaching have been defined by experts in the field over the years. For example, Krashen (1981) stated that speaking skills refer to an individual's ability to produce language spontaneously, typically within the context of real-world conversation and often in high-pressure situations. In addition, Brown & Yule (1983) claimed that speaking skills are defined as an ability to participate in conversation or discourse in a manner that demonstrates coherence, cohesion, and contextual relevance. Furthermore, Rivers (1987) claimed that speaking skills can be defined as the utilization of oral language to effectively communicate in a non-native language. Moreover, Schmidt (1995) described speaking skills as the capacity to use language in a manner that successfully, appropriately, and efficiently communicates meaning within diverse social and cultural settings. Besides, Nunan (2003) defined speaking skills as the ability to effectively produce and comprehend language sounds in context. According to Brown (2000), speaking skills are the ability to generate a language's sounds, words, and intonation aiming to interact in speaking situations. Additionally, Freeman (2000) stated that speaking skills include the capacity to produce a clear, comprehensible, and suitable speech for the social and communicative context. Lastly, Richards (2008) asserted that speaking abilities encompass the capacity to utilize spoken language suitably and efficiently across several social contexts.

These definitions reflect the multifaceted nature of speaking skills, encompassing not only the production of sounds and words but also the ability to communicate effectively in various social and cultural contexts. Speaking skills involve pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and the capacity to convey meaning appropriately and efficiently in spoken language. These definitions have informed language teaching and assessment practices in the field of language education.

2.1.3 Importance of Speaking Skills

In today's global world, effective communication is recognized as an essential strategy for achieving success in many fields. Language serves as a fundamental tool for facilitating communication. Without a language, it is difficult for people to communicate effectively. Moreover, people cannot accomplish their aims, objectives,

and goals without proper communication. Consequently, a language is necessary for communication among people all around the world. As English is often regarded as the lingua franca, being spoken throughout many areas, states, countries, and continents, learning to speak is considered a crucial skill to acquire when studying English as a foreign or second language. According to Brown and Yule (1983), speaking skills hold the greatest significance for learners as they will be judged in real-world situations. The modern world necessitates learners to acquire communication skills, and English educators must impart these skills to English language learners so that they can enhance their speaking abilities and perform well in real-life scenarios.

According to Bueno, Madrid, and McLaren (2006: 321), the acquisition of speaking skills is a significant challenge for language learners. Speaking is regarded as the most essential of the four English language abilities that are also found challenging for learners to achieve. Even for those who have studied the language for many years, it is difficult to speak in real-world situations when required. However, there are numerous justifications for overcoming this challenge. Firstly, English Language Learners (ELLs) must understand the significance of speaking skills and attempt to master them, as these skills are essential for them to be successful in today's highly competitive community. Furthermore, the acquisition of speaking abilities is also advantageous for learners as it facilitates their success in their careers. Nowadays, it has become more common to assess candidates' English-speaking abilities during job interviews, with many selection decisions being influenced by interview performance. Job candidates are required to actively engage in group discussions to demonstrate their abilities, particularly in spoken communication. Furthermore, an effective speaker can greatly motivate the audience, capturing their whole attention and maintaining the same speed until the finish of his or her speech. As a result, the audience becomes fully engaged in the speaker's speech, occasionally losing interest in the outside world and devoting their attention to the speech. Therefore, effective oral communication skills are of greatest significance as the success of interpersonal interactions depends on individuals' ability to convey their messages to others.

In conclusion, effective communication, especially through speaking skills, is crucial in today's globalized world. English proficiency is essential, given its status as the lingua franca. Despite the challenges, mastering speaking skills is vital for success, both

professionally and in interpersonal interactions. As such, cultivating speaking abilities is paramount for proficiency and success in the English language.

2.1.4 Components of Speaking Skills

In order to teach speaking English effectively, it is essential to consider some factors that significantly impact one's speech. Mazouzi (2013) contends that language learners' activities should be structured to achieve a balance between fluency and accuracy, both integral aspects of the communicative approach. Fluency and accuracy play significant roles in developing communicative competence, which can be nurtured through classroom practice. Mastery of the language system is crucial for learners to effectively navigate linguistic nuances. Fluency, identified as the primary objective in teaching speaking skills by Hughes (2002), refers to the ability to articulate thoughts coherently to prevent communication breakdowns and sustain listener engagement. Hedge (2000) elaborates on fluency as the seamless connection of words and phrases, clear pronunciation, and adept use of stress and intonation.

Conversely, accuracy, the second component of speaking proficiency, is essential for learners striving to achieve fluency in a foreign language. Teachers, therefore, should underscore the significance of accuracy throughout the instructional process, as noted by Mazouzi (2013). Attention to grammatical structures, vocabulary selection, and pronunciation is paramount. Thornbury (2005) emphasizes the importance of grammatical accuracy, which necessitates constructing well-formed utterances and employing vocabulary contextually. Achieving accuracy in vocabulary usage involves selecting appropriate words for specific contexts and discerning nuances in meaning to ensure precise expression. Thornbury (2005) also highlights pronunciation as a component often overlooked by learners despite its significance. To speak English accurately, learners must familiarize themselves with phonological rules, various sounds, stress patterns, intonation, and pitch. Proficiency in these areas enhances language fluency and facilitates effective communication in English.

As mentioned above, it can be concluded that speaking components comprise fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These elements cannot be neglected and should be mastered by the speakers in order to deliver the intended speech successfully. Moreover, it is crucial for an instructor to consider and include these elements when teaching speaking.

2.1.5 Factors Influencing Components of Speaking Skills

The integral components of speaking skills encompass fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, all of which hold significant importance. Educators should carefully consider the various factors that impact these components. Below is an overview of the review detailing the influences affecting the different components of speaking skills.

2.1.5.1 Factors Influencing Speaking Fluency

Speaking fluency is a pivotal aspect of language proficiency, shaped by various factors that intersect to influence individuals' ability to communicate effectively. Scholars have extensively studied these factors across different periods, offering insights into how language proficiency, motivation, socio-cultural context, and technological advancements impact fluency development. This section delves into the significant factors influencing speaking fluency, highlighting the complex interplay between language acquisition, psychological factors, sociocultural influences, and technological innovations.

Krashen and Terrell (1986) emphasized the critical roles of language proficiency and anxiety in speaking fluency. They argued that individuals with higher language proficiency levels demonstrate greater fluency due to their superior grasp of vocabulary, grammar, and language structures. Conversely, high levels of anxiety can impede fluency by hindering the fluidity and spontaneity of speech production. Strategies aimed at reducing anxiety, such as relaxation techniques and gradual exposure to speaking situations, were proposed to enhance speaking fluency.

In 1995, Swain expanded upon Krashen's Input Hypothesis, introducing the concept of output as a crucial factor influencing speaking fluency. Swain argued that language learners require not only exposure to comprehensible input but also opportunities for meaningful output production through speaking. Engaging in communicative tasks that demand active language production facilitates fluency development by promoting the integration of linguistic knowledge and fostering fluency-enhancing strategies like paraphrasing and self-correction.

Motivation and autonomy also emerged as significant factors in speaking fluency, as highlighted by Deci and Ryan (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were identified as driving forces behind language learning endeavors, influencing learners' willingness to engage in speaking activities and persist in overcoming challenges. Additionally,

learner autonomy was emphasized, advocating for learner-centered approaches that empower individuals to take ownership of their learning process and make autonomous decisions regarding speaking tasks and strategies.

Socio-cultural factors play a crucial role in shaping speaking fluency, according to scholars like Lantolf and Thorne (2012). They underscored the importance of social interaction and participation in authentic communicative contexts for fluency development. Peer feedback, negotiation of meaning, and exposure to diverse linguistic models were identified as catalysts for fluency enhancement. Moreover, cultural norms and values were highlighted, emphasizing the significance of cultural awareness and communicative conventions in achieving fluency in intercultural communication contexts.

With the advent of digital technologies, scholars such as Warschauer (2019) explored the impact of technology-mediated practices on speaking fluency. They noted the potential of digital tools and platforms to provide learners with authentic speaking practice and interaction opportunities. Online communities and social media platforms were also highlighted for their role in facilitating language exchange and fostering speaking fluency through collaborative learning experiences.

In conclusion, speaking fluency is influenced by interconnected factors including language proficiency, motivation, sociocultural context, and technological advancements. Understanding and addressing these factors are essential for designing effective language learning interventions that promote fluency development. By leveraging strategies to enhance language proficiency, reduce anxiety, foster motivation, encourage autonomy, create sociocultural immersion, and harness technological innovations, educators can empower learners to achieve greater fluency and communicative competence in diverse linguistic contexts.

2.1.5.2 Factors Influencing Grammatical Knowledge

Grammatical knowledge is crucial for enhancing language proficiency and influencing individuals' ability to comprehend and produce coherent and accurate utterances. This section delves into key factors influencing grammatical knowledge encompassing input and output, form-focused instruction, cognitive factors, input enhancement, and usage-based approaches.

Krashen and Swain (1985) emphasized the pivotal roles of input and output in grammatical knowledge acquisition. Krashen's Input Hypothesis posited that language learners acquire grammatical structures through exposure to comprehensible input, while Swain's Output Hypothesis extended this perspective by suggesting that meaningful output production facilitates the internalization and consolidation of grammatical rules. Learners benefit from opportunities to receive input containing grammatical structures and actively produce language through speaking and writing tasks, thereby enhancing their grammatical competence.

Form-focused instruction emerged as a crucial factor in promoting grammatical knowledge, as highlighted by Spada and Lightbown (1998). They argued that explicit instruction targeting specific grammatical features accelerates the acquisition process by drawing learners' attention to linguistic forms and rules. Form-focused activities, such as grammar drills and error correction exercises, provide opportunities for learners to notice, understand, and internalize grammatical structures. Integrating form-focused instruction with communicative activities ensures that learners develop both accuracy and fluency in language use.

Cognitive factors and individual differences play significant roles in grammatical knowledge development, according to Ellis and Skehan (2004). They proposed that learners' cognitive abilities, such as working memory capacity and processing speed, influence their ability to comprehend and produce grammatical structures. Moreover, individual differences, such as age, aptitude, and learning style, impact learners' receptivity to different types of grammar instruction and their proficiency levels. Tailoring instructional strategies to learners' specific cognitive profiles and needs optimizes the acquisition of grammatical knowledge.

Input enhancement and focus on form techniques are advocated by VanPatten and Doughty (2010) to facilitate grammatical knowledge acquisition. Input enhancement involves making salient linguistic features in input materials to draw learners' attention to grammatical structures, while focus on form entails providing explicit instruction or feedback on specific grammatical forms during communicative activities. By incorporating these techniques into language instruction, educators scaffold learners' understanding of grammatical rules and promote accurate language use in authentic contexts.

Usage-based approaches shift the focus toward the role of usage patterns and frequency in shaping grammatical knowledge, as proposed by Ellis and Larsen-Freeman (2015). Learners acquire language through exposure to frequent and meaningful language patterns in communicative contexts, developing implicit knowledge of grammatical structures and usage conventions. Providing learners with opportunities for meaningful interaction and usage-based practice reinforces and consolidates their grammatical knowledge, fostering a deeper understanding of language structures and usage conventions.

In conclusion, grammatical knowledge acquisition is influenced by a combination of input and output, form-focused instruction, cognitive factors, input enhancement, focus on form, and usage-based approaches. Understanding and addressing these factors are essential for designing effective language learning interventions that promote grammatical proficiency. By integrating diverse instructional strategies tailored to learners' needs and providing ample opportunities for meaningful language practice, educators can foster the development of grammatical competence and enhance learners' communicative abilities in various linguistic contexts.

2.1.5.3 Factors Influencing Vocabulary Learning

Vocabulary learning is a dynamic process influenced by various factors that shape learners' ability to acquire and retain new words. Over the years, scholars have explored different approaches to understanding and enhancing vocabulary acquisition. This section delves into key factors influencing vocabulary learning encompassing contextual learning, frequency and repetition, incidental learning, semantic mapping, and task-based learning approaches.

Craik and Lockhart's Levels of Processing Model (1972) laid the groundwork for understanding vocabulary learning by highlighting the role of depth of processing. According to this model, the depth of processing during encoding affects the strength and durability of memory traces. Scholars applied this principle to vocabulary acquisition, emphasizing the importance of engaging learners in meaningful, context-rich activities that encourage deep semantic processing. By connecting new vocabulary items to prior knowledge and real-world contexts, learners can enhance their understanding and retention of words, leading to more effective vocabulary acquisition.

Nation (1990) focused on the influence of frequency and repetition on vocabulary learning. He emphasized the importance of exposure to high-frequency words and repeated encounters with target vocabulary items. Nation proposed that frequent exposure to words in diverse contexts facilitates the consolidation of lexical representations in memory and promotes automaticity in word recognition and production. Scholars advocated for the use of spaced repetition techniques and deliberate practice strategies to reinforce vocabulary retention and retrieval over time. Incidental learning and exposure emerged as significant factors in vocabulary acquisition, as highlighted by Laufer and Hulstijn (2001). They argued that learners acquire vocabulary not only through deliberate study but also through incidental encounters with words in authentic reading, listening, and communicative contexts. Providing learners with extensive exposure to comprehensible input, wherein they encounter unfamiliar words in meaningful, contextually rich passages, enhances vocabulary acquisition. Through repeated exposure to words in various contexts, learners develop implicit knowledge of vocabulary, allowing them to infer word meanings and usage patterns through context clues and contextual cues.

Drawing from cognitive psychology and schema theory, Thornbury and McCarthy (2007) emphasized the role of semantic mapping and associations in vocabulary learning. They proposed that organizing vocabulary items into meaningful semantic networks facilitates the encoding, storage, and retrieval of word meanings. Techniques such as semantic mapping, word clustering, and concept mapping encourage learners to explore semantic relationships among words and concepts, thereby enhancing their depth of understanding and retention of vocabulary. Promoting active engagement and elaborative processing during vocabulary instruction encourages learners to generate personal connections and associations with target words, further enhancing vocabulary acquisition.

Long and Ellis (2014) shifted the focus towards meaningful language use and communicative tasks in vocabulary acquisition. They argued that vocabulary learning occurs most effectively in contextually rich, communicative environments where learners engage in purposeful language use to achieve communicative goals. Integrating vocabulary instruction into authentic communicative tasks and language learning activities provides learners with opportunities for meaningful interaction, negotiation

of meaning, and language practice. By facilitating vocabulary acquisition through situated and usage-based learning experiences, educators can enhance learners' vocabulary proficiency and communicative competence.

In conclusion, vocabulary learning is influenced by a combination of factors spanning contextual learning, frequency and repetition, incidental learning, semantic mapping, and task-based learning approaches. Understanding and addressing these factors are crucial for designing effective vocabulary instruction that promotes learners' acquisition and retention of new words. By incorporating diverse instructional strategies tailored to learners' needs and providing meaningful language practice opportunities, educators can foster the development of vocabulary proficiency and enhance learners' communicative abilities in various contexts.

2.1.5.4 Factors Influencing Pronunciation

Pronunciation development is a fundamental aspect of language acquisition, influenced by various factors that encompass both cognitive and sociolinguistic dimensions. This section delves into key factors influencing pronunciation offering insights into the complex processes underlying accurate pronunciation acquisition.

Archer (1985) emphasized the crucial role of phonological awareness and aptitude in pronunciation development. Phonological awareness, the ability to detect and manipulate the sounds of language, is essential for accurate pronunciation. Individuals with a high level of phonological aptitude tend to exhibit greater proficiency in perceiving and producing the phonetic features of a language. Scholars argued that explicit instruction focusing on phonological awareness can enhance learners' ability to discriminate between sounds and acquire native-like pronunciation patterns, thereby facilitating pronunciation accuracy.

Building upon Long's Interaction Hypothesis, Gass (1996) highlighted the importance of input and interaction in pronunciation acquisition. Exposure to comprehensible input, particularly in naturalistic communicative contexts, provides learners with opportunities to encounter and internalize the pronunciation norms of the target language. Interactive language learning activities, such as peer interaction and conversational practice, enable learners to receive corrective feedback and engage in meaningful communication, contributing to the development of accurate pronunciation skills.

Ching (2003) underscored the interconnectedness between perception and production processes in pronunciation learning. Learners' ability to accurately perceive and discriminate between sounds influences their production accuracy. Scholars advocated for explicit instruction and practice targeting both perception and production skills, using techniques such as minimal pair exercises and model imitation to enhance learners' phonetic awareness and production accuracy. By addressing both perception and production aspects, educators can facilitate the development of intelligible pronunciation.

Jenkins and Bell (2010) drew from sociolinguistic perspectives to highlight the influence of individual differences and identity on pronunciation variation. Factors such as age, first language background, and social identity shape learners' pronunciation patterns and preferences. Scholars emphasized the concept of "accent pride," whereby speakers may embrace elements of their native accent as part of their cultural identity. Strategies aimed at improving pronunciation should consider learners' individual backgrounds and identities, fostering a positive attitude towards linguistic diversity and promoting mutual intelligibility in communication.

Derwing (2017) explored the potential of technology-assisted pronunciation training (TAPT) in pronunciation instruction. Advocating for the integration of digital tools and multimedia resources, such as speech recognition software and pronunciation apps, scholars emphasized the importance of personalized feedback and practice opportunities. Furthermore, the incorporation of task-based learning principles and gamification into TAPT programs enhances learner engagement and motivation, facilitating continuous improvement in pronunciation skills.

In conclusion, pronunciation development is influenced by a combination of factors spanning phonological awareness, input and interaction, perception-production interplay, individual differences, and technology-assisted training. Understanding and addressing these factors are crucial for designing effective pronunciation instruction that fosters accurate and intelligible speech production. By incorporating diverse instructional strategies tailored to learners' needs and leveraging technology to provide personalized feedback and practice, educators can facilitate the development of

pronunciation skills and enhance learners' communicative competence in the target language.

2.1.6 Teaching Speaking Skills

The effective teaching methods employed to develop speaking skills are an essential part and should be taken into account in language learning. Many scholars in the field have developed various methods and approaches over the years. The review of speaking teaching methods that are widely used is provided as follows:

2.1.6.1 The Direct Method

The Direct Method in teaching speaking emphasizes learning a language directly through speaking and listening, rather than through translation and grammar rules. It is grounded in the idea that second language acquisition should mirror the natural process of first language learning. In this method, instruction is conducted exclusively in the target language, with minimal to no use of the students' native language. The primary focus is on developing oral communication skills, prioritizing speaking and listening over reading and writing. Vocabulary is introduced using real-life objects, pictures, and demonstrations without translating into the students' native language, and phrases and sentences are taught instead of isolated words. Grammar is taught inductively, allowing students to infer rules from exposure to language patterns in context rather than through explicit instruction. Classroom activities often involve a series of questions and answers to practice speaking and listening skills, with a strong emphasis on correct pronunciation from the beginning. Lessons are based on everyday situations, making the language relevant and practical for real-life use. The Direct Method is particularly effective in smaller classes, where teachers can provide individual attention to each student. Developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a response to the Grammar-Translation Method, which focused heavily on reading and writing and relied on translation, the Direct Method seeks to create a more immersive and natural language learning experience, akin to how children learn their first language.

2.1.6.2 The Audio-Lingual Method

The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) is a mid-20th century language teaching approach, rooted in behaviorist theory, which emphasizes habit formation through repetition and reinforcement. Primarily focused on developing listening and speaking skills before reading and writing, ALM relies heavily on repetitive drills and practice to instill

correct language habits. Students engage in mimicry, memorization, and pattern drills to reinforce language structures. Lessons often start with dialogue memorization based on everyday situations, introducing new vocabulary and grammatical structures. Accurate pronunciation is crucial, with teachers modeling correct pronunciation for students to mimic precisely. Structural patterns are practiced through substitution and transformation drills, helping students internalize grammatical rules without explicit instruction. The target language is used almost exclusively in the classroom, creating an immersive environment with minimal use of the native language. Immediate correction of errors is emphasized to prevent bad habits, with teachers providing instant feedback to ensure accurate language output. The initial focus is on listening and speaking, with reading and writing introduced later to reinforce oral skills. Technological aids like language labs and tapes are frequently used to provide ample listening and speaking practice. Influenced by behaviorist learning theories, ALM was popularized in the U.S. during World War II for military language training programs, known as the Army Method, aimed at quickly teaching foreign languages to soldiers. The approach seeks to create automatic, habitual responses to language stimuli, developing fluency through extensive repetition and practice. Although criticized for lacking focus on communicative competence and contextual understanding, the Audio-Lingual Method paved the way for modern communicative approaches by emphasizing the importance of oral proficiency in language learning.

2.1.6.3 Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a language teaching method developed by Dr. James J. Asher in the 1960s, which links language learning with physical movement. In TPR, students respond to verbal commands with physical actions, mirroring the natural way children learn their first language. This method aims to reduce student stress and create an engaging learning environment. Key features include action-based learning, where students perform actions ranging from simple movements to complex sequences in response to teacher commands. Emphasis is placed on comprehension before production, allowing students to internalize the language before speaking it. The teacher models commands and actions initially, which students then imitate. TPR aims to create a stress-free environment, avoiding pressure on students to speak until they are ready, thus building confidence. Learning is incremental, starting with simple commands and

progressing to more complex ones, helping students gradually build their language skills. Physical movement aids memory retention and recall, as associating words with actions makes them more memorable. The language used is predominantly in the form of imperatives, which are straightforward and easy to act out. TPR often involves whole-class participation, fostering a sense of community and collective learning. It is adaptable for different proficiency levels, with more complex commands and speaking activities introduced for advanced learners. TPR can be integrated with other teaching methods to provide a balanced approach to language learning. Overall, TPR is an effective method for teaching speaking, emphasizing comprehension, and reducing anxiety to make language learning more enjoyable and effective.

2.1.6.4 The Natural Approach

The Natural Approach, developed by Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell in the 1970s, is rooted in the theory that language acquisition occurs most effectively through exposure to understandable language in meaningful contexts, rather than through formal instruction or repetitive exercises. Key principles of the Natural Approach include the emphasis on providing comprehensible input—language that is just above the learner's current proficiency level but still understandable and relevant. It advocates for prioritizing listening and understanding before speaking, mirroring how children acquire their first language. Creating a low-anxiety environment is crucial to encourage learners to speak when they feel comfortable, without fear of correction that might hinder their willingness to communicate. The approach aims to develop communicative competence, encompassing not only speaking skills but also listening, reading, and writing abilities essential for effective communication. Language is best learned when taught in meaningful contexts, such as through stories or real-life situations, promoting authentic language use. Krashen's distinction between language acquisition (subconscious learning through exposure) and language learning (conscious study of grammar and vocabulary) underscores the Natural Approach's focus on acquisition through exposure. Error correction is minimal and naturally occurs through exposure to comprehensible input, with teachers offering supportive feedback and modeling correct language usage. Integration of language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—is emphasized to encourage learners to apply their language knowledge across various contexts and modalities. Cultural awareness is also valued, prompting

learners to explore cultural aspects related to the language they are learning. In essence, the Natural Approach advocates for a communicative and holistic approach to language learning, prioritizing meaningful communication and comprehension over explicit grammar instruction or drills, and fostering a supportive environment where learners can naturally acquire language skills through exposure and meaningful interactions.

2.1.6.5 Content-based Instruction (CBI)

Content-based Instruction (CBI) is an innovative language teaching approach that merges language learning with the study of academic subjects or real-world themes. Unlike traditional methods that isolate language skills, CBI uses meaningful content to contextualize language learning, particularly in speaking. Students develop speaking skills by participating in discussions, delivering presentations, engaging in debates, or explaining concepts tied to the content being studied. This method prioritizes authentic communication, where students use language to convey and debate information on specific topics, mirroring real-world scenarios. Through these activities, students not only enhance their speaking abilities but also acquire vocabulary pertinent to the subject matter, thereby fostering simultaneous language and content comprehension. CBI integrates speaking with listening, reading, and writing skills, ensuring a comprehensive language learning experience. It promotes critical thinking by encouraging students to analyze and defend viewpoints during discussions, tasks, and projects. Teachers play a facilitative role in CBI, guiding students through speaking tasks, offering language support, and fostering meaningful discourse related to the content. This approach provides a spectrum of speaking opportunities, ranging from informal exchanges to formal presentations, tailored to academic objectives and the content under study. Ultimately, CBI empowers students to develop proficiency in language while deepening their understanding of subject-specific knowledge, enriching their educational experience with practical and intellectual engagement.

2.1.6.6 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a learner-centered approach to language instruction that prioritizes the development of communicative competence over rote memorization of grammar rules. Specifically in teaching speaking, CLT advocates for engaging students in authentic communication scenarios that mirror real-life contexts. This involves tasks such as discussions, role-plays, debates, and problem-solving

activities where students actively exchange ideas, negotiate meanings, and express opinions. Emphasizing fluency over grammatical accuracy, CLT encourages learners to communicate effectively even if they make errors, believing that accuracy naturally improves through meaningful practice. Authentic materials like native speaker recordings and real-world texts are utilized to expose students to natural language use and cultural nuances. Teachers in CLT act as facilitators, guiding students through speaking activities, providing language support as necessary, and fostering discussions to enhance communication skills. Integrated with listening, reading, and writing, speaking tasks in CLT are part of a cohesive learning process that promotes active student participation, collaboration, and reflection on language use. Cultural awareness is also integral, with discussions on cultural topics enhancing learners' intercultural competence. Assessment in CLT focuses on evaluating students' ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in diverse contexts, assessing fluency, coherence, communicative impact, and interactional skills rather than just grammatical correctness. Ultimately, CLT aims to equip learners with the ability to confidently and competently use language for genuine communication in real-world settings.

2.1.6.7 Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) is an instructional approach that places meaningful tasks at the core of language learning activities, particularly in speaking. In TBLT, speaking tasks are designed to simulate real-world activities such as planning a trip, solving problems, making decisions, or completing projects, all requiring learners to use language to achieve practical outcomes. These tasks are authentic and relevant, mirroring situations learners may encounter outside the classroom, thereby fostering language use that is meaningful and applicable. TBLT emphasizes communication over grammatical accuracy, encouraging learners to express ideas effectively even if they make errors, with a focus on developing fluency and functional language skills. The approach unfolds in three phases: pre-task (preparation and language input), task (active performance using learned language), and post-task (reflection and feedback). Teachers act as facilitators, offering support during tasks by clarifying language, providing vocabulary assistance, and guiding learners to use language appropriately. Speaking tasks in TBLT are integrated with listening, reading, and writing activities, promoting a holistic approach to language acquisition. Collaboration among learners is

encouraged to achieve task goals, fostering interaction, negotiation of meaning, and interpersonal communication skills. Assessment in TBLT evaluates learners' performance based on how well they accomplish communicative objectives, including fluency, coherence, appropriateness of language use, and task effectiveness, rather than solely focusing on linguistic accuracy. Overall, TBLT aims to prepare learners to confidently and effectively use language in authentic contexts, nurturing their ability to engage meaningfully in real-life communication.

2.1.6.8 Game-based Learning (GBL)

Game-based Learning (GBL) in teaching speaking involves structuring language learning activities as games or game-like interactions to immerse learners in enjoyable and meaningful experiences while practicing speaking skills. These games are designed to heighten motivation and engagement by creating a dynamic and interactive learning atmosphere where active participation is encouraged. Contextualized communication within games allows learners to apply language in scenarios that mirror real-life situations, promoting authentic language use. The variety of speaking tasks embedded in games—such as giving instructions, negotiating, or role-playing—fosters different aspects of speaking proficiency. Immediate feedback mechanisms in games aid learners in refining their speaking abilities in real-time, often through interaction with peers. Social interaction is a fundamental component of GBL, encouraging collaborative speaking activities where students work together to achieve common goals. Language learning through play alleviates anxiety associated with traditional speaking practice, facilitating language acquisition through exposure and practice in a relaxed setting. Integration with technology further enhances GBL by offering multimedia-rich environments, such as simulations or virtual worlds, tailored to develop speaking skills. Games are adaptable to suit learners' needs, allowing teachers to customize rules, tasks, and content according to proficiency levels and learning objectives. Reflective practices post-gameplay encourage learners to assess their performance, discuss strategies, and review language use, fostering metacognitive awareness. Ultimately, GBL harnesses the motivational power of games to cultivate engaging and effective language learning experiences, empowering learners to enhance their communication skills and confidence in using the target language.

According to Garriss et al., (2002), the learning process for speaking skills in Game-Based Learning (GBL) follows a dynamic and engaging process. At the beginning of the process, the teacher must play an important role in preparing students for the game cycle by providing instructional content including conversational concepts and vocabulary within the game's context. The integration of instructional content and game characteristics leads students to experience learning in the game cycle where they practice speaking and listening through the interactive task. During the practice phase, learners will have an opportunity to apply what they have learned through the gameplay. Feedback mechanisms in the game cycle provide guidance and reinforcement, helping learners understand and correct their mistakes, leading to successful expected learning outcomes in the lesson (Figure 1).

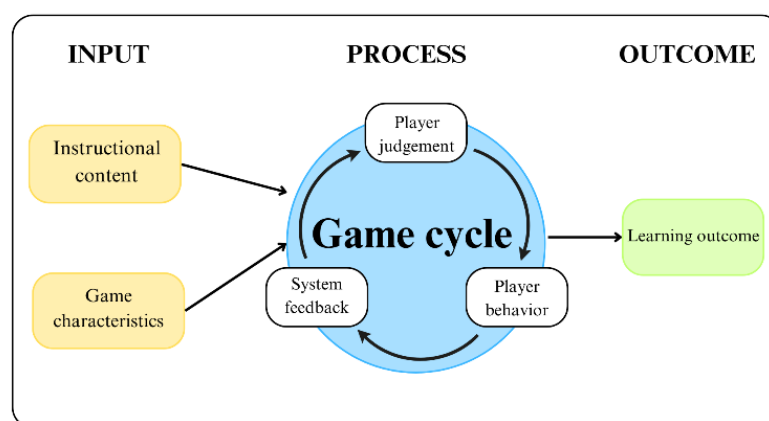


Figure 1 Game-based learning model by Garriss et al., (2002)

These methods and approaches have evolved and continue to influence language teaching and the development of speaking skills in various educational contexts. Teachers often adapt and combine these methods to suit the needs and proficiency levels of their students.

2.1.7 Teaching speaking skills in Thai primary schools

In Thailand, English as a foreign language (EFL) has been incorporated into the primary school curriculum since 1996. Nevertheless, the first implementation of this policy was not equally executed across the country, particularly in rural areas (Kaur et al., 2016). According to the Ministry of Education (2017), the current curriculum requires the inclusion of English as a compulsory foreign language in the primary school curriculum, which extends from the first year to the last year. The main goals outlined

in this curriculum are centered around the acquisition of both knowledge and skills, as well as fostering positive attitudes towards the English language.

The implementation of a new Basic Education Curriculum was initiated in Thailand in 2007 with the objective of enhancing the cognitive abilities, innovative thinking, and practical skills of students (Thein, 2016). The objective of the new curriculum was to shift students and educators away from the practice of memorizing information mechanically and focusing solely on exam-oriented learning. Instead, the aim was to embrace more comprehensive and learner-centered methodologies. The teaching method placed a strong emphasis on active learning, project-based tasks, and the incorporation of technology into the learning process. The revised curriculum additionally prioritized the development of moral and ethical principles, the inclusion of citizenship education, and the fostering of an understanding and appreciation for Thai culture and heritage. Furthermore, the importance of English language proficiency has emerged as a prominent concern in light of the nation's ambitions for global influence and economic growth (Thomas et al., 2023).

According to a study by Sukavatee and Khlaisang (2023), the most preferred teaching approach in most primary schools in Thailand is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) followed by Conversation Analysis, Flipped Classroom, and Problem-Based Learning (PBL).

In conclusion, Thailand's integration of English as a foreign language (EFL) into the primary school curriculum reflects a concerted effort to equip students with essential language skills in an increasingly interconnected world. While initial disparities in implementation existed, the Ministry of Education's mandate for English language education underscores its importance nationwide. The introduction of the new Basic Education Curriculum in 2007 marked a pivotal shift towards more holistic and learner-centered approaches to education, emphasizing critical thinking, creativity, and practical skills. With a focus on active learning, project-based tasks, and the use of technology, this curriculum reform aims to foster well-rounded individuals capable of contributing meaningfully to society. Furthermore, the emphasis on moral education, citizenship, and cultural appreciation highlights Thailand's commitment to nurturing responsible and culturally aware citizens. The prioritization of English language proficiency reflects Thailand's aspirations for global competitiveness and economic

growth. As evidenced by the preference for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and other innovative methodologies, Thailand is embracing modern teaching approaches to meet the evolving needs of its learners and ensure their success in an increasingly globalized world.

2.1.8 Assessing speaking skills

According to Brown (2004), the assessment of speaking skills encompasses various types of tasks, including imitative speaking tasks, intensive speaking tasks, responsive speaking tasks, interactive speaking tasks, and extensive speaking tasks. The following section describes the characteristics associated with each of the five evaluation categories.

1. Imitative

This type of task requires the ability to simply repeat a word, phrase, or sentence. Despite the fact that it emphasizes on phonetic level of oral production, a number of prosodic, lexical, and grammatical language properties may be included in the criterion performance. However, the only concern in this task is focusing on what is traditionally referred as "pronunciation"; no inferences are drawn about the test-taker's ability to comprehend or communicate meaning or to engage in interactive discourse. The role of listening in this task is to remember the prompt and the speaker to retain the short stretch of language that must be mimicked. The example of this task is presented in Figure 2

Word repetition task

<i>Test-takers hear:</i>	<i>Repeat after me:</i>	
	beat [pause] bit [pause]	
	bat [pause] vat [pause]	etc.
	I bought a boat yesterday.	
	The glow of the candle is growing.	etc.
	When did they go on vacation?	
	Do you like coffee?	etc.
<i>Test-takers repeat the stimulus.</i>		

Figure 2 An example of an imitative speaking task

2. Intensive

This type of task is often used in assessing the production of brief segments of oral language intended to demonstrate ability in a small range of grammatical, phrasal, lexical, or phonological relationships. To respond to the task, the speaker must be aware of semantic properties, but interaction with an interlocutor or test administrator is at best minimal. Intensive assessment tasks include directed response tasks, reading aloud, sentence and dialogue completion, limited picture-cued tasks that include simple sequences, and translation up to the level of simple sentences. The descriptions of each task are provided as follows:

2.1 Reading aloud

This task includes reading sentences and up to two paragraphs. This technique is easily administered by selecting a passage that incorporates test specifications and recording the output; scoring is relatively simple because all of the test-taker's results are recorded. According to research on the PhonePass test, reading aloud may be a surprisingly accurate indicator of overall oral production ability.

2.2 Directed response task

Within this specific task, the examiner prompts the production of a specific grammatical structure or a sentence transformation. These activities are undeniably mechanical and lack a communicative aspect, yet they do necessitate a basic level of comprehension in order to generate the appropriate grammatical response.

2.3 Sentence/dialogue completion

In this task, task-takers are required to read dialogue in which a speaker's lines have been omitted. The task-takers are first given time to prepare the dialogue and consider the most appropriate lines to respond. Then the tape, instructor, or test administrator produces a single part.

2.4 Limited picture-cued task (Including simple sequence)

One of the more popular ways to elicit oral language performance at both intensive and extensive levels is a picture-cued stimulus that requires a description from the test-taker. Pictures may be very simple, designed to elicit a word or a phrase; somewhat more elaborate and "busy"; or composed of a series that tells a story or incident. Here is an example of a picture-cued elicitation of responses and description proposed by Brown & Sahni (1994) presented in Figure 3.

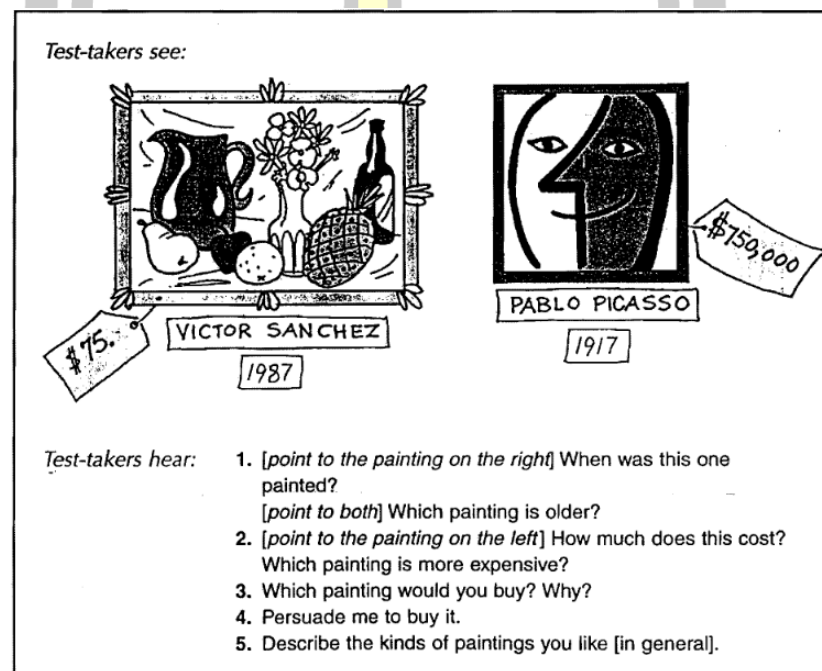


Figure 3 Picture-cued elicitation of responses and description (Brown & Sahni, 1994, p. 162)

2.5 Translation

Instead of presenting images or written prompts, the test-taker is provided with a word, phrase, or sentence in their native language and is instructed to provide a translation. The conditions for this task can range from demanding an immediate translation of orally presented language elements to allowing more time for consideration when translating longer passages, with the possibility of providing written options to the test-taker. As an assessment method, the benefits of using translation are rooted in its ability to regulate

the test-taker's responses, often resulting in more clearly defined scoring criteria.

3. Responsive

Assessment tasks that focus on responsiveness involve evaluating interaction and assessing comprehension, though these assessments are often confined to brief exchanges such as simple conversations, standard greetings, small talk, basic requests, and similar interactions. These tasks typically feature spoken prompts to maintain authenticity, with only one or two subsequent questions or responses in many cases.

3.1 Question and answer

Question-and-answer tasks can take various forms, either involving a single or a pair of questions posed by an interviewer or as part of a larger set of questions and prompts in an oral interview. The initial question typically serves an intensive purpose, aiming to prompt a predetermined correct response. In contrast, questions at the responsive level are generally authentic referential questions, providing the test-taker with a greater opportunity to generate meaningful language in their response (Figure 4).

Test-takers hear:

1. What do you think about the weather today?
2. What do you like about the English language?
3. Why did you choose your academic major?
4. What kind of strategies have you used to help you learn English?
5.
 - a. Have you ever been to the United States before?
 - b. What other countries have you visited?
 - c. Why did you go there? What did you like best about it?
 - d. If you could go back, what would you like to do or see?
 - e. What country would you like to visit next, and why?

Test-takers respond with a few sentences at most.

Figure 4 Questions eliciting open-ended responses (Brown, 2004, p.160)

3.2 Giving instruction and direction

Incorporating this kind of stimulus into an assessment setting offers the test-taker a chance to partake in a somewhat prolonged exchange of information, allowing them to be highly explicit and precise while using suitable discourse markers and connectors. The approach is straightforward: the evaluator presents a question or issue, and the test-taker offers their response. Scoring primarily depends on how understandable the response is, with secondary consideration given to specified grammatical or discourse aspects. Here is an example of giving instruction and direction provided in Figure 5.

Test-takers hear:

- Describe how to make a typical dish from your country.
- What's a good recipe for making _____?
- How do you access email on a PC computer?
- How would I make a typical costume for a _____ celebration in your country?
- How do you program telephone numbers into a cell (mobile) phone?
- How do I get from _____ to _____ in your city?

Test-takers respond with appropriate instructions/directions.

Figure 5 Eliciting instructions or directions (Brown, 2004, p.161)

3.3 Paraphrasing

Another form of responsive assessment task entails the test-taker reading or listening to a small set of sentences, typically ranging from two to five, and then providing a paraphrase of each sentence.

4. Interactive

The distinction between responsive and interactive speaking lies in the duration and complexity of the interaction, which can involve multiple exchanges and participants. Interaction can manifest in two forms: transactional language, primarily focused on exchanging specific information, and interpersonal exchanges, with the aim of maintaining social relationships. In interpersonal exchanges, oral communication can become intricate in terms of pragmatics, requiring a casual register, colloquial language, ellipsis, slang, humor, and other sociolinguistic conventions.

4.1 Interview

An oral interview involves a direct, face-to-face interaction between a test administrator and a test-taker, following a predefined set of questions and instructions. The interview, which can be recorded for review, is evaluated based on various criteria like pronunciation accuracy, grammar, vocabulary use, fluency, sociolinguistic/pragmatic appropriateness, task completion, and comprehension.

4.2 Role-play

Role-playing is a popular activity in communicative language classes, offering students the freedom to be creative within the provided guidelines. Some versions of role-play allow for practice so that students can plan their dialogue. This activity also helps alleviate anxiety as students temporarily assume different roles.

4.3 Discussions and Conversations

When used as formal assessment tools, evaluating discussions and conversations among students can be challenging to define and even more challenging to score accurately. However, as informal assessment methods for learners, they offer a level of authenticity and spontaneity that other assessment techniques may lack. Discussions, in particular, can serve as valuable tasks for assessing and observing various abilities, including:

- Initiating, sustaining, and concluding topics.
- Capturing attention, interrupting, holding the floor, and exerting control.
- Seeking clarification, posing questions, and rephrasing.
- Signaling comprehension through non-verbal cues like nodding, "uh-huh," "hmm," and so on.
- Negotiating the meaning of the conversation.
- Employing intonation patterns for pragmatic impact.
- Using non-verbal communication such as body language, eye contact, and spatial proximity.
- Demonstrating politeness, formality, and other sociolinguistic factors.

5. Extensive (Monologue)

The extensive oral production tasks encompass activities like delivering speeches, oral presentations, and storytelling. In these scenarios, the opportunity for listener interaction is either severely limited, often restricted to nonverbal responses, or entirely eliminated. The language style is typically more deliberative, often involving planning and formality. However, it's worth noting that informal monologues, such as a casual account of a vacation in the mountains, a recipe for a delicious pasta dish, or a summary of a novel or movie plot, can still be part of extensive tasks.

5.1 Oral Presentation

In academic and professional settings, it's not uncommon to be asked to deliver a presentation on various subjects such as reports, papers, marketing plans, sales pitches, product designs, or methodologies. Therefore, when discussing oral assessment techniques, it's important to include extensive speaking tasks. To ensure effective assessment, it's essential to adhere to the rules of (a) clearly defining the criteria, (b) creating suitable tasks, (c) encouraging the best possible performance, and (d) establishing reliable scoring methods.

5.2 Picture-cued storytelling

In this task, the task-taker will be presented a sequence of pictures and asked to speak about them for a minute or so, the purpose of eliciting narrative discourse needs to be well-defined. The example of picture-cued storytelling designed by Brown (1999) is presented in Figure 6.

พหุ ประถมศึกษา

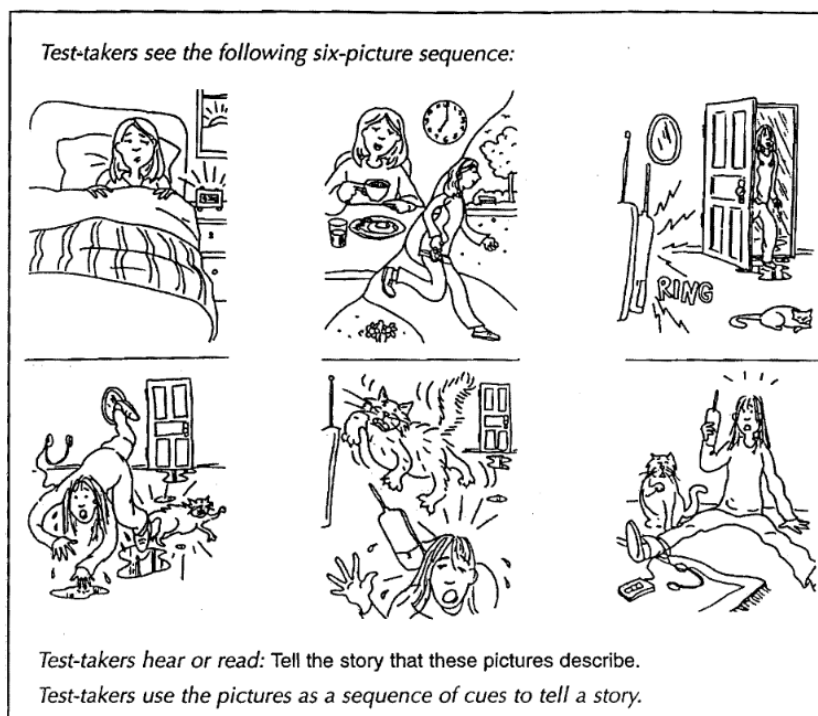


Figure 6 Picture-cued story-telling task (Brown, 1999, p.29)

5.3 Retelling a story or news event

In this type of task, test-takers are presented with a story or news event, either in written or spoken form, which they are required to retell. The objectives for assigning such a task can range from assessing their listening comprehension of the original content to evaluating their ability to convey various oral discourse elements, such as presenting sequences and relationships of events, emphasizing key points, and delivering a dramatic story. Additionally, this task assesses their fluency and interaction with the listener. Scoring should align with the intended criteria.

5.4 Translation (Extended prose)

This task involves presenting long texts in the test-taker's native language for them to translate into English. These texts can take various forms, such as dialogues, assembly instructions for a product, story or movie synopses, map navigation directions, and other genres. Translation offers control over content, vocabulary, and, to some extent, grammatical and discourse features. However, the downside is that translating longer texts is a highly

specialized skill, often requiring post-baccalaureate training. Assessing a non-specialist's oral language ability based on this skill may be invalid, especially if the test-taker lacks experience in translation at this level. Scoring criteria should, therefore, consider not only the purpose of stimulating translation but also the potential for errors unrelated to oral production ability.

This current study will assess students' speaking skills using an intensive task. To be more specific, the limited picture-cued task will be used to measure students' speaking skills in the aspects of grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation.

2.2 Game-based learning

2.2.1 A brief history and definitions of game-based learning

According to Hellerstedt & Mozelius (2019), the history of game-based learning covers many centuries, with roots that can be traced back to ancient civilizations. In ancient Greece, for example, games like "petteia" were used to teach military strategy and tactics. The concept of using games for educational purposes continued through the Middle Ages with games like chess and backgammon, which imparted valuable strategic thinking skills. Fast forward to the 20th century, and board games like "The Game of Life" and "Monopoly" began incorporating economic and life lessons. The digital revolution in the late 20th century marked a significant turning point, with early educational computer games like "Lemonade Stand" and "Oregon Trail" introducing students to history and decision-making. Today, game-based learning has fully embraced the digital age, with a wide array of educational video games, simulations, and gamified platforms designed to engage learners and facilitate meaningful skill development across various subjects and age groups. In conclusion, the history of game-based learning showcases a long-standing recognition of the power of games as effective educational tools.

The definitions of game-based learning have been defined in vary by many scholars. For instance, Gee (2003) stated that GBL is the use of the engagement and immersion of video games to promote in-depth learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. In addition, Eck (2006) defined GBL as a teaching method that involves the

use of games in order to improve and facilitate the process of learning, hence fostering participation and intrinsic motivation among learners. Furthermore, Aldrich (2009) asserted that GBL refers to the utilization of simulations and role-playing games as a way for learners to engage in skill practice, decision-making, and experiential learning within a secure and interactive context. Similarly, Kapp (2012) contended that GBL is a teaching approach that employs the interactions that characterize games, such as competition, rules, and incentives, in order to foster engaging and effective learning experiences. Besides, Gloria (2014) claimed that GBL is an innovative pedagogical approach that capitalizes on the increasing popularity of mobile technology as a platform for educational purposes. Based on Clark, Tanner & Jones (2016), game-based learning encompasses the utilization of digital games as an instrument for improving the techniques of learning, instruction, and evaluation.

These definitions represent different perspectives on game-based learning, but they all emphasize the use of games as a means to engage learners, provide authentic learning experiences, and leverage the inherent motivational elements of games for educational purposes.

2.2.2 Theoretical rationale of game-based learning

According to Plass, Homer & Kinzer (2015), the foundations underlying game-based learning are the cognitive foundation, motivational foundation, affective foundation, and sociocultural foundation. These foundations collectively underpin the theoretical framework for integrating games into educational settings. The cognitive foundation pertains to how games engage learners in cognitive processes such as problem-solving and critical thinking. The affective foundation recognizes the importance of learners' emotions, attitudes, and beliefs in shaping their learning experiences. The motivational foundation emphasizes the ability of games to motivate and engage learners through enjoyable experiences. Lastly, the sociocultural foundation highlights the role of social interactions and cultural contexts in influencing learning outcomes within game-based environments. Together, these foundations provide a comprehensive framework for understanding and implementing game-based learning approaches in educational contexts.

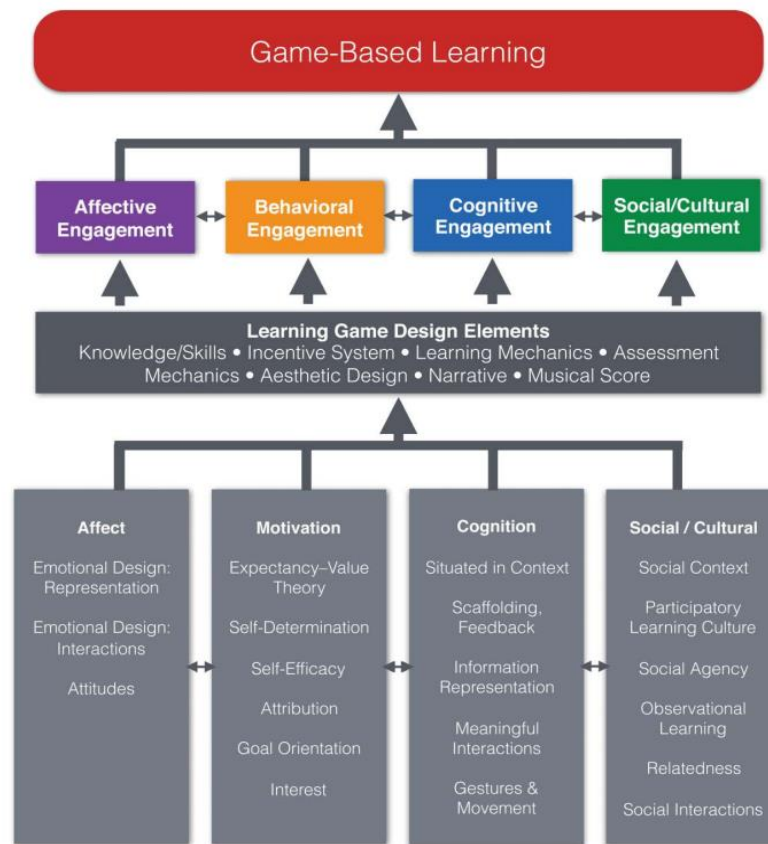


Figure 7 Game-based learning framework (Plass, Homer & Kinzer, 2015)

When game-based learning is viewed from a cognitive perspective, the goal of learners' engagement with a game is to construct mental models (Mayer, 2005, 2014). According to cognitive theory, learners engage with game content by selecting, organizing, and integrating information in working memory, along with prior knowledge (Mayer, 2014). From a cognitive perspective, designers and researchers must consider which game elements contribute to the cognitive processing of the learning content. This involves determining how content should be represented and how learning mechanics should be designed to engage the learner in a way that facilitates reaching the intended cognitive outcomes. Using games can facilitate cognitive processing through various methods, as outlined by Plass, Homer, and Kinzer (2015), including situated learning, transfer of learning, scaffolding and feedback, dynamic assessment, information, and interaction design.

In game-based learning, games offer the advantage of situated learning, where learning occurs within relevant and meaningful contexts (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

By providing information precisely when it's needed, such as when solving a problem, games facilitate effective learning experiences. Moreover, games can simulate real-life situations, enhancing the transfer of learning. Teaching students to apply their knowledge outside of the classroom presents a significant educational challenge. Transfer of learning is easier when the new context resembles the learning environment, influenced by various factors (Barnett & Ceci, 2002; Haskell, 2000). Perkins and Salomon (1989) proposed two main pathways for knowledge transfer. The first pathway, often referred to as the "low road," involves knowledge transfer through repeated practice. In this approach, learners achieve automaticity in skill through consistent repetition, enabling them to apply the skill efficiently in various contexts without conscious effort. The second pathway, termed the "high road," focuses on knowledge transfer through different but related experiences. Learners engage in varied experiences that prompt them to consciously abstract principles and apply them to novel situations. By encountering diverse scenarios, learners develop a deeper understanding of the underlying concepts, allowing for the generalization of knowledge beyond the learning context.

Scaffolding and feedback through gameplay are crucial for effective learning outcomes. According to Pea (2004), the key components of true scaffolding involve a dynamic evaluation of the learner's acquisition of the skills to be learned, and a progressive fading of supports as the learner progresses. Therefore, effective scaffolding relies on an assessment of learners' knowledge and skills. Accurate assessment is essential to determine which scaffolds will be most beneficial, while dynamic assessment is necessary to know when to reduce or modify these supports. Similarly, other forms of adaptivity, such as learning progressions in games, require dynamic assessment to determine the appropriate level of challenge or when to transition to new topics. The first step in dynamic assessment involves identifying the specific factors to be evaluated, which depend on learning objectives and individual-level variables affecting learning outcomes. Evidence-centered design offers a valuable framework for in-game assessments, leveraging both process and product data generated by learners. Educational games are intentionally designed to prompt players to engage in activities that offer information about their knowledge and skills. Accurate in-game assessments

not only facilitate effective adaptation of games to support learners but also have the potential to obviate the need for external evaluation of learning outcomes.

Another essential factor that plays a crucial role in shaping games to enhance learners' cognitive processes is information and interaction design. As one strength of games is their visual nature, which can present essential information in visually appealing ways, these visual representations should align with their function in the learning process, aiding in selecting, organizing, or integrating information. Games typically present information through multiple representations that learners must integrate. Research suggests that learning is enhanced when information is available in various formats, although the effectiveness depends on the role of these representations. Integrating multiple representations can be challenging for many learners, especially those with low prior knowledge, but effective visual design can guide learners' attention to conceptual connections between representations, facilitating integration (O'Keefe, Letourneau, Homer, Schwartz, & Plass, 2014). The interaction design in the game is also important and must be considered when designing the game. To create an effective interaction design in games, it is crucial that the learning mechanics must align closely with the learning objectives and instructional strategies to yield positive outcomes. For instance, a study by deHaan, Reed, & Kuwada (2010) involving Japanese English language learners demonstrated that when game mechanics were mismatched with the learning objectives, players performed significantly worse on measures of vocabulary learning compared to observers of the gameplay. This was attributed to players perceiving the game as more challenging than the observers.

When considering game-based learning through an affective perspective, it emphasizes the significance of players' emotional experiences, attitudes, and beliefs during gameplay. This perspective also acknowledges that the design of the game environment can influence learners' emotional states and explores the extent to which players' emotions impact learning outcomes. Models and theories like the differential emotions theory (Izard, 2007), control value theory of achievement emotions (Pekrun, 2000), and integrated cognitive-affective model of learning with multimedia (Plass & Kaplan, 2015) emphasize the intertwined nature of cognition and emotion during learning. These affective theories describe how learners experience core affect in response to

their interactions, influencing their cognitive processing and vice versa (Russell, 2003; Izard, 2009).

One approach to incorporate affect in games involves leveraging specific game elements such as aesthetic design, mechanics, narrative, or musical score, aiming to induce emotions like fear, anxiety, or happiness. Another less common approach is for games to assess players' emotions and adjust in response, often used to reduce boredom and frustration (Craig, Graesser, Sullins, & Gholson, 2004; D'Mello & Graesser, 2014). Consideration of affective aspects in game design also involves examining how emotional aspects of gameplay influence learner engagement, whether they support or hinder learning. This approach suggests that the primary objective in designing a playful learning environment is to enhance game engagement and stickiness, sometimes prioritizing these over the cognitive load imposed by the game. Some argue that playful learning could re-engage students who have become disinterested in traditional teaching methods. However, caution is advised, as some games may demand high levels of emotion regulation, potentially hindering learning. Nonetheless, research on emotional design suggests that emotions can positively impact learning outcomes (Huang & Tettegah, 2010; Griffiths, 2002; Squire, 2008).

Viewing motivational foundation through game-based learning emphasizes the potential of games to engage and motivate players by offering enjoyable experiences that encourage continued participation (Gee, 2003; Ryan, Rigby, & Przylski, 2006; Zusho, Anthony, Hashimoto, & Robertson, 2014). It posited that players' interactions with educational games can enhance cognitive processing of the game content, thus improving learning outcomes (Delacruz, 2012). While various elements contributing to engagement and motivation in games have been identified, such as incentive systems, visual aesthetics, game mechanics, narrative/fantasy, and musical score (Gee, 2003; Loftus & Loftus, 1983; Malone, 1981; Squire, 2011), there's been limited systematic application of motivational theories to understand learning in games.

Early theories on motivation, influenced by behaviorism, focused on drives, needs, and behaviors of learners (Graham & Weiner, 1996). Similarly, early explanations of motivation in video games relied on behaviorist constructs (Loftus & Loftus, 1983). Contemporary theories, however, delve into more nuanced aspects, framing achievement motivation around questions that students ask themselves when tackling a

learning task, such as "Can I do this?", "Do I want to do this, and why?", and "What do I need to do in order to succeed?" (Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998). Games are well-suited to address these motivational questions, ensuring players can achieve, and understand what they need to do to succeed, and providing adaptive challenges and support when needed (Zusho et al., 2014). Yet, addressing the question of whether players want to engage with the educational content poses a greater challenge. Theoretical approaches emphasize intrinsic motivation, personal values, interests, and achievement-related goals (Wigfield, Eccles, Schiefele, Roeser, & Davis-Kean, 2006; Zusho et al., 2014). For example, intrinsic motivation is fostered by elements like challenge, curiosity, and fantasy in game design (Dondlinger, 2007), with an optimal level of challenge inducing a state of flow, enhancing learning (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Pavlas et al., 2010). Situational and individual interest, influenced by game mechanics and mode of play, can lead to deeper engagement with educational content over time (Hidi & Renninger, 2006).

Additionally, achievement goal orientations play a role in learners' motivation and learning strategies (Ames & Archer, 1988; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliot, 2005). Studies have shown that game features like badges can influence students' achievement goals and learning outcomes, with considerations for individual differences in situational interest (Plass et al., 2014; Plass, Biles, & Homer, 2016).

When considering GBL through the sociocultural lens, it is recognized that learning is shaped by social interactions and motivations (Bandura in 2002; Barab & Duffy in 2000; Wenger, 2000). Games can incorporate opportunities for social engagement, creating contexts where peers interact and contribute to the learning experience (Squire, 2011; Ito et al., 2008). Learning designs with a focus on the social and cultural aspects aim to enable learners to participate in groups, utilize collective knowledge to achieve their objectives, connect learning to cultural norms and identities, and leverage social and cultural influences as motivators for learning, all within the framework of immediate and broader gameplay.

It is important to note that social and cultural aspects of learning are closely intertwined with the cognitive and emotional dimensions of learning, often operating within social and cultural contexts (Turkay et al., 2014). Even in cases where designers may not deliberately consider social or cultural factors in their design, these factors still exert

influence, and their own experiences and values impact design decisions, even if they are not explicitly aware of it (Nissenbaum, 2014).

However, even though it's challenging to separate social and cultural factors from other aspects of game design, the assertion that games depend on and leverage social and cultural elements is significant enough to warrant separate consideration. The cognitive, emotional, and sociocultural aspects of gameplay frequently interact with one aspect potentially taking precedence over another in a given game. A substantial portion of the appeal of games and the motivation to continue playing, often referred to as "stickiness," hinges on the anticipation of social interaction. This holds particularly true for players of Massively Multiplayer Online Games (MMOs), as they eagerly anticipate gameplay due to the opportunities for interaction with others and participation in group-related activities and quests (Steinkuehler & Duncan, 2008). Social interactions within games also impact self-perception, where feedback received during group play can lead to feelings of self-worth or negativity as a learner. Consequently, the formation of one's identity is closely linked to how they are perceived by others and how they perceive themselves, a dynamic shaped by social interactions that influence notions of self-efficacy and learning performance.

2.2.3 Elements of game-based learning

Game-Based Learning (GBL) incorporates a set of essential elements that together form a distinctive and effective approach to education. According to research by Plass, Homer, and Kinzer (2015), these elements are pivotal in creating immersive and engaging learning experiences through games.

Firstly, game mechanics form the foundational aspect of GBL. These mechanics encompass the series of actions and rules that define gameplay. They can be categorized into learning mechanics, which facilitate educational objectives within the game, and assessment mechanics, which evaluate player performance. Often, these mechanics blend together to provide interactive and social elements, shaping the genre and dynamics of the game.

Visual aesthetic design plays a crucial role in GBL by shaping the overall look and feel of the game. This includes the visual presentation of game elements, characters, environments, and user interfaces. Beyond aesthetics, visual design serves cognitive

functions by conveying information, cues, and feedback essential for gameplay and learning progression.

Narrative design adds depth to GBL by providing a storyline or overarching narrative that unfolds through gameplay elements such as cutscenes, dialogues, and player decisions. Unlike traditional linear narratives, games offer non-linear storytelling, where player choices influence the narrative direction. This narrative framework not only enhances engagement but also facilitates learning by contextualizing game elements and fostering connections between rules, characters, tasks, and rewards.

The incentive system within games is designed to motivate and sustain player engagement. This system includes various rewards such as points, badges, trophies, and power-ups. These incentives can be intrinsic, directly impacting gameplay by enhancing player abilities, or extrinsic, fostering competition through leaderboards or recognition systems. Effective use of incentives encourages players to stay focused, make informed decisions, and persist in achieving game objectives.

Lastly, the content and skills embedded in educational games define the specific subject matter and learning goals targeted by the game. These elements influence all aspects of game design, from mechanics and visuals to narrative and incentives. The alignment of content with game design ensures that educational goals are effectively integrated into gameplay, maximizing learning outcomes.

In conclusion, Game-Based Learning synthesizes these elements to create dynamic and impactful educational experiences that leverage the inherent engagement of games. By integrating game mechanics, visual design, narrative depth, incentives, and targeted content, GBL offers a robust framework for fostering meaningful learning across diverse educational contexts and subjects.

2.2.4 Types of games

Game-based learning (GBL) encompasses a diverse range of game types and approaches that scholars have categorized into several distinct classifications. Serious games, as identified by Clark & Smith (2015), are specifically designed for educational, training, or problem-solving purposes. Unlike traditional entertainment-focused games, serious games integrate educational content and learning objectives directly into gameplay. They are utilized across various fields such as healthcare simulations,

disaster preparedness training, leadership development, and environmental education, providing engaging and effective platforms for learning.

Non-digital games in GBL refer to educational games and activities that do not rely on electronic devices or digital technology for execution. This category includes traditional board games, card games, physical simulations, and role-playing exercises. Non-digital games engage learners in interactive and immersive experiences that promote critical thinking, collaboration, and skill development in social settings.

Digital games represent a broad spectrum of interactive, electronic games designed explicitly for educational purposes within GBL. These games leverage digital technology—such as computers, gaming consoles, or mobile devices—to create immersive learning environments. Digital GBL offers dynamic platforms for delivering educational content, enabling learners to acquire and reinforce various skills and knowledge through interactive and often gamified experiences.

Simulation games, as described by Anderson & Dill (2000), simulate real-world scenarios or processes, providing learners with immersive environments to make decisions, solve problems, and learn from their actions. Whether simulating flight, city management, or medical diagnostics, these games offer learners a risk-free space to explore and apply their knowledge and skills in realistic contexts.

Puzzle games within GBL challenge players with complex problems and tasks that require critical thinking, logic, and problem-solving skills to progress. These games feature interconnected challenges, riddles, or brain-teasers across diverse subjects, such as mathematics, physics, history, and language, fostering cognitive engagement and skill development.

Role-playing games (RPGs) immerse players in interactive narratives where they assume specific roles and characters. RPGs encourage decision-making, problem-solving, and storytelling within structured frameworks. Players develop personas, navigate through fictional scenarios, and make choices that influence the game's outcome, enhancing creativity, communication skills, and empathy.

In summary, scholars and educators have classified GBL into these distinct categories—serious games, digital games, non-digital games, simulation games, puzzle games, and role-playing games—each offering unique educational benefits and

fostering engaging, interactive learning experiences across different subjects and learning environments.

2.3 Board games

2.3.1 A brief history and definitions of board games

The use of board games as educational tools dates back to ancient times when they were employed to teach various skills and concepts (Mardon et al, 2020). During the 6th century CE, the game of Chess in India served not only as a recreational activity but also as an instructional tool for developing strategic thinking, planning, and tactical skills (Golombek, 1976). Throughout history, various board games have been adapted to serve educational purposes, incorporating subjects like mathematics, geography, and history (Booth, 2015). In the 19th and 20th centuries, the introduction of games like "The Mansion of Happiness" and "The Game of the Goose" in Europe further popularized the idea of combining entertainment with learning (Wood, 2012). Modern educational board games, like "Scrabble" and "Catan," have continued this tradition, offering engaging ways to enhance language, problem-solving, and social skills (Pape, 2012). In the digital age, educational video and online board games have become a prominent component of e-learning, allowing students to explore a range of subjects in an interactive and enjoyable manner (Rogerson et al, 2015). Today, board games continue to play a valuable role in classrooms fostering learning in a fun and interactive way.

A board game is one of the game types that has been extensively used by educators to instruct in the game-based learning classroom. Over the years, the various definitions of board games have been offered by scholars and experts. According to Parlett (1999), a board game refers to a game that is typically played on a flat surface, commonly decorated with a visually appealing pattern. In this type of game, players use game pieces or counters to make actions or advance other elements of the game. In addition, Zimmerman & Salen (2004) stated that board games are rule-based systems that enable social engagement and foster competition in a group of players. These activities encompass structured forms of play that involve specific objectives and obstacles that players attempt to accomplish. Besides, Walz & Deterding (2015) described that board games are considered to be ludic artifacts, which serve a group of players to engage in the utilization of non-verbal and non-physical symbolic systems. Through this

participation, players are able to generate, negotiate, and communicate a common goal, all while following established rules and shared values. Similarly, Barbara (2017) defined board games as a type of entertainment that involves a set of rules, an allocated playing area, and various game pieces. These components facilitate interaction and engagement among players, who typically gather around the playing surface and maintain face-to-face contact. Lastly, Pierce et al. (2018) contended that board games refer to games that are commonly designed for playing on a tabletop. These games typically have distinct physical components that are restricted to the game and are contained within a cardboard box. These definitions offer various perspectives on what board games are but generally emphasize the use of a specific game board or playing surface, rules, and game pieces for structured play and social interaction.

In conclusion, the use of board games as educational tools has a rich history dating back to ancient times, where they were employed not only for entertainment but also for instructional purposes. Throughout the centuries, board games have evolved to encompass a wide range of subjects and skills, offering engaging ways to enhance learning in classrooms. Scholars have offered various definitions of board games, emphasizing their rule-based nature, social engagement, and ludic artifacts. Despite the advent of digital learning platforms, board games continue to play a valuable role in fostering interactive and enjoyable learning experiences, making them a staple in educational settings.

2.3.2 Elements of board games

According to Mardon et al. (2020), the elements of board games are fundamental components that collectively contribute to creating engaging and enjoyable gameplay experiences. At the heart of any board game is the game board itself, whether physical or digital, which serves as the structured playing surface where the game unfolds. This board provides the spatial layout and movement paths that dictate how players navigate through the game and interact with its components.

Integral to the experience are the game pieces, physical representations such as tokens, pawns, or figurines, which players manipulate on the board to progress in the game. Clear rules and instructions define the framework of gameplay, encompassing setup procedures, turn sequences, objectives, permissible actions, and conditions for winning.

These guidelines ensure consistency and fairness while providing structure to players' decision-making processes.

Central to the appeal of board games are their objectives, the overarching goals that players strive to achieve to win or succeed. These objectives guide strategic planning and decision-making throughout the game, shaping the competitive or cooperative dynamics among participants. The player count specifies the number of individuals for whom the game is designed, influencing the game's interaction complexity and competitiveness.

Components and accessories like cards, dice, timers, and tokens augment gameplay by introducing variability, chance elements, and additional strategic layers. Game mechanics, the underlying systems governing interactions and rules, dictate how players engage with each other and the game environment, influencing tactics and decision-making.

Player interaction dynamics, whether cooperative, competitive, or a blend of both, contribute to the social dynamics and engagement within the game. Progression mechanisms dictate the sequence of turns and events that propel the game forward, moving players closer to achieving their objectives and determining the game's pacing and strategic depth.

The duration of gameplay, ranging from quick, fast-paced sessions to longer, more strategic endeavors, influences player engagement and enjoyment. Themes and artwork provide thematic immersion, enhancing the overall aesthetic appeal and thematic coherence of the game.

Critical to gameplay are strategy and decision-making, requiring players to strategize, plan, and adapt their tactics based on evolving game states and objectives. Winning conditions, the criteria for achieving victory, vary across games and can involve achieving specific goals, accumulating points, or outlasting opponents in competitive scenarios. Turn sequences establish an orderly framework for player actions, ensuring equitable gameplay and strategic fairness.

In conclusion, the elements identified by Mardon et al. (2020) collectively form the foundation of board game design, influencing gameplay dynamics, player engagement, and overall enjoyment. As board game design evolves with technological advancements and creative innovations, these core elements remain essential in crafting

diverse and compelling gaming experiences that captivate players and foster meaningful interaction and competition.

2.3.3 Roles of board games in improving speaking skills

The utilization of games as a tool for teaching and learning represents a departure from traditional knowledge transmission methods. The inclusion of games in the learning process fosters a sense of autonomy among students and enhances their grasp of various knowledge domains (Arif et al., 2019). Without a doubt, games serve to alleviate students' anxieties and provide an environment where they can engage in meaningful language use and teamwork with peers in a relaxed manner. This idea is reinforced by Kapp (2012), who emphasizes that students interact with fellow players while adhering to the context presented within the games. There exists a wide range of communicative games for teaching speaking, with board games being one such example. In these board games, students take turns conveying their thoughts in accordance with the given instructions. Some board games simulate real-life situations, subtly assisting students in honing their social skills and increasing their adaptability. Several prior studies have investigated the effectiveness of integrating board games into classroom instruction to enhance speaking skills.

In conclusion, integrating games into teaching fosters engaging and interactive learning experiences. Board games, in particular, provide a relaxed environment for students to enhance their speaking skills through meaningful language use and collaboration. Previous research supports the effectiveness of board games in developing speaking abilities. Going forward, leveraging games in education offers educators a valuable tool for promoting active learning and student engagement.

2.3.4 Advantages and disadvantages of board games

Board games have emerged as valuable tools in educational settings, offering a blend of entertainment and cognitive benefits that enhance learning experiences. They facilitate active learning by prompting students to engage in problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking, as noted by Kapp (2012). This active participation not only reinforces academic concepts but also fosters intrinsic motivation among students, encouraging voluntary engagement in learning due to the enjoyable and rewarding nature of gameplay (Gee, 2003).

Moreover, board games promote collaboration and teamwork, nurturing positive social interactions and communication skills among students (McGonigal, 2010). They provide a supportive environment where students can make mistakes, learn from failures, and refine strategies, thereby cultivating a growth mindset (Gee, 2007). Educators can tailor board games to specific learning objectives or choose games that align with various subjects, making them versatile tools adaptable to different classroom contexts (Kapp, 2012). Another strength of board games lies in their ability to accommodate diverse learning styles through the integration of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements, ensuring inclusivity for students with varying abilities and backgrounds (Eck, 2006). By offering an immersive and engaging learning experience, board games effectively enhance student motivation and deepen understanding of academic content (Gee, 2003).

However, despite their advantages, board games pose certain challenges that educators should consider when incorporating them into language classes. One significant drawback is their potential to consume valuable instructional time, especially in tightly packed curricula (Kapp, 2012). Additionally, access to suitable board games and financial constraints may limit their widespread use in educational settings (Eck, 2006). Some games with complex rules require considerable explanation and student comprehension, which can be time-intensive (Squire, 2006). Educators must also manage gameplay effectively to ensure students remain focused and adhere to rules, addressing potential distractions or disruptions (McGonigal, 2010). Competitive board games, while stimulating, may inadvertently foster frustration or anxiety among certain students, affecting their overall learning experience (Kapp, 2012). Moreover, board games designed for specific group sizes may not always align with classroom configurations, posing logistical challenges (Eck, 2006).

In conclusion, while board games offer numerous advantages for interactive and enriching learning environments in language classes, they require careful consideration of both their benefits and limitations. From enhancing collaborative skills to providing multi-modal learning experiences, board games can significantly contribute to educational outcomes. However, educators must navigate challenges such as time management, accessibility, rule complexity, and student engagement to effectively harness the educational potential of board games in diverse classroom settings.

2.3.5 Board Games in the Study

2.3.5.1 Dream on! game

Dream On! is a collaborative storytelling game where participants work together to craft a dream using provided dream cards (Droit & Prothière, 2018). Within the time frame, players construct the dream narrative. Once the timer expires, the challenge shifts to recalling the dream's sequence and details. Points are awarded for accurate recollection, and the game concludes with a tally of scores to determine how much of the shared dream players have successfully remembered. The Dream On! game is designed to be suitable for players of all skill levels, providing a platform for practicing the skill of constructing positive sentences while narrating sequences.

Rules of Dream on! game:

Setup:

1. Place the three Scoring cards and Timer aside.
2. Shuffle all the Dream cards into one deck and put it face down in the middle of the table.
3. Choose a player to start.

Gameplay: The game consists of two phases: Dreaming and Remembering.

Phase 1: Dreaming

1. The first player draws the top card from the deck and puts it face up next to the deck, creating the Dream pile. They use the image on the card to start the story and flip the Timer.
2. The Dream begins, and any player can play a Dream card from their hand onto the Dream pile, connecting it to the previous card.
3. After playing a card, draw a new one from the Dream deck to maintain a hand of three cards.
4. The Dreaming Phase ends when the Timer runs out.

Phase 2: Remembering

1. All players discard the remaining cards in their hands. Place the three Scoring cards in the center.
2. With everyone contributing to a unique dream, each player must now try to recall the dream sequence.

3. If you were the last player to add a card, pick up the Dream pile, holding it face down.
4. As the active player, recall the first part of the Dream and reveal the top card.
5. If you correctly remember the next part without help, place the card near the Individual Scoring card for 2 points.
6. If you need assistance, teammates raise their hands to offer help. Ask one teammate for assistance or try to remember alone, then reveal the next card.
7. If you correctly remember with help, place the card near the Collective Scoring card for 1 point.
8. Failing to remember results in placing the card near the Faulty Scoring card for -2 points.
9. Once a card is scored, pass the Dream pile to the next player, who becomes the active player.

End of the Game: After scoring all the cards and attempting to remember the entire Dream, count up the points to determine the winner

In conclusion, Dream On! offers a unique and collaborative storytelling experience that challenges players to construct and recall intricate dream narratives. With its simple setup and gameplay mechanics, the game provides an accessible platform for players of all skill levels to practice the art of storytelling and positive sentence construction. By encouraging teamwork and creative thinking, Dream On! fosters an engaging and immersive environment where players can exercise their imagination and memory skills. With its focus on narrative creation and recall, the game offers a refreshing and enjoyable way to enhance language proficiency and cognitive abilities. Overall, Dream On! stands as a versatile and entertaining tool for language learning and collaborative storytelling.

2.3.5.2 Snakes and Ladders game

Snakes and Ladders is a classic board game for two or more players. Played on a 10x10 grid, participants use a six-sided die to move along numbered squares, aiming to reach or exceed the final square marked with the highest number (Nachiappan et al, 2014).

Snakes and Ladders, although traditionally known as a classic board game, can also be adapted for teaching speaking skills in language education. In the educational context, the game serves as a fun and interactive way to encourage conversation and verbal communication among students. Each square on the game board can be assigned a specific topic or question, and as players advance, they take turns discussing or responding to the designated prompts. This approach prompts students to engage in spontaneous speech, share their thoughts, and practice articulating ideas in a more informal setting. Additionally, teachers can introduce language-related challenges or prompts on certain squares, further incorporating vocabulary, grammar, or specific language skills into the speaking activity. By combining the elements of a classic game with language learning objectives, Snakes and Ladders becomes a dynamic tool for fostering oral communication skills in a lively and engaging manner (York, deHaan & Hourdequin, 2019).

Snakes and Ladders game rules:

Setup:

1. Each player starts at the bottom of the board on square 1.
2. Decide the order of play (e.g., by rolling a die, with the highest roll going first).

Gameplay:

1. Players take turns rolling the die and moving their game piece forward by the number rolled.
2. Players move along the numbered squares in a snake-like pattern, advancing from the bottom to the top.
3. If a player lands on a square with a positive symbol (+), the player must create a positive sentence using the word on the square.
4. If a player lands on a square with a negative symbol (-), the player must create a negative sentence using the word on the square.
5. If a player lands on a square with the bottom of a ladder, they move their game piece to the top of the ladder.
6. If a player lands on a square with the head of a snake, they move their game piece to the square's tail.

7. The first player to reach or exceed the final square wins the game.

In conclusion, Snakes and Ladders presents a versatile and engaging platform for practicing speaking skills in language education. By integrating language-related prompts and challenges into the gameplay, teachers can encourage students to engage in spontaneous conversation and articulate their ideas in a relaxed and informal setting. The game's simple rules and interactive nature make it accessible to learners of all levels, providing an enjoyable way to reinforce language learning objectives. With its combination of classic gameplay and language learning elements, Snakes and Ladders offers a dynamic approach to fostering oral communication skills and enhancing language proficiency in a collaborative and interactive manner.

2.3.5.3 Guess Who? game

"Guess Who?" is a classic two-team board game that revolves around deductive reasoning and strategic questioning (Coster, 1979). It is typically played with a game board consisting of a grid of characters, each with various characteristics (Barr, 1982). The objective of the game is for one player to guess the specific character the other player has chosen from the grid by asking a series of questions. As proposed by Wendorf & Maloney (2020), the Guess Who? game is suitable for learners who are considered a beginner aiming to improve their speaking skills in describing and listening to the description.

Rules of Guess Who? game:

1. **Setting Up the Game:** Each player selects a game board featuring the same grid of characters and selects one character from that grid without revealing it to the opponent. The characters on the grid are identical for both players.
2. **Asking Questions:** Players take turns asking questions that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." For example, "Is your character wearing glasses?" or "Is your character a man?"
3. **Eliminating Characters:** Based on the responses received, players eliminate characters from their own boards. For example, if the opponent answers "yes" to the question "Is your character wearing glasses?" the player can eliminate all characters on their board who aren't wearing glasses.

4. **Making a Guess:** Players can make a guess about the opponent's character at any time during their turn. If they guess correctly, they win the game. If they guess incorrectly, they lose that round.
5. **Winning the Game:** The first player to correctly identify the opponent's character wins the game. The game can be played over multiple rounds, with the winner of the most rounds declared the overall winner.

In conclusion, "Guess Who?" offers an engaging and interactive platform for practicing speaking skills, particularly for beginner learners aiming to improve their descriptive abilities and listening comprehension. Through the game's structured format of asking questions and deducing answers, players are encouraged to articulate clear and concise descriptions while actively listening to their opponent's responses. The simplicity of the game's rules and the focus on deductive reasoning make it accessible to learners of all levels, providing an enjoyable way to reinforce language learning objectives. With its emphasis on descriptive language and strategic thinking, "Guess Who?" serves as an effective tool for enhancing speaking skills in a fun and interactive manner.

2.3.5.4 Spyfall game

Spyfall, a captivating board game, serves as an innovative tool for enhancing speaking skills in language education. In this game, players take on different roles and engage in conversations centered around diverse scenarios and locations (Ushan, 2014). The essence of Spyfall lies in effective communication, where students articulate questions and responses to unravel the mystery of their assigned setting. The game not only encourages fluency in speaking but also prompts learners to think, fostering spontaneity in language use. As players navigate the intricacies of the game, they practice expressing themselves clearly and creatively, honing their ability to convey ideas and information.

The Spyfall game rules:

Setup:

1. Shuffle the location cards and deal one to each player, keeping it secret.
2. Randomly select one player as the spy, while others receive information cards.

3. Decide on the number of rounds to play or a time limit per round.

Gameplay:

1. Players take turns asking each other questions about the information without being too obvious or revealing.
2. The spy must try to blend in and ask questions without giving away the fact that they don't know the information.
3. Non-spies try to ask questions that will reveal whether the other players know the information.
4. Players can discuss their suspicions and, at any point, vote on who they think the spy is. If the majority correctly identifies the spy, they win. If the spy is not caught, they win.

End of Round:

1. At any point, players can vote on who they think the spy is.
2. If the majority votes for the spy, the non-spies win.
3. If the spy is not caught, the spy wins

In conclusion, Spyfall emerges as an engaging and dynamic board game that fosters the development of speaking skills in language education. By immersing players in diverse scenarios and encouraging them to communicate effectively within those contexts, Spyfall prompts learners to articulate questions and responses while maintaining a sense of mystery and intrigue. Through gameplay, students practice fluency, spontaneity, and clarity in their language use, honing their ability to convey ideas and information in a creative and engaging manner. The structured yet flexible nature of Spyfall's rules allows for interactive and collaborative learning experiences, making it a valuable tool for enhancing speaking skills in language education settings.

2.4 Previous studies of board games and speaking skills

Numerous studies conducted in global and local settings have shown that incorporating board games into speaking lessons has a positive impact on students, particularly in their cognitive and emotional domains. Using board games has led to enhancements in all five aspects of speaking skills, namely grammar, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (Rohdian, 2017). This section provides a review of the studies related to using board games to improve speaking skills.

Previous studies in the global context suggest that board games can effectively enhance students' speaking skills in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency. For instance, Ng et al. (2021) conducted a quasi-experimental study to explore the impact of using the Pick and Speak board game on the speaking skills and perceptions of 67 third-grade students in Malaysia. Their research revealed that following the introduction of the Pick and Speak board game, students demonstrated the ability to verbally describe their daily routines using the present continuous tense. Furthermore, the students provided positive feedback about the instructions that encouraged their active participation and speaking practice during the game. These findings indicated that board games have the potential to assist students in enhancing their vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency while fostering their active engagement.

Similarly, in a case study conducted by Wang and Han (2021), the objective was to assess the impact of the "Liulishuo" digital game-based language learning mobile application on the enhancement of English-speaking skills of second-year undergraduate students in China. The results indicated positive outcomes associated with the use of this mobile application, as it contributed to the advancement of complexity, accuracy, and fluency in monologic oral production among English language learners.

In another quasi-experimental study carried out by Wong and Yunus (2023), an online board game called "Flippity" was introduced into online speaking lessons, with the aim of assessing its effectiveness in enhancing the speaking skills of fifth-grade students in Malaysia. The research also sought to investigate the students' perceptions regarding the use of the online board game "Flippity." The findings revealed a significant enhancement in the students' speaking abilities, encompassing improvements in accuracy, fluency, range, interaction, and coherence. Additionally, the students expressed a preference for and exhibited a positive attitude toward using the online board game as a means of learning to speak.

In Taiwan, Hung (2023) conducted a quasi-experimental study with the objective of investigating the advantages of integrating game-based learning strategies with the flipped classroom model for 48 second-year undergraduate students. The study findings indicate that this approach offers advantages to English-language learners, including a

reduction in anxiety associated with speaking English in the classroom and an increase in their motivation to engage in classroom activities.

Indeed, Xiao and He (2023) conducted a quasi-experimental study in China involving 66 first-year undergraduate students to assess the impact of the "Digital Game-Virtual College" game on the development of their oral English skills as well as their language awareness, communicative awareness, and emotional awareness. The research conclusively demonstrated the effectiveness of the "Digital Game-Virtual College" software in enhancing various aspects of college students' oral communication abilities, encompassing vocabulary, oral expression, social skills, and emotional expression. It also positively influenced their language-related awareness, cognitive awareness, communicative skills, and emotional awareness.

Studies carried out in the global context also indicate that game-based learning has a significant influence on improving interaction, student engagement, motivation, and willingness to communicate while simultaneously decreasing student anxiety (Chen, 2010; Fung & Min, 2016). For example, Viray (2016) carried out quasi-experimental research aimed at assessing the impact of involving students in board games on their academic achievements. The study involved 87 undergraduate students in the Philippines. The results indicated that board games enhanced the enjoyment of speaking sessions and reduced their errors when speaking.

In addition, Yeh et al. (2017) conducted a quasi-experimental study with the intention of examining the influence of a digital game-based learning (DGBL) program called "Digital Game-Virtual College" on academic achievement, learning motivation, and willingness to communicate among second-year undergraduate Taiwan students. The research revealed that the employed DGBL approach, along with supplementary materials in the form of TEBG, proved to successfully motivate students to actively participate in speaking activities and improved the speaking skills of those with lower proficiency.

Lastly, Chao & Fan (2020) conducted a quasi-experimental study with the aim of exploring the impact of ice-breaking board games in reducing English learning anxiety among 48 fifth-grade Taiwan students. The findings indicated that these board games fostered a positive and enjoyable learning atmosphere that reduced primary school

students' apprehension about English communication and boosted their speaking confidence.

After reviewing studies conducted in the Thai context, it becomes evident that board games are frequently employed to assess their influence on enhancing vocabulary acquisition and subsequently improving grammatical knowledge. According to Pakginnon, Phongploenpis & Mahimuang (2020), a quantitative study was carried out to explore the engagement of 45 seventh-grade students in English learning activities using vocabulary games. The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of these games in enhancing the students' English vocabulary knowledge. The games employed included Food and Drink, Countable and Uncountable Nouns, Comparative Adjectives, Regular and Irregular Verb Classification, Bingo Past Simple Tense, and Jigsaw Transportation. The results demonstrated that students displayed a high level of engagement during English learning activities, and their English vocabulary achievement reached a commendable standard.

Moreover, Boonprawes (2020) conducted an experimental study with the objective of enhancing and comparing the communication skills of 80 first-year undergraduate students. The study involved two groups: one utilizing game-based learning in incorporating classroom applications, and the other using game-based learning with classroom applications and feedback. The outcomes indicated that both groups achieved higher scores in learning compared to before using the tools. Notably, the group employing game-based teaching along with classroom applications and feedback demonstrated greater effectiveness in improving their listening and speaking skills.

Similar to a quasi-experimental study by Sothikun, Dibyamandala, and Mangkhang (2022) aimed to explore how digital board games, such as Kahoot, Vonder Go, Booklet, and Quizizz influenced the enhancement of English vocabulary skills and collaborative abilities among secondary students. The findings indicated that Digital Game-Based Learning (DGBL) is associated with the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which fosters the development of collaborative skills in learners.

In the primary school context, Khansorn, Siripipattanakul, and Diteeyont (2022) carried out quasi-experimental research with the aim of exploring the effectiveness of a multimedia game in incorporating game-based learning for improving the memorization of English vocabulary. The study also compared the learning

achievements between two groups and examined the satisfaction levels of 30 third-grade students with the multimedia game. The results indicated that the achievement scores after using this approach were significantly higher, and the students expressed the highest level of satisfaction with the learning experience.

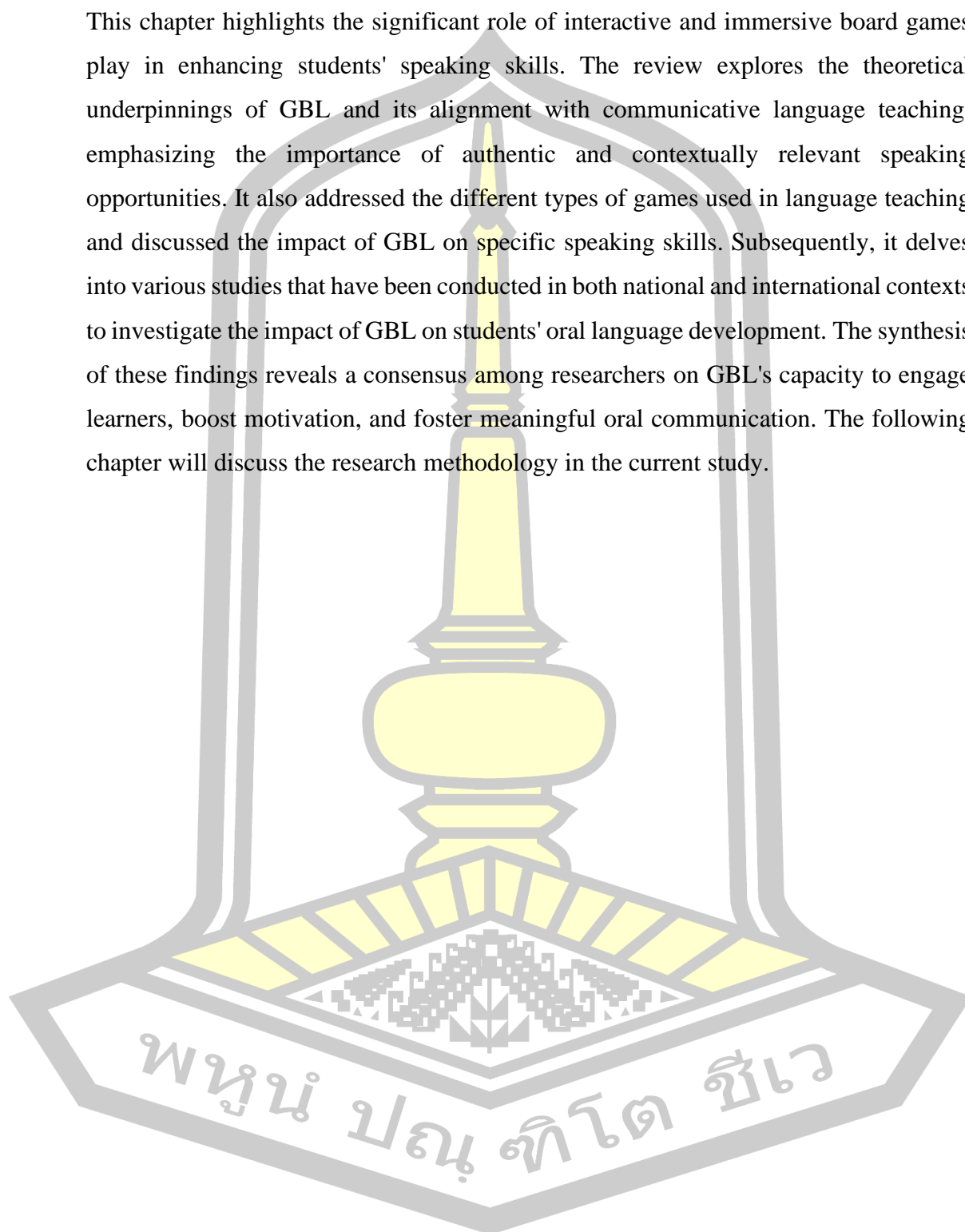
In addition, Oyibochia and Waewchimplee (2022) conducted a quasi-experimental study with the aim of assessing the enhancement in achieving learning objectives among third-grade students. They compared a class that implemented game-based learning with one using traditional instructional methods, involving a total of 90 students. The vocabulary themes covered in the lessons included Occupation, Transportation, Weather, and Clothing. The results indicated that across the four vocabulary themes, the use of game-based learning was effective in improving English vocabulary attainment among third-grade students. In Thailand, board games are employed not only for improving vocabulary acquisition but also for enhancing grammatical comprehension.

Lastly, a quasi-experimental study conducted by Da-Oh et al. (2023), which aimed to assess the grammatical knowledge and satisfaction levels of 35 eighth-grade students in Southern Thailand using game-based learning, the results revealed a statistically significant improvement in students' English grammar knowledge at the .05 level ($p < .05$). Additionally, students expressed the highest level of satisfaction with learning English grammar through game-based learning.

Previous studies have highlighted the positive impacts of board games on speaking skills enhancement, increased engagement, reduced speaking anxiety, and higher student satisfaction, particularly at secondary, high school, and undergraduate levels. However, there is limited research in the Thai context specifically focusing on primary school learners. Moreover, corporate series board games like Dream on!, Snakes and Ladders, Guess Who?, and Spyfall have not been thoroughly examined for their potential role in improving speaking skills among primary school students. Thus, this study aims to address these gaps by investigating the effect of these board games on primary school students' speaking skills and exploring their perceptions regarding the use of board games for enhancing speaking abilities.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter highlights the significant role of interactive and immersive board games play in enhancing students' speaking skills. The review explores the theoretical underpinnings of GBL and its alignment with communicative language teaching, emphasizing the importance of authentic and contextually relevant speaking opportunities. It also addressed the different types of games used in language teaching and discussed the impact of GBL on specific speaking skills. Subsequently, it delves into various studies that have been conducted in both national and international contexts to investigate the impact of GBL on students' oral language development. The synthesis of these findings reveals a consensus among researchers on GBL's capacity to engage learners, boost motivation, and foster meaningful oral communication. The following chapter will discuss the research methodology in the current study.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted quasi-experimental and mixed-method research designs to investigate the effect of board games on Thai EFL primary learners' speaking skills. This chapter describes the research paradigm/methodology, participants and setting, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research design

This current study applied the quasi-experimental research design which is a methodology used in social science research to study cause-and-effect relationships without the strict control of variables found in experimental research (Cook and Campbell, 1979). Quasi-experimental studies often involve naturally occurring groups or conditions, such as different classrooms or interventions, allowing researchers to compare outcomes between groups while accounting for potential confounding variables. While quasi-experimental designs may lack the random assignment of participants seen in true experimental research, they offer valuable insights into real-world phenomena and are particularly useful when randomization is impractical or unethical. In this study, two groups of participants, the control group and the experimental group, were included to investigate the effect of board games on their speaking skills. With two different conditions offered, the control group received the traditional instruction while the experimental received the board game instruction. In addition, the data collection in this study involved both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis. Quantitative data in the current study were gathered through pre- and post-tests on speaking skills, while qualitative data were collected via semi-structured interviews to explore students' perceptions of using board games in speaking classes.

3.2 Participants and Setting

This study involved 86 sixth-grade Thai EFL learners from two intact classes selected from a large public primary school in northeast Thailand. One class with 43 students was assigned as a control group, and another with 43 students was assigned as an experimental group. Participants' ages ranged between 11 to 12. All participants were

Thai native speakers who have learned English as a foreign language (EFL) and received English lessons for at least five years of systematic schooling, with two hours a week for the Fundamental English class and one hour a week for English for Communication. Both groups of participants were studying in the regular program, and their speaking proficiency was found to be similar based on the English for Communication class speaking test. In the Fundamental English class that the researcher taught, students were expected to speak to exchange interpersonal communication, express needs, ask for and give data about themselves, their friends, families, and matters around them, and express their feelings about various matters and activities around them based on the school curriculum. However, the students' English-speaking skills seemed low due to their lack of practice in class. Moreover, they lost interest in, motivation for, and engagement in classroom activities since the class was typically conducted in the traditional instruction, which tended to focus on learning language through memorizing the English patterns.

This current study was conducted at a large public primary school located in the northeastern part of Thailand. This school encompassed a total of eight grades, starting from kindergarten 2 to primary 6, with a total school population of approximately 1,800 students. The primary school offered a wide range of programs, including the regular program, the intensive English program, and the advanced placement program. The participants in this study were sixth-grade students who were studying in the regular program.

Six participants for the semi-structured interview were selected based on their performance in the speaking post-test, which assessed their speaking proficiency. To divide participants into high-speaking proficiency, middle-speaking proficiency, and low-speaking proficiency groups, their scores on the speaking post-test are used. For instance, participants scoring in the top quartile (75th percentile and above) are categorized as high proficiency, those scoring in the middle two quartiles (between the 25th and 75th percentile) are considered middle proficiency, and those scoring in the bottom quartile (below the 25th percentile) are classified as low proficiency.

3.3 Research instruments

Two instruments were used to collect data, namely an English-speaking pretest and posttest, and a semi-structured interview. The descriptions of these instruments are described below:

3.3.1 An English-speaking pre-test and post-test

This study used an intensive assessment task to assess the participants' speaking skills. According to Madsen (1983), an intensive assessment task requires a task taker to demonstrate their comprehension of a narrow band of grammatical, semantic, or phonological relationships. Using a limited picture-cued assessment task, the task taker will be assigned "something specific to talk about while allowing some flexibility in the expression" (Fulcher, 2014, p.73). In this study, the participants were given a picture of a situation with a description of what happened in the past time. The students had one minute to prepare, then were asked five questions to explain the situation in the picture using the past simple tense form, which was the main content of the lesson. For the reliability and validity of the speaking pre-test and post-test, three experts in English Language Teaching (ELT) were asked to validate the tests using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC).

To evaluate the result of the tests, the English-speaking pre-test and post-test were rated by three raters, one of whom was the researcher, and the other two were English teachers, evaluating students' speaking skills both before and after the implementation of the board game instruction. To minimize any biases in the evaluation and make it reliable, the raters were trained about the assessment tool, including the specific criteria and rubrics used to evaluate responses, as well as the overall objectives of the assessment. The rating scale used in this study was the analytic rubric for speaking assessment. This rubric was used to assess speaking skills based on four distinct criteria: fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Scores were assigned on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, as outlined below:

Table 1 The analytic rubric for speaking assessment

No.	Aspect	Score	Criteria
1.	Fluency	5	The speech flows smoothly with minimal to no hesitations or pauses, any pauses are very brief (1-2 seconds), no need to search for words, and an excellent volume.
		4	The speech flows smoothly with occasional minor pauses (2-3 seconds) or minimal hesitations, a slight search for words, and occasional inaudible slips of a word or two.
		3	The speech is relatively smooth, with noticeable pauses (3-5 seconds) or some hesitation and unevenness resulting from rephrasing and searching for words; the volume fluctuates.
		2	The speech frequently pauses (5-7 seconds) or is often hesitant, with some sentences left incomplete, and the volume is very soft.
		1	The speech is slow, with long pauses (7 seconds or more) or hesitant, and strained, except for short memorized phrases; there's difficulty in perceiving continuity, and parts are inaudible.
2.	grammar	5	The grammar use of language patterns taught in class is effective with complete sentences and no mistakes. Demonstrate a deep understanding of the focus grammar.
		4	The grammar use of language patterns taught in class is effective with complete sentences and few (1-2) mistakes. Demonstrate a high understanding of the focus grammar.
		3	The grammar use of language patterns taught in class is good with few incomplete sentences and some (3-4) mistakes. Demonstrate some understanding of the focus grammar.

No.	Aspect	Score	Criteria
		2	The grammar use of language patterns taught in class is average with some incomplete sentences and several (5-6) mistakes.
		1	The grammar use of language patterns taught in class is poor with numerous mistakes and a lack of mastery of sentence construction which hinders the message.
3.	Vocabulary	5	The vocabulary range is varied, well-chosen, accurate, and appropriate to the context.
		4	The vocabulary range is good and well-chosen, but slightly inaccurate in the context.
		3	The vocabulary range is moderate. The speaker sometimes needs help identifying the correct words. There are only occasional problems with the correct meanings of words.
		2	The vocabulary range is moderate. The speaker needs help identifying the correct words. There often are problems with the correct meanings of words.
		1	The vocabulary range is limited and incorrect words are often used.
4.	Pronunciation	5	The pronunciation is clear, making communication very effective.
		4	The pronunciation is generally clear, with few noticeable errors.
		3	The pronunciation is clear enough to convey the intended meaning.
		2	The pronunciation may affect understanding but allows for basic communication.
		1	The pronunciation issues significantly impede understanding.

3.3.2 A semi-structured Interview

A ten-minute semi-structured interview was conducted in the post-stage of the study with six students selected based on high, mid, and low scores on the English-speaking

post-test. The interview was conducted in Thai to reduce the language barriers and facilitate students' understanding. The interview was recorded and transcribed for analysis. The interview questions were as follows:

1. What do you think about the use of board games in the English class?
2. What do you think about the use of board games in enhancing speaking skills?
3. How did the Dream on! game enhance your speaking skills?
4. How did the Snakes and Ladders game enhance your speaking skills?
5. How did the Guess Who? game enhance your speaking skills?
6. How did the Spyfall game enhance your speaking skills?

3.4 Data collection procedure

Two groups of participants were taught by two distinct teaching methods. The control group received the traditional instruction, while the experimental group received board game instruction, specifically utilizing the Dream on! game, Guess Who? board game, Snakes and Ladders game, and Spyfall game. The selection of the board games used in the study is provided in Table 2.

Table 2 The selection of the board games used in the study

Game	Characteristic	Content
Dream On!	The Dream On! game facilitates learning the past simple tense through its collaborative storytelling and memory recall process. Players construct a dream narrative together and then describe it using the past simple tense during the recall phase, reinforcing their understanding and usage of past tense verbs.	The affirmative form of past simple tense
Snakes and Ladders	In the adapted version of Snakes and Ladders, each square contains prompts that require players to form sentences or answer questions using the past simple tense. This	The negative form of past simple tense

Game	Characteristic	Content
	integration of language prompts ensures consistent practice and application of the past tense as players move through the game	
Guess Who?	Guess Who? supports the learning of the past simple tense by encouraging players to ask and answer questions about the character's past actions or attributes. This process of questioning and answering helps players practice constructing and comprehending sentences in the past simple tense.	The interrogative form of past simple tense
Spyfall	Spyfall enhances the learning of the past simple tense by involving players in conversational exchanges where they must describe past events or actions to identify the spy. These interactions necessitate the use of the past simple tense, thereby improving the players' ability to use this tense accurately and fluently in spontaneous conversations	The integration of affirmative form, negative form, and interrogative form of past simple tense

The teaching procedures in the experimental group were based on the game-based learning model by Gariss et al., (2002). Both the experimental group and control group received teaching instruction on the topic of past pimple tense in the Fundamental English class for six weeks, which was 12 hours in total. The learning contents of each hour are described in Table 3.

Table 3 The learning contents during the teaching process

Time	Contents	Board games used in the class
week 1	1 st hour: The overview of tenses used in the English language and introduction to past simple tense 2 nd hour: The affirmative form of past simple tense using regular verbs	The mini-game adapted from Dream On! game
week 2	3 rd hour: The affirmative form of past simple tense using regular verbs in describing activities 4 th hour: The affirmative form of past simple tense using irregular verbs	The mini-game adapted from Dream On! game
week 3	5 th hour: The affirmative form of past simple tense using irregular verbs in describing activities 6 th hour: Revision of the affirmative form of past simple tense in describing activities	The Dream On! game
week 4	7 th hour: The negative form of past simple tense 8 th hour: The negative form of past simple tense in describing activities	The Snakes and Ladders game
week 5	9 th hour: The interrogative form of past simple tense 10 th hour: The interrogative form of past simple tense in asking for describing activities	The Guess Who? game
week 6	11 th hour: The integration of affirmative form, negative form, and interrogative form of past simple tense in asking for and describing activities 12 th hour: The integration of affirmative form, negative form, and interrogative form of past simple tense in asking for and describing activities	The Spyfall game

The speaking instructions for both the experimental and control groups are detailed in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Speaking instructions for the experimental group and the control group

Experimental group (GBL classroom)	Control group (traditional classroom)
<p>1. Warm-up:</p> <p>The teacher introduces the lesson.</p>	<p>1. Warm-up:</p> <p>The teacher introduces the lesson.</p>
<p>2. Pre-game:</p> <p>a. The teacher presents the content of the lesson related to the use of past simple tense, including sentence structures and target vocabulary.</p> <p>b. The teacher introduces and explains the game rules of the board game to students.</p> <p>c. The teacher provides examples of how to integrate the use of past simple tense in playing the board game.</p> <p>d. The teacher lets students practice to prepare them for playing the board game in the game cycle.</p>	<p>2. Presentation:</p> <p>The teacher presents the content of the lesson related to the use of past simple tense.</p>
<p>3. Game cycle:</p> <p>a. Students engage in the game cycle, playing the board game.</p> <p>b. While playing the game, students must interact with other players by asking questions to gather information and giving information using the past simple tense.</p> <p>c. In the game cycle, students learn through the interplay of player judgment, behavior, and system feedback. Initially, students make judgments based on game cues, which guide their actions. As they play, they receive immediate feedback, helping them understand the consequences of their actions and refine their strategies. This iterative process of judgment, action, and feedback fosters experiential learning, allowing students to</p>	<p>3. Practice:</p> <p>Students practice using past simple tense by doing the activities based on the teacher's manual.</p>

Experimental group (GBL classroom)	Control group (traditional classroom)
improve their skills and knowledge through trial and error, reflection, and adaptation.	
4. Post-game: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students brainstorm and share the language that they used in the game cycle. b. The teacher asks students to observe, discuss, and reflect on the language that they used in the game cycle. c. The teacher facilitates students to learn while reviewing the language that they used in the game cycle. 	4. Production: Students do the exercise in the workbook.
5. Wrap up: The teacher summarizes the lesson.	5. Wrap up: The teacher summarizes the lesson.

The data was collected in the following procedures (Figure 8).

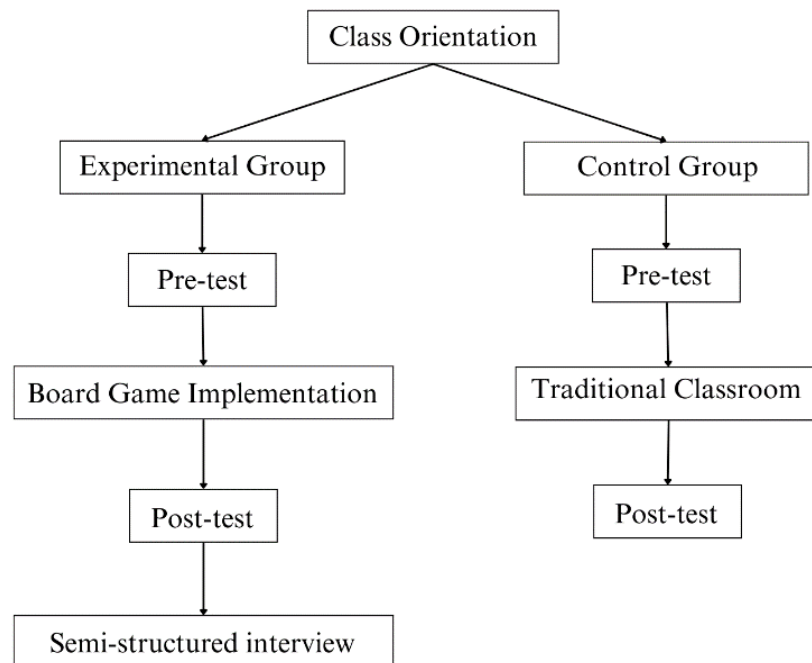


Figure 8 Data collection procedure

3.4.1 In the pre-study phase, an orientation of the research project, including the purposes of the study and the types of participation was given to the participants. Moreover, a consent form was provided for the participants.

3.4.2 The participants of the two groups were administered a speaking pre-test before data collection took place. This stage demonstrated students' previous knowledge about describing the situation using past simple tense.

3.4.3 Within six weeks of the second semester, the participants of the two groups learned about the past simple tense. The control group was instructed using traditional instruction, which provided activities according to the textbook, while the experimental group classroom was conducted employing board games in the classroom.

3.4.4 In the post-study phase, the participants of both groups were administered the speaking post-test.

3.4.5 Finally, the six representative students from high, mid, and low score groups were asked to participate in a semi-interview to gain their perceptions regarding using board games to enhance speaking skills.

3.5 Data analysis

The collected data from the speaking pre-test and post-test was analyzed quantitatively to answer the first research question. The test scores were statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean (\bar{X}) and standard deviation (S.D.) in the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software. After that, inferential statistics such as t-test analysis were used to analyze whether test scores were statistically significant. The paired-sample t-test was used to compare the data and assess the effectiveness of the treatment within the group. Meanwhile, the independent-sample t-test was used to analyze the data between the two groups to determine if the observed difference between the means of the two groups was statistically significant.

For the second research question, the qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured interview were analyzed using thematic analysis. A detailed analysis was conducted on transcribed qualitative data to uncover patterns, themes, and perceptions regarding the effect of employing board games for enhancing speaking skills among students. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data analysis, the second coder, possessing five years of experience as an English instructor, was chosen to participate. This coder received comprehensive instructions detailing the process of evaluating the transcripts and

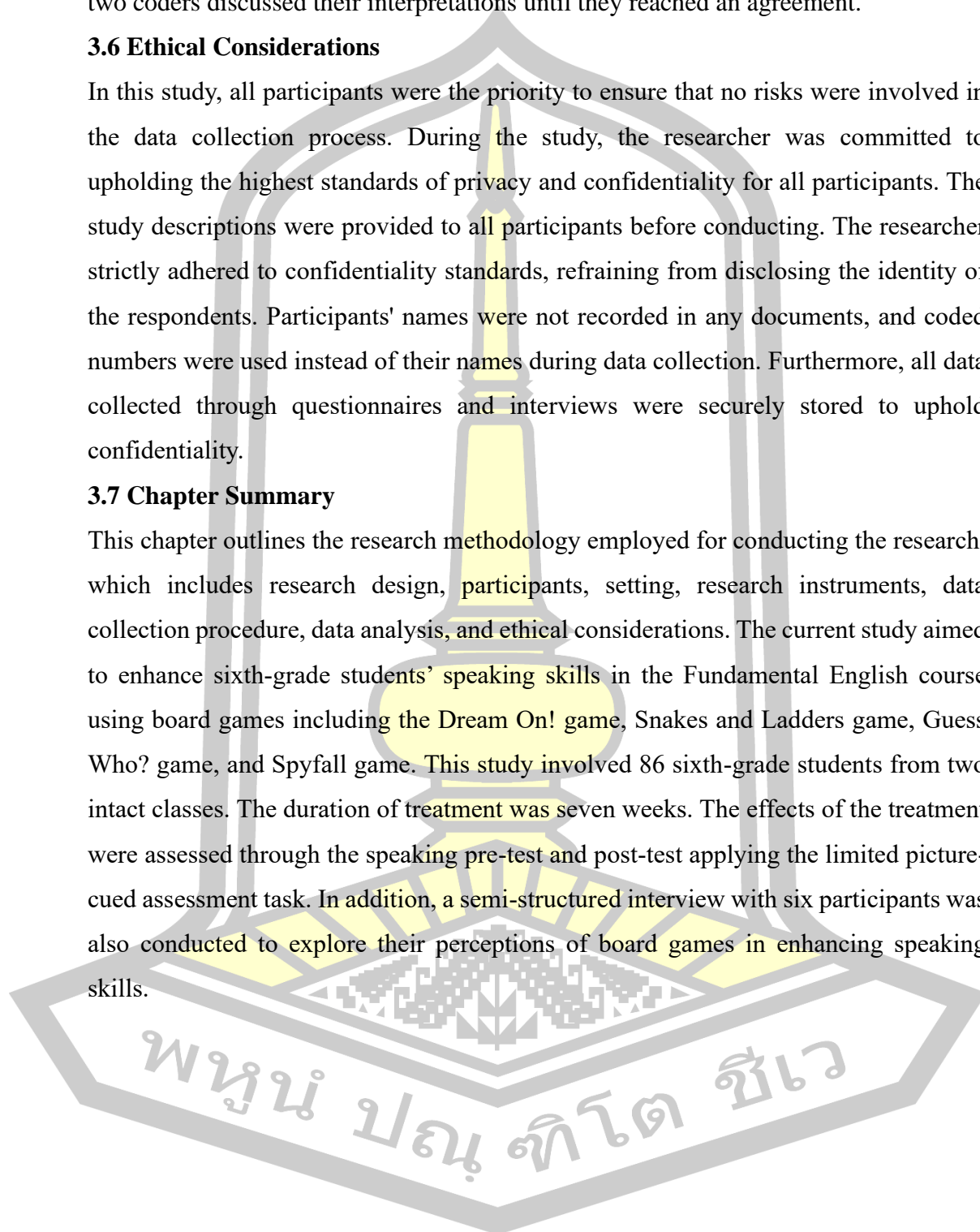
textual data. The coded data were compared for similarities and differences. Then, the two coders discussed their interpretations until they reached an agreement.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

In this study, all participants were the priority to ensure that no risks were involved in the data collection process. During the study, the researcher was committed to upholding the highest standards of privacy and confidentiality for all participants. The study descriptions were provided to all participants before conducting. The researcher strictly adhered to confidentiality standards, refraining from disclosing the identity of the respondents. Participants' names were not recorded in any documents, and coded numbers were used instead of their names during data collection. Furthermore, all data collected through questionnaires and interviews were securely stored to uphold confidentiality.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the research methodology employed for conducting the research, which includes research design, participants, setting, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis, and ethical considerations. The current study aimed to enhance sixth-grade students' speaking skills in the Fundamental English course using board games including the Dream On! game, Snakes and Ladders game, Guess Who? game, and Spyfall game. This study involved 86 sixth-grade students from two intact classes. The duration of treatment was seven weeks. The effects of the treatment were assessed through the speaking pre-test and post-test applying the limited picture-cued assessment task. In addition, a semi-structured interview with six participants was also conducted to explore their perceptions of board games in enhancing speaking skills.



CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter delves into the results of the study by employing descriptive and statistical analyses to address research questions centered on the effect of board games on enhancing the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary students. This chapter consists of two main sections. The first section presents quantitative statistics analyses reporting the effect of board games on the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary school students. The second section delves into the qualitative exploration of Thai EFL primary students' perceptions regarding the utilization of board games to enhance their speaking skills.

4.1 The effect of board games on Thai EFL primary students' speaking skills

This section presents the results of board game instruction on the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary students. A speaking test was administered to assess the student's speaking skills both before and after six weeks of implementation of board game instruction. The speaking test employed a limited picture-cued assessment task, where participants were given a picture depicting a past situation. The participants had one minute to prepare and were then asked five questions to explain the situation using the past simple tense, the main content of the lesson. After collecting the data, quantitative data from the speaking tests were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 29 software, employing both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including measures of skewness, kurtosis, mean, and standard deviation, were used to provide a comprehensive overview of data analysis. Raw scores were transformed into percentages, enabling a more meaningful evaluation of speaking test scores across different time points.

Table 5 illustrates the summary of descriptive statistics for the speaking tests conducted among Thai EFL primary students. The results indicate that both groups exhibited higher post-test scores compared to pre-test scores. Specifically, the experimental group achieved a mean performance of 8.01 (40.05%) with a standard deviation of 2.50 on the pre-test, while the control group achieved a mean performance of 8.59 (42.95%) with a standard deviation of 2.32. Following board game instruction, the experimental group demonstrated substantial improvement, achieving a mean performance of 14.57 (72.85%) with a standard deviation of 2.61, whereas the control group achieved a mean

performance of 10.83 (54.15%) with a standard deviation of 2.25. These findings indicate the positive effect of utilizing board game instruction on the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary learners.

Table 5 A summary of descriptive statistics of speaking tests

Group	Time	Mean	(%)	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Control group (n = 43)	Pre-test	8.59	42.95	2.32	0.337	-0.354
	Post-test	10.83	54.15	2.25	0.621	0.319
Experimental group (n = 43)	Pre-test	8.01	40.05	2.50	0.346	-0.869
	Post-test	14.57	72.85	2.61	-0.464	-0.114

Note: N = 86

The distribution of scores was also examined for normality. Skewness and kurtosis were found to be normal across two times of tests. As illustrated in Table 1, approximately 95% of case values lie within two standard deviations from the mean. Therefore, there appears to be no violation of the statistical assumption of normal distribution (Larson-Hall, 2016).

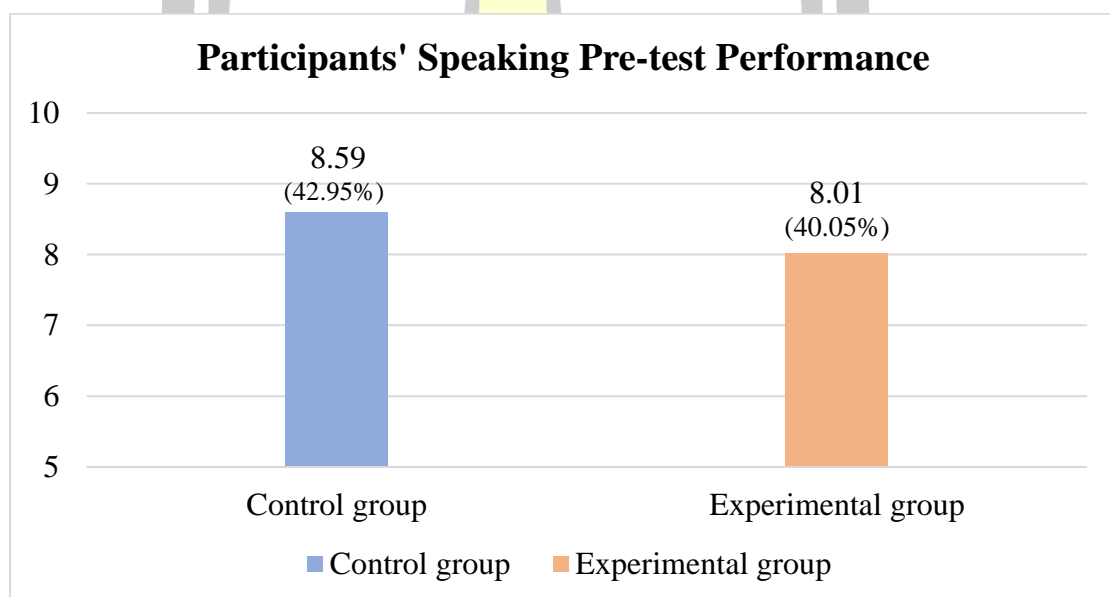
To assess the homogeneity of variances between the control and experimental groups on their pre-test scores, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was conducted. As shown in Table 6, the results indicated that the assumption of homogeneity was met ($F = 0.31$, $p = 0.58$), as the significance value was greater than the 0.05 threshold. This suggests that the variances between the two groups are not significantly different. Additionally, an independent samples t-test was performed to compare the pre-test scores between the control and experimental groups. The t-test results showed no significant difference between the groups ($t = -1.01$, $p = 0.27$).

Table 6 Comparisons between two groups in the pre-test

Group	Pre-test			
	<i>F</i>	sig	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> -value
Control group (n = 43)	0.31	0.58	-1.10	0.27
Experimental group (n = 43)				

Note: Significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$)

Figure 9 demonstrates a comparison of pre-test scores between the control and experimental groups illustrating that both groups began with relatively similar pre-test scores, with the control group having a marginally higher average score. The closeness of these scores suggests that the groups were comparable before any intervention.

**Figure 9** Participants' Speaking Pre-test Performance

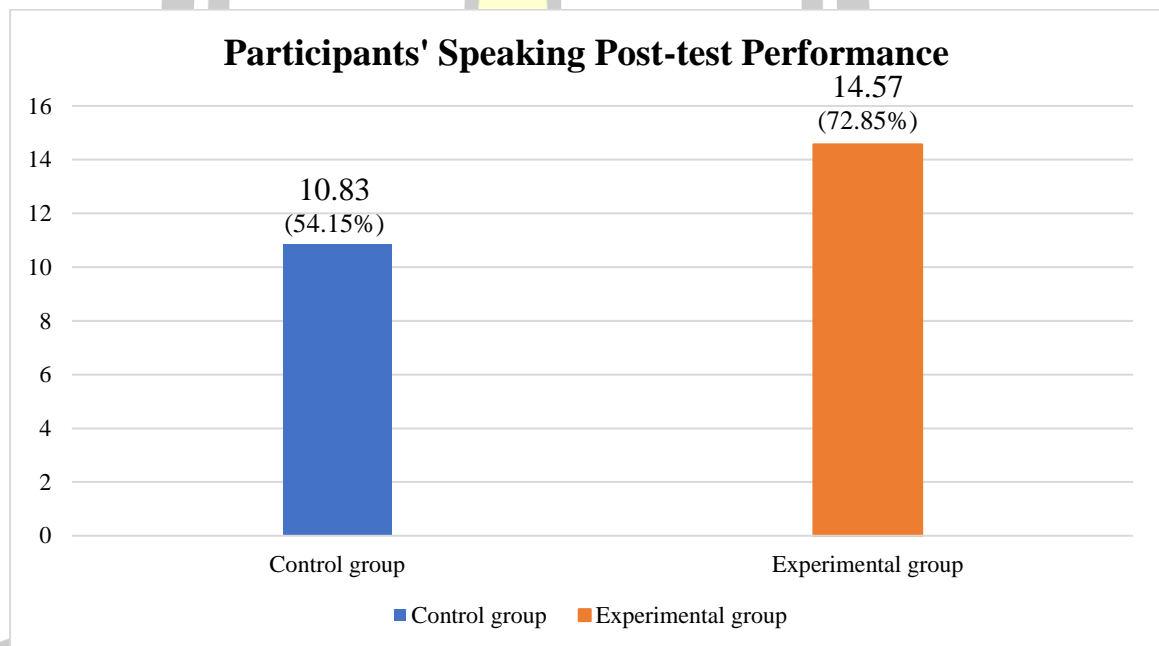
In addition, the independent samples t-test was also conducted to compare the post-test scores between the control and experimental groups. The results indicated a significant difference between the two groups ($t = 7.13$, $p < 0.001$). This significant p-value suggests that the mean post-test scores of the experimental group are significantly different from those of the control group. Furthermore, the effect size, as measured by Cohen's d , was found to be 2.44. This indicates a large effect size, suggesting that the difference between the groups is not only statistically significant but also of substantial practical importance (Table 7).

Table 7 Comparisons between two groups in the post-test

Group	Post-test		
	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> -value	Effect size (<i>d</i>)
Control group (n = 43)	7.13	< 0.001	2.44
Experimental group (n = 43)			

Note: Significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$)

Figure 10 indicated statistically significant differences between the post-test performances of the control and experimental groups. Moreover, these differences are underscored by a large effect size, showing the significant impact of the instructional interventions on speaking skills outcomes between the two groups.

**Figure 10** Participants' Speaking Post-test Performance

To assess whether a significant difference existed between speaking test performance before and after board game instruction within the experimental group, a paired-sample t-test analysis was conducted. Effect sizes (*d*) were then calculated to gauge the strength of board game instruction. Table 8 demonstrates a significant improvement in scores from the pre-test to the post-test ($t = 29.65$, $p < 0.001$). This significant *p*-value suggests that the difference in mean scores between the pretest and posttest is statistically significant. Additionally, the effect size was found to be 1.45. This indicates a large

effect size, demonstrating that the change in scores from pre-test to post-test is not only statistically significant but also practically significant. The high t -value and large effect size together imply a substantial improvement in participants' scores, likely attributable to the board game instruction applied.

Table 8 Comparisons between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group

Participant	Test		t	p -value	Effect size (d)
Experimental group (n = 43)	Pre-test VS Post-test		29.65	< 0.001	1.45

Note: $N=86$; *Significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$)

Figure 11 illustrates the summary of the paired-sample t -test analysis of the experimental group's performance. The analysis of the results showed that the speaking pre-test and post-test were significantly different with the large effect size.

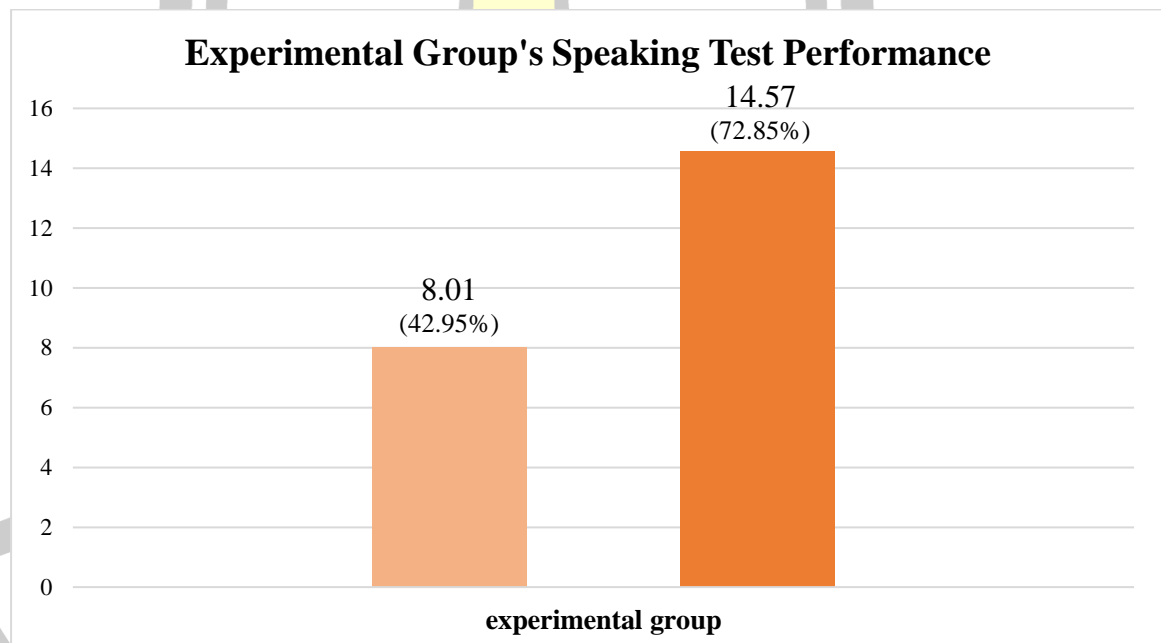


Figure 11 Participants Speaking Test Performance

Table 9 presents the speaking performance results of the experimental groups, separated into fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation components. The analysis of the experimental group performance revealed a significant difference in fluency scores between the pre-test and post-test ($t = 31.21$, $p < 0.001$), indicative of a moderate effect size ($d = 0.40$). Similarly, for grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, significant

differences were evident between pre-test and post-test scores, denoted by moderate effect sizes: grammar ($t = 33.38$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.42$), vocabulary ($t = 17.16$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.50$), and pronunciation ($t = 15.92$, $p < 0.001$, $d = 0.48$).

Figure 12 Comparisons between speaking components of the experimental group's performance

Group	Speaking component	Test		t	p -value	Effect size (d)
Experimental group ($n = 43$)	Fluency	Pretest	VS Post-test	31.21	< 0.001	0.40
	Grammar	Pretest	VS Post-test	33.38	< 0.001	0.42
	Vocabulary	Pretest	VS Post-test	17.16	< 0.001	0.50
	Pronunciation	Pretest	VS Post-test	15.92	< 0.001	0.48

Note: Significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$)

Figure 12 represents the summary of the control and experimental groups' speaking test performance across different speaking components. The analyses indicate that the scores for each speaking component exhibited significant differences, all accompanied by moderate effect sizes.

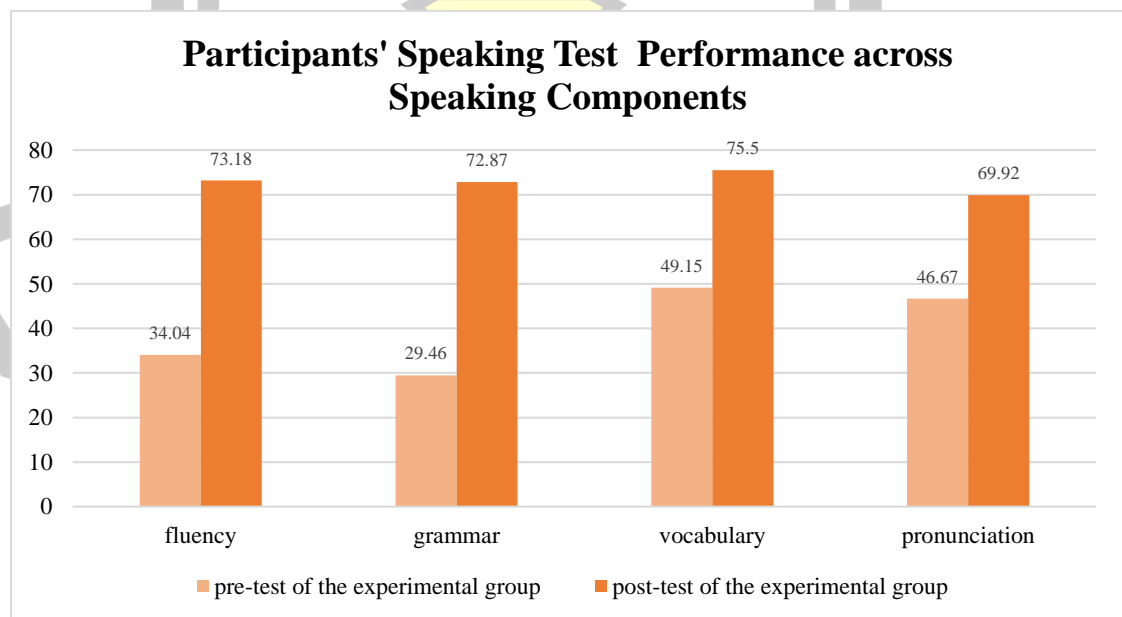


Figure 13 Participants' Speaking Test Performance across Speaking Components

4.2 Thai EFL primary school students' perception of board games to enhance speaking skills

This section delved into the perceptions of participants regarding the combination of board games in speaking classes. Drawing from qualitative insights gleaned through semi-structured interviews, six participants were purposively selected based on their performance levels on the speaking test. These participants were categorized into three groups: low speaking proficiency (LS), medium speaking proficiency (MS), and high speaking proficiency (HS).

The current study examined student perceptions regarding the utilization of board games in enhancing speaking skills. Through thematic analysis, the study identified key themes demonstrating participants' perceptions, including positive feelings toward the learning atmosphere, enhancement of functional benefits through the board game instruction, and enhancement of emotional benefits through the board game instruction. The themes offering a structured overview of the qualitative findings derived from participants' perceptions are presented in Table 10.

Table 9 The theme for qualitative data analysis

Themes	Salient characteristics
positive feelings toward the learning atmosphere	fun, happy, interesting, exciting, enjoyable, collaborative, encouraging, engaging, relaxing, useful
enhancement of functional benefits through board game instruction	improve speaking skills, can ask and answer questions, can communicate better with others
enhancement of emotional benefits through board game instruction	good attitude toward learning English, confident, motivating, inspiring, rewarded, proud

4.2.1 Positive Feelings Toward the Learning Atmosphere

The positive feelings toward the learning atmosphere focused on how participants perceived their engagement in learning activities. This theme indicated that participants generally had optimistic attitudes toward learning speaking skills through board game instruction. Specifically, six participants expressed a multitude of positive feelings, ranging from feelings of fun and happiness to excitement and enjoyment. These participants described the board game activities as interesting, engaging, and collaborative, fostering an encouraging and supportive learning environment. The interactive nature of the games encouraged active participation and collaboration among peers, promoting a sense of relaxation and ease. Furthermore, participants found the board games to be not only enjoyable but also useful in enhancing their language skills. Overall, the overwhelmingly positive feedback from these participants highlights the transformative impact of board game instruction, creating an atmosphere conducive to effective learning. The perceptions of participants regarding the positive feeling toward the learning atmosphere are presented in Table 11.

Table 10 Participants' perceptions regarding the positive feelings toward the learning atmosphere

Participants	Statement or responses
LS1	<i>I like it when the teacher brings games to play in the class. It is really fun.</i>
LS2	<i>I think using board games in English class is fun. It feels like we're just playing and having fun, not really studying. So, I'm happy with it.</i>
MS1	<i>I think learning through board games makes the class more interesting and exciting.</i>
MS2	<i>I really enjoyed playing those games especially when we played in a team. My friends helped me a lot when I had a problem with language difficulties. I think it encourages me to learn English more.</i>
HS1	<i>I like this teaching method very much. I feel like I have more chances to engage in the class and practice my speaking skills, unlike other usual classes.</i>

Participants	Statement or responses
HS2	<i>I really like playing English games in the class. I think it is relaxing and useful to recheck our understanding of the lesson.</i>

Note: LS = low speaking proficiency; MS = medium speaking proficiency; HS = high speaking proficiency

4.2.2 Enhancement of Functional Benefits through Board Game Instruction

The theme of the enhancement of functional benefits through board game instruction centered on students' perceptions of the advantages of board game instruction in speaking classes. In this theme, participants highlighted the positive impact on their ability to ask and answer questions and communicate with others. These participants reported significant improvements in their language proficiency, particularly in speaking skills. By actively participating in board game activities, they gained confidence in expressing themselves and engaging in conversations. The structured nature of board game instruction provided a supportive environment for practicing language skills practically and interactively. A detailed analysis of participant responses regarding board game instruction within the functional benefits theme is provided in Table 12.

Table 11 Participants' perceptions regarding the enhancement of functional benefits

Participants	Statement or responses
LS1	<i>As you know, I cannot learn English well, but I still can remember some sentences we used in the games.</i>
LS2	<i>Because of the games we play, I can now ask and answer questions about simple things like "What did you do yesterday?"</i>
MS1	<i>I think I can speak English better because I had a chance to practice and use it in your games.</i>
MS2	<i>After repeating listening and using the same sentence pattern in the games, I think it helped me a lot to remember those sentences and use them more naturally.</i>
HS1	<i>I really like how you organize the games, starting with practicing affirmative sentences, then negative ones, and finally interrogative. I think it helps us understand better each time and makes it easier to communicate with others.</i>

Participants	Statement or responses
HS2	<i>Now I sometimes use what I have learned in your class to talk to our foreign teachers.</i>

Note: LS = low speaking proficiency; MS = medium speaking proficiency; HS = high speaking proficiency

4.2.3 Enhancement of Emotional Benefits through Board Game Instruction

Regarding the enhancement of emotional benefits of board game instruction, six participants expressed the positive impact on their motivation to learn English, as well as heightened feelings of inspiration, confidence, and pride. Engaging in board game activities provided these participants with a sense of enjoyment and excitement, which fostered their enthusiasm for language learning. Through the interactive and immersive nature of board games, participants found themselves more inspired to overcome challenges and actively participate in the learning process. As a result, they reported increased confidence in their language abilities and a greater sense of pride in their progress. These emotional benefits highlighted the transformative effect of board game instruction, not only on language acquisition but also on students' overall motivation and self-esteem in learning English. The participants' perceptions regarding the positive learning atmosphere are detailed in Table 13.

Table 12 Participants' perceptions regarding the enhancement of emotional benefits

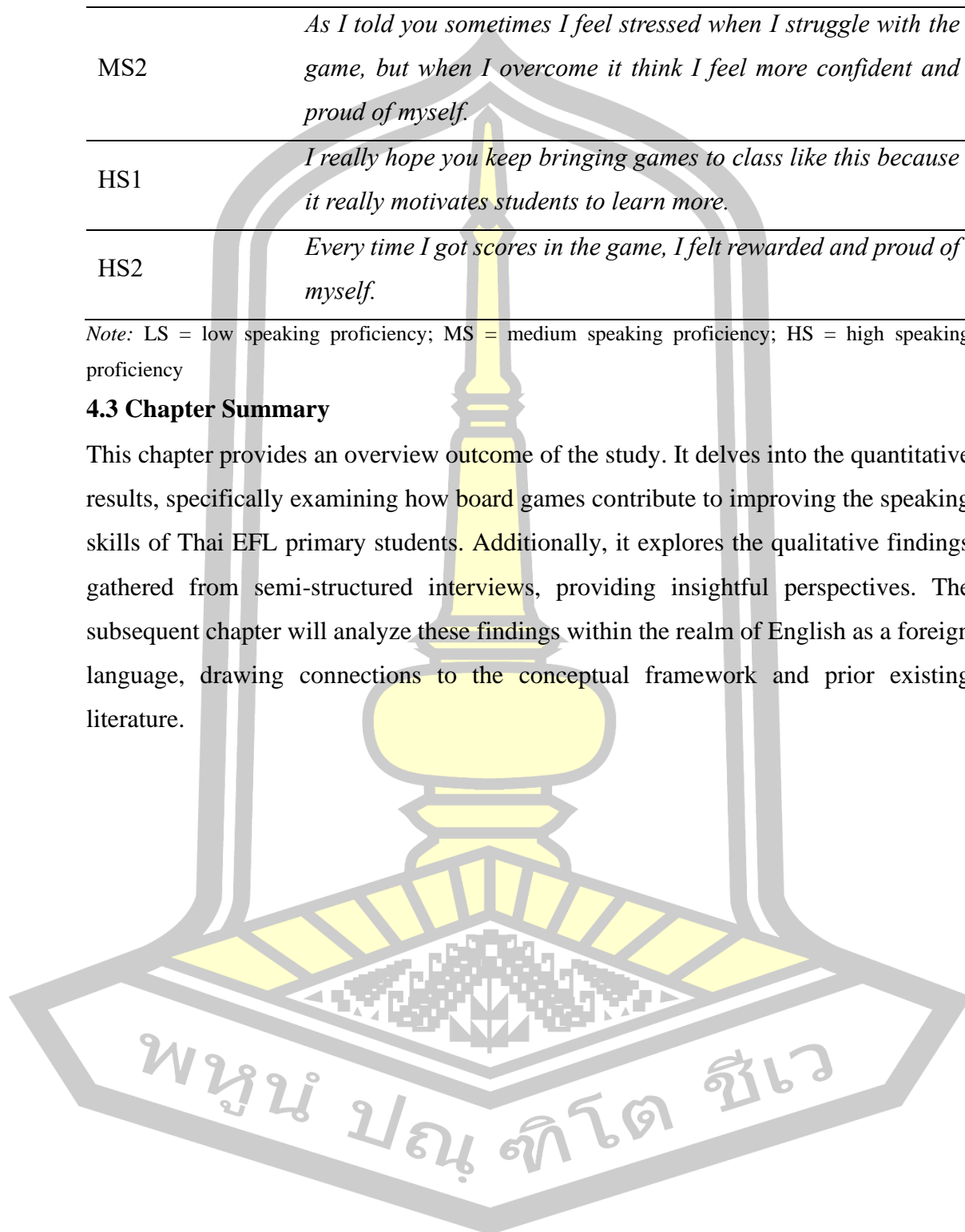
Participants	Statement or responses
LS1	<i>English is not easy for me to learn, but games in your class made me feel better and want to learn English more.</i>
LS2	<i>Before this, I wasn't interested in learning English because I thought it was too difficult and I didn't think I'd ever need it. But playing those games in class showed me how English could be used and inspired me to learn English for my future.</i>
MS1	<i>Ever since you started bringing games to our class, I get really excited every time. I even check my schedule, counting down the days until I get to learn with you again because the games really make me want to learn English.</i>

Participants	Statement or responses
MS2	<i>As I told you sometimes I feel stressed when I struggle with the game, but when I overcome it think I feel more confident and proud of myself.</i>
HS1	<i>I really hope you keep bringing games to class like this because it really motivates students to learn more.</i>
HS2	<i>Every time I got scores in the game, I felt rewarded and proud of myself.</i>

Note: LS = low speaking proficiency; MS = medium speaking proficiency; HS = high speaking proficiency

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides an overview outcome of the study. It delves into the quantitative results, specifically examining how board games contribute to improving the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary students. Additionally, it explores the qualitative findings gathered from semi-structured interviews, providing insightful perspectives. The subsequent chapter will analyze these findings within the realm of English as a foreign language, drawing connections to the conceptual framework and prior existing literature.



CHAPTER V

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter will delve into the discussion and conclusions drawn from the investigation of the effect of board games on the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary students. The results will be analyzed within the theoretical framework that guided the study, providing an interpretation of these findings and drawing comparisons with previous studies to underscore similarities or differences. The analysis of the current finding aims to illuminate the effectiveness of board games in improving the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary students. Additionally, this section seeks to explore qualitative data in greater depth, offering a more comprehensive insight into how students develop their speaking skills through gameplay. Moreover, the chapter will offer implications and propose avenues for future research in this field.

5.1 The Effect of Board Games on Speaking Skills of Thai EFL Primary Students

This study explored the effect of board games on the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary students, revealing a notable improvement in speaking performance. It is important to acknowledge that the results of the test could be influenced by raters' bias; however, the researcher attempted to limit and minimize this bias by training raters before collecting data and using a speaking rubric to evaluate participants' speaking performance. This methodological approach aimed to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings, further reinforcing the positive impact of board game instruction on students' speaking skills.

Analysis of the speaking pre-test and post-test scores demonstrated improvement in speaking skills in the experimental groups, with significant differences and large effect sizes suggesting that board game instruction is beneficial for enhancing speaking skills. These results align with previous studies, which underscore the benefits of utilizing board games to improve speaking skills (Boonprawes, 2020; Ng et al., 2021; Wang & Han, 2021; Wong & Yunus, 2023; Xiao & He, 2023). Nevertheless, this study provides new findings supporting the effectiveness of board game instruction in promoting speaking skills among primary school learners, an area with limited prior investigation.

The notable enhancement in speaking skills among participants can be attributed to the four foundations of game-based learning (GBL), as outlined by Plass, Homer & Kinzer (2015), namely cognitive, motivational, affective, and sociocultural, work synergistically to enhance the speaking skills of young learners. From a cognitive perspective, games engage learners in problem-solving and critical-thinking processes, promoting active engagement with language content (Plass, Homer & Kinzer, 2015). This engagement is further bolstered by the motivational foundation, which emphasizes the enjoyable experiences games offer, encouraging continued participation and learning (Gee, 2003; Ryan, Rigby, & Przybylski, 2006). The affective foundation underscores the role of emotions in shaping learning experiences, with games designed to induce positive emotional states that foster engagement and learning (Izard, 2007; Pekrun, 2000). Lastly, the sociocultural foundation highlights the importance of social interactions and cultural contexts in influencing learning outcomes within game-based environments (Bandura, 2002; Barab & Duffy, 2000). Together, these foundations create a comprehensive framework that immerses young learners in dynamic and interactive language experiences, ultimately enhancing their speaking skills within educational settings.

To integrate board games into speaking classes, the game-based learning method involves three distinct phases: pre-game, game cycle, and post-game. The following paragraphs will delve into how board games can efficiently enhance the speaking skills of young learners through these teaching steps.

In game-based learning (GBL), the pre-game phase refers to the preparatory stage aimed at scaffolding learners' linguistic competence before engaging in the actual gameplay. In the current study, participants underwent structured instruction focusing on the grammar structure of the past simple tense, accompanied by essential vocabulary relevant to this tense. The instructional approach commenced with presenting affirmative, negative, and interrogative sentence structures, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of past tense structure. In addition, the emphasis on pronunciation learning was also placed in this phase, particularly regarding the pronunciation rules governing the "-ed" ending sound of regular past tense verbs. Both explicit and implicit teaching methods were employed, utilizing form-focused instruction to directly address linguistic components while integrating mini-games to

contextualize learning and facilitate meaningful practice. Through this combined approach, learners engaged in drills and exercises designed to reinforce their understanding and application of past simple tense grammar and vocabulary. The practice process in this phase was scaffolded to support learners' progression towards increased fluency in a low-stakes setting, reducing anxiety, and preparing them for the subsequent game cycle phase where they would apply their skills in a more dynamic and interactive context. The preparatory practice undertaken in the pre-game phase serves not only to scaffold learners' linguistic competence and fluency but also to bolster their motivation and confidence, ensuring their readiness to actively engage in the subsequent game cycle phase (Krashen & Terrell, 1986). To reflect on this, a participant identified as MS1 shared, *"I liked how the teacher taught and gave students some example sentences using the past simple tense before playing the game. It helped me understand how to form sentences correctly, so I wasn't as nervous when it was my turn to speak."* This comment indicates that preparation during the pre-game phase effectively contributed to their linguistic competence, readiness, and confidence to engage in the gameplay.

Once the pre-game preparation is complete, the game cycle phase immerses students in the interactive gameplay, providing ample opportunities for practicing speaking skills in a dynamic and engaging context. In this current study, the four board games encompass the Dream on! game, snakes and ladders game, the guess who? game and the Spyfall game were used in the game cycle phrase. Each board game was selected to serve different purposes to facilitate students' speaking skills. For instance, the Dream On! game offers a valuable platform for enhancing students' understanding and usage of past simple tense affirmative structures. Through interactive gameplay, students are encouraged to construct sentences and narratives recounting past experiences or dreams (Droit & Prothière, 2018). This active engagement facilitates a deeper comprehension of the grammatical structure and usage of past tense in affirmative statements. Moreover, the game provides a supportive environment for students to practice verbal communication, allowing them to develop fluency and confidence in expressing themselves orally. By combining language learning with enjoyable gameplay, the Dream on! game effectively reinforces past simple tense affirmative structures while promoting speaking skills among students. Reflecting on this, a participant identified

as HS1 expressed, *“Dream on! was awesome! I used to struggle with saying things in the past tense, but now I feel more confident. I can say sentences like 'I ate pizza last night' or 'I watched a movie yesterday'. It's like learning while playing!”* This feedback suggests that participating in the Dream On! game effectively supported their language learning in an enjoyable and engaging way.

The next game used in this study is the Snakes and Ladders game. This game offers an engaging platform for enhancing students' understanding of past simple tense negative structures. As students navigate through the game, they encounter various scenarios where they must formulate sentences in the past tense, including negative statements. For instance, when landing on a space indicating a setback, students might express sentences like “I didn't finish my homework yesterday” or “She didn't go to the party last weekend.” By actively engaging with the game mechanics to express negation in the past tense, students reinforce their grasp of grammatical structures while simultaneously honing their speaking abilities. Additionally, the interactive nature of the game fosters opportunities for students to engage in conversational exchanges, promoting fluency and confidence in spoken communication. To reflect this, a participant identified as MS2 expressed, *“I liked how Snakes and Ladders helped me practice speaking. Every time I landed on a space, I had to make a sentence using the past tense. Now I can talk about what I didn't do in the past more confidently”* This feedback suggests that the interactive nature of the Snakes and Ladders game effectively enhances speaking skills, particularly in constructing sentences with past simple tense in the negative form, within an engaging and enjoyable learning setting.

The third game used in this study is the Guess Who? game. By engaging in the Guess Who? game, students are challenged to formulate questions in the past simple tense to identify a specific character. This activity necessitates the use of yes-no interrogative structures, encouraging students to ask questions such as “Did he buy a toy?” or “Did she cook dinner?” As students interact with their peers in the game, they practice constructing grammatically correct questions and develop fluency in asking and responding to inquiries. Furthermore, the game fosters critical thinking skills as students strategize to eliminate characters based on the responses received, reinforcing their understanding of past tense interrogatives. Through this interactive and communicative approach, the Guess Who? game effectively supports students in

mastering past simple tense yes-no interrogative structures while promoting confidence and proficiency in speaking English. This point was supported by the feedback from participant LS2, who stated *“I enjoyed playing Guess Who? with my friends. It was fun trying to guess who they had while practicing English. I learned new ways to ask questions like ‘Did he play piano?’”* This highlights how the Guess Who game effectively aids students in mastering past simple tense yes-no interrogative structures and proficiency in spoken English in the enjoying learning atmosphere.

The last game used in the current study is the Spyfall game. In this game, players are assigned different roles, with one player being the spy, whose identity is unknown to others. Through a series of questions and answers, players must deduce the identity of the spy while the spy attempts to blend in. This gameplay necessitates the use of past simple tense in various forms. Players must formulate affirmative statements to provide information about their role or the location, construct negative sentences to deny suspicions of being the spy, and pose interrogative questions to gather clues and identify the spy. As a result, students engage in meaningful interactions that require them to apply past tense structures spontaneously and accurately. Moreover, the dynamic and immersive nature of the game encourages active participation and fosters speaking fluency as students strive to communicate effectively to achieve their objectives. Overall, the Spyfall game serves as an effective tool for reinforcing past simple tense grammar structures and promoting the development of students' speaking skills in an engaging and enjoyable learning environment. To reflect, the participant identified as HS2 expressed *“Spyfall made English class so exciting! I had to explain myself without giving too much information, which was tricky but super fun. It definitely improved my speaking skills and made me more comfortable using English in conversations.”* This highlights how Spyfall effectively fosters the growth of students' speaking skills within a dynamic and entertaining learning environment.

Overall, the implementation of various board games, including Dream On!, Snakes and Ladders, Guess Who?, and Spyfall, in the game cycle phase has demonstrated their effectiveness in enhancing students' speaking skills, particularly in the context of past simple tense structures. Each game offers unique opportunities for students to engage in interactive gameplay, prompting them to construct sentences, ask questions, and engage in conversational exchanges using past-tense grammar. Through this dynamic

and immersive approach, students not only reinforce their understanding of grammatical structures but also develop fluency, confidence, and proficiency in spoken English. The feedback from participants underscores the positive impact of these games on their language learning experiences, highlighting the enjoyment and excitement they experienced while simultaneously sharpening their speaking skills.

Following the gameplay, the post-game phase allows students to engage in reflective activities and discussions aimed at consolidating their learning experiences and reinforcing language skills acquired during gameplay. This phase serves as a critical component of the learning process, providing students with an opportunity to reflect on their performance, identify areas for improvement, and internalize newly acquired language structures. Through guided reflection and feedback from instructors or peers, students can deepen their understanding of grammar concepts, vocabulary usage, and communication strategies employed during the game. Additionally, post-game discussions encourage students to articulate their thoughts and experiences in the target language, further enhancing their speaking skills. Reflecting on this the LSH2 expressed *“During the post-game discussions, I learned from my mistakes. My friends helped me correct my sentences, and now I know how to say things better. It was like having a mini English class”* This emphasizes how the post-game phase reinforces learning outcomes and deepens understanding.

Even though the post-test performance of the experimental group showed a significant improvement in speaking skills compared to their pre-test scores indicating the effectiveness of board game instruction on speaking skills, the enhancement across speaking components such as fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation was found significant only to a moderate effect size. This can be attributed to several contributing factors. Firstly, the variability in the individual learner in their level of engagement, proficiency, and responsiveness to the language input provided during gameplay could influence the overall effectiveness of the treatment. As noted by Deci and Ryan (2000) and Ellis and Skehan (2004), cognitive factors, motivation factors, and individual differences are significant contributors to the development of knowledge in language learning. Reflecting on this, the LS1 shared the perception regarding the use of board games in improving speaking skills *‘With my language proficiency, I often found a hard time to engage in the games.’* This feedback reflected that individual

differences could be one factor that influences speaking skills enhancement. Another factor that could contribute to this issue is the duration and frequency of repetition. As board game-based instruction in this study is implemented over a relatively short period or infrequently, the impact on speaking skills may be less effective compared to interventions with longer durations or higher frequency of practice. This point was also supported by the response from participant LS1, who shared '*I think I need more time to practice. Playing those games just in a class a few times cannot help me to remember anything well.*' This emphasizes how the short duration of board game instruction could influence the improvement of speaking skills.

In summary, the study underscores the significant effects of board games on the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary students. Despite the moderate effect size observed in the improvement across the speaking components including fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation attributed to individual differences and the duration of board game instruction, the overall findings underscore the positive impact of board games on speaking skills enhancement. This finding aligns with previous research highlighting the positive influence of board games on speaking skills. The success of board game instruction can be attributed to the comprehensive framework of game-based learning, which engages students cognitively, motivationally, affectively, and socio-culturally. Furthermore, the study's implementation of various board games, such as Dream On!, Snakes and Ladders, Guess Who?, and Spyfall, in the game cycle phase demonstrated their efficacy in reinforcing past simple tense structures and promoting fluency, confidence, and proficiency in spoken English. Additionally, the post-game phase facilitated reflective activities and discussions, further enhancing students' understanding and reinforcing language skills acquired during gameplay. Overall, the study provides compelling evidence supporting the effectiveness of board game instruction in improving speaking skills among young learners, highlighting the enjoyment and excitement experienced by students while simultaneously sharpening their linguistic abilities.

5.2 Thai Primary Students' Perception of Using Board Games to Enhance Speaking Skills

In addressing Research Question 2 (RQ2), qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interviews were employed to investigate participants' perspectives on the use of board games to enhance their speaking skills. The qualitative data underwent thematic analysis, resulting in the identification of three main thematic categories: positive feelings toward the learning atmosphere, enhancement of functional benefit through board game instruction, and enhancement of emotional benefits through board game instruction.

The qualitative analysis provided insight into the underlying perceptions and behaviors contributing to the effect of board games on the speaking skills of Thai primary students. These findings not only supplemented the quantitative results but also emphasized the importance of board games in promoting speaking skills. Thematic insights regarding positive feelings toward the learning atmosphere, and enhancement of functional and emotional benefits revealed the positive influence of board games on student engagement and motivation. This offers valuable perspectives on the pedagogical advantages of integrating board games into language learning settings.

The utilization of board games to improve speaking skills is widely viewed favorably as board games serve as dynamic tools for enhancing the speaking skills of young learners in several ways. Through interactive gameplay, students engage in conversations, negotiations, and strategic discussions, providing ample opportunities for practicing speaking in a relaxed setting. These games often incorporate thematic content and specific vocabulary, expanding learners' linguistic repertoire. Additionally, by adhering to game rules and communicating with peers, students reinforce grammar structures and build confidence in expressing themselves orally. Board games also foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills, encouraging learners to articulate their thoughts, opinions, and reasoning. Overall, the immersive and collaborative nature of board games cultivates a supportive environment where young learners can actively develop and refine their speaking abilities. This approach is corroborated by previous research (Chen, 2010; Fung & Min, 2016; Viray, 2016; Yeh et al., 2017; Chao & Fan, 2020), which indicates that games positively impact interaction, student engagement,

motivation, and willingness to communicate, while concurrently reducing student anxiety.

Insights gleaned from participants' responses during the semi-structured interviews unveiled nuanced viewpoints regarding the learning environment facilitated by board game instruction, highlighting the positive feelings. Participants perceived board game instruction as offering abundant opportunities for practicing speaking skills through interactive and enjoyable activities. This created a less anxiety-inducing environment that facilitated engagement with the learning process. Participants reported feeling enjoyment, encouragement, and engagement, resulting in the successful achievement of learning goals. The following excerpts from students' responses illustrate this viewpoint:

"I think using board games in English class is fun. "It feels like we're just playing and having fun, not really studying. So, I'm happy with it." (LS2)

"I really enjoyed playing those games especially when we played in a team. My friends helped me a lot when I had a problem with language difficulties. I think it encourages me to learn English more." (MS2)

"I like this teaching method very much. I feel like I have more chances to engage in the class and practice my speaking skill, unlike other usual classes." (HS1)

In terms of the enhancement of functional benefits through board game instruction, qualitative analysis of the data indicated that board game instruction offered participants functional benefits, as they effectively attained targeted learning objectives through speaking practice during the game sessions. The following excerpts from participants' responses could corroborate this assertion:

"As you know, I cannot learn English well, but I still can remember some sentences we used in the games." (LS1)

"I think I can speak English better because I had a chance to practice and use it in your games." (MS1)

“After repeating listening and using the same sentence pattern in the games. I think it helped me a lot to remember those sentences and use them more naturally.” (MS2)

Board game instruction not only enhances speaking skills as expected but also provides emotional benefits. Participants reported increased motivation, inspiration, confidence, self-esteem, and pride. These findings indicate that board game instruction contributes not only to academic proficiency but also to students' emotional well-being. The following excerpts from participants' responses could support this assertion:

“Before this, I wasn't interested in learning English because I thought it was too difficult and I didn't think I'd ever need it. But playing those games in class showed me how English could be used and inspired me to learn English for my future” (LS2)

“Ever since you started bringing games to our class, I get really excited every time. I even check my schedule, counting down the days until I get to learn with you again because the games really make me want to learn English.” (MS1)

“As I told you sometimes I feel stressed when I struggle with the game, but when I overcome it think I feel more confident and proud of myself.” (MS2)

“Every time I got scores in the game, I felt rewarded and proud of myself.” (HS1)

In conclusion, the qualitative findings illustrate that board game instruction not only enhances students' speaking skills but also positively influences their emotional well-being. This implies that integrating board games into the curriculum can result in enhanced speaking proficiency and heightened motivation, inspiration, confidence, self-esteem, and pride among students.

5.3 Implications

The current study elucidates both research and pedagogical implications for educators and designers, particularly highlighting how board games can significantly enhance speaking skills among young EFL learners. Firstly, from a pedagogical standpoint,

educators can leverage board games as dynamic and engaging tools to enrich speaking skill development in the EFL classroom. By integrating board games into lesson plans, teachers can create interactive learning environments that encourage active participation and foster oral communication among students.

Additionally, at the curricular level, the study underscores the importance of incorporating board game-based activities into language learning curricula. This finding suggests that by integrating board games into the curriculum, educators can provide students with meaningful opportunities to practice and improve their speaking proficiency in a fun and interactive manner, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of language instruction.

Furthermore, the methodological implications of the study highlight the potential of board games as a valuable approach to teaching speaking skills in EFL contexts. By exploring different types of board games and adapting them to suit the needs and proficiency levels of students, educators can diversify their teaching methods and cater to the varied learning styles of their students.

Overall, the implications of the study suggest that integrating board games into language learning curricula can be a valuable approach to promoting speaking skills among Thai EFL primary students. By leveraging the interactive and communicative nature of board games, educators can create engaging learning environments that foster language development and support students' overall language proficiency.

5.4 Limitations and recommendations for future studies

While the study on the effect of board games on the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary students provides valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. A notable limitation of the study is the constraint imposed by the duration of the research. Due to time limitations, the study may have been unable to fully capture the long-term effects of board game instruction on speaking skills. Language acquisition is a complex process that unfolds over time, and short-term interventions may not provide a comprehensive understanding of the sustained impact of board games on students' speaking skills.

There are several recommendations for future studies in this area. Firstly, researchers could explore the long-term effects of board game instruction on speaking skills among Thai EFL primary students. Longitudinal studies tracking students' language development over an extended period could provide valuable insights into the sustained impact of board games on speaking proficiency. Additionally, future studies could investigate the effectiveness of specific types of board games or instructional strategies in promoting speaking skills. By focusing on different game genres, themes, or language learning objectives, researchers can identify the most effective approaches for enhancing speaking proficiency among Thai EFL primary students.

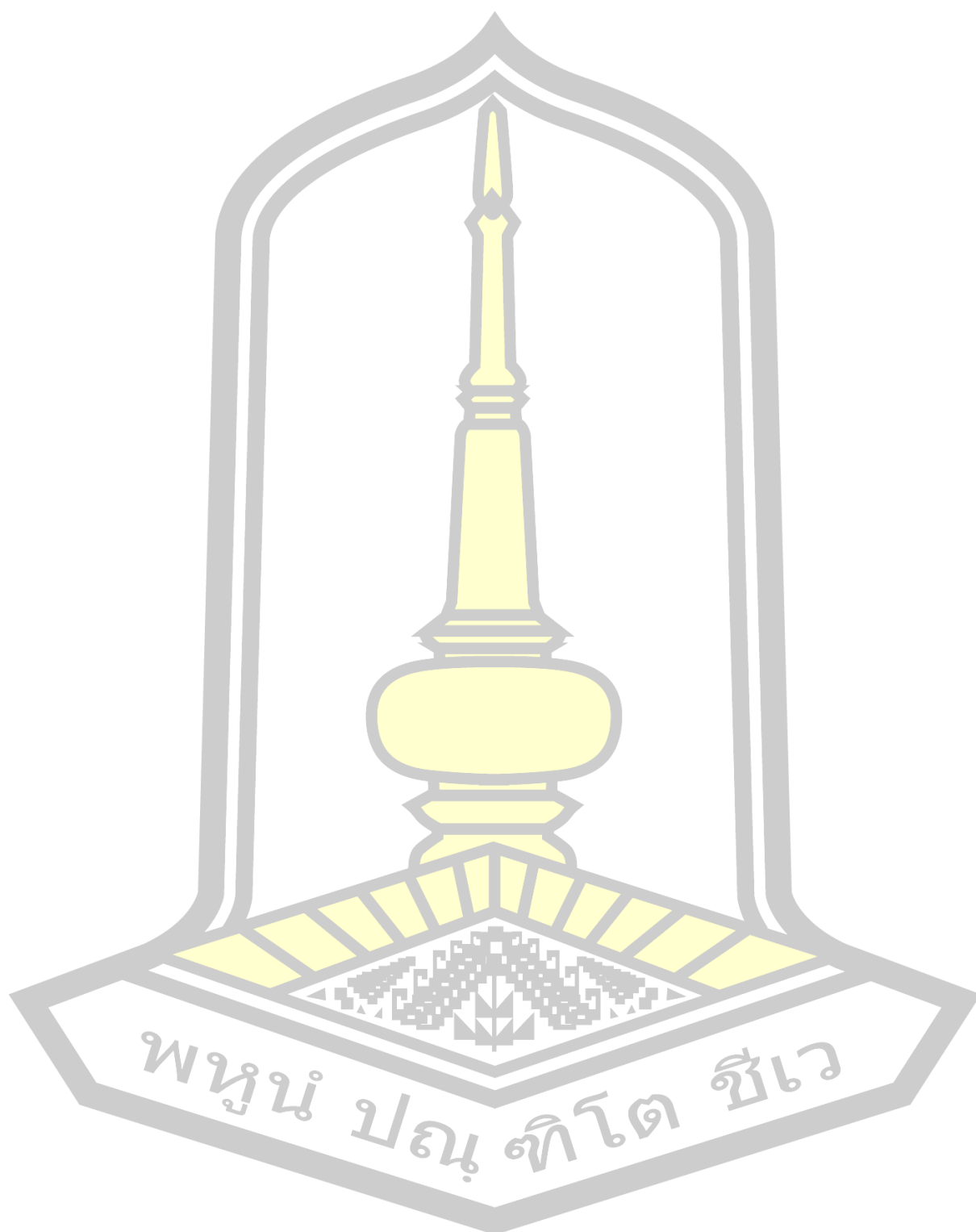
Overall, while the study provides valuable insights into the potential benefits of board games for promoting speaking skills among Thai EFL primary students, there is still much to be explored in this area. By addressing the study's limitations and building upon its findings, future research can contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of board games in language learning and inform effective instructional practices in the EFL classroom.

5.5 Conclusion of the study

The current study investigated the impact of board games on the speaking skills of Thai EFL primary students. Through the integration of board games such as Dream On!, Snakes and Ladders, Guess Who?, and Spyfall into the classroom, quantitative analysis revealed a positive effect on improving students' speaking skills, notably in the areas of grammar and fluency. Furthermore, the qualitative findings shed light on participants' perceptions regarding the use of board games in speaking classes. Participants found this instructional approach enjoyable, motivating, and engaging, facilitating speaking acquisition and bolstering their confidence.

In essence, this research makes a valuable contribution to the ongoing studies in the field of language teaching by bridging theoretical frameworks with empirical evidence. With an emphasis on the importance of incorporating board games into speaking classes, the study underscores the efficacy of board game instruction in enhancing speaking skills.

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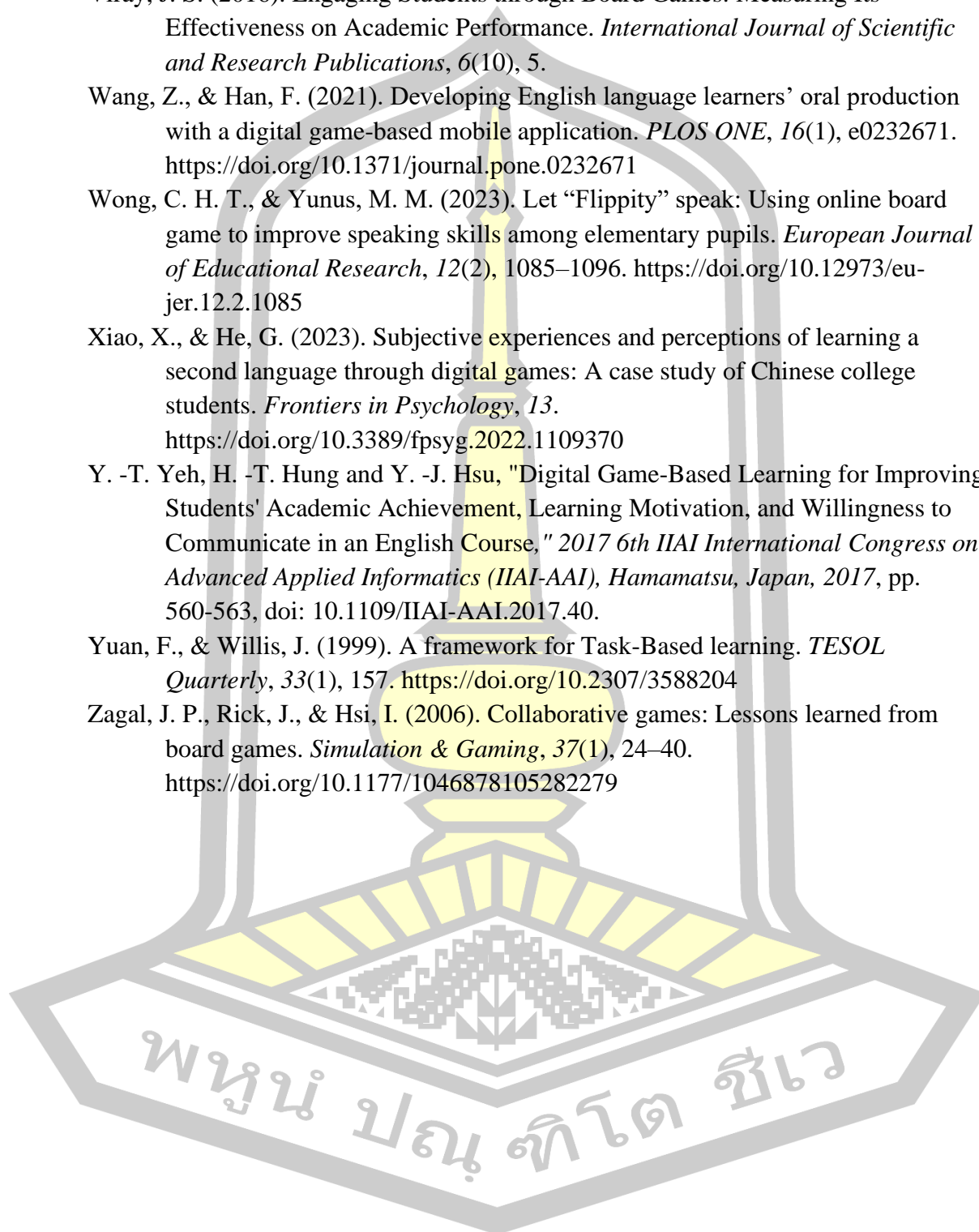
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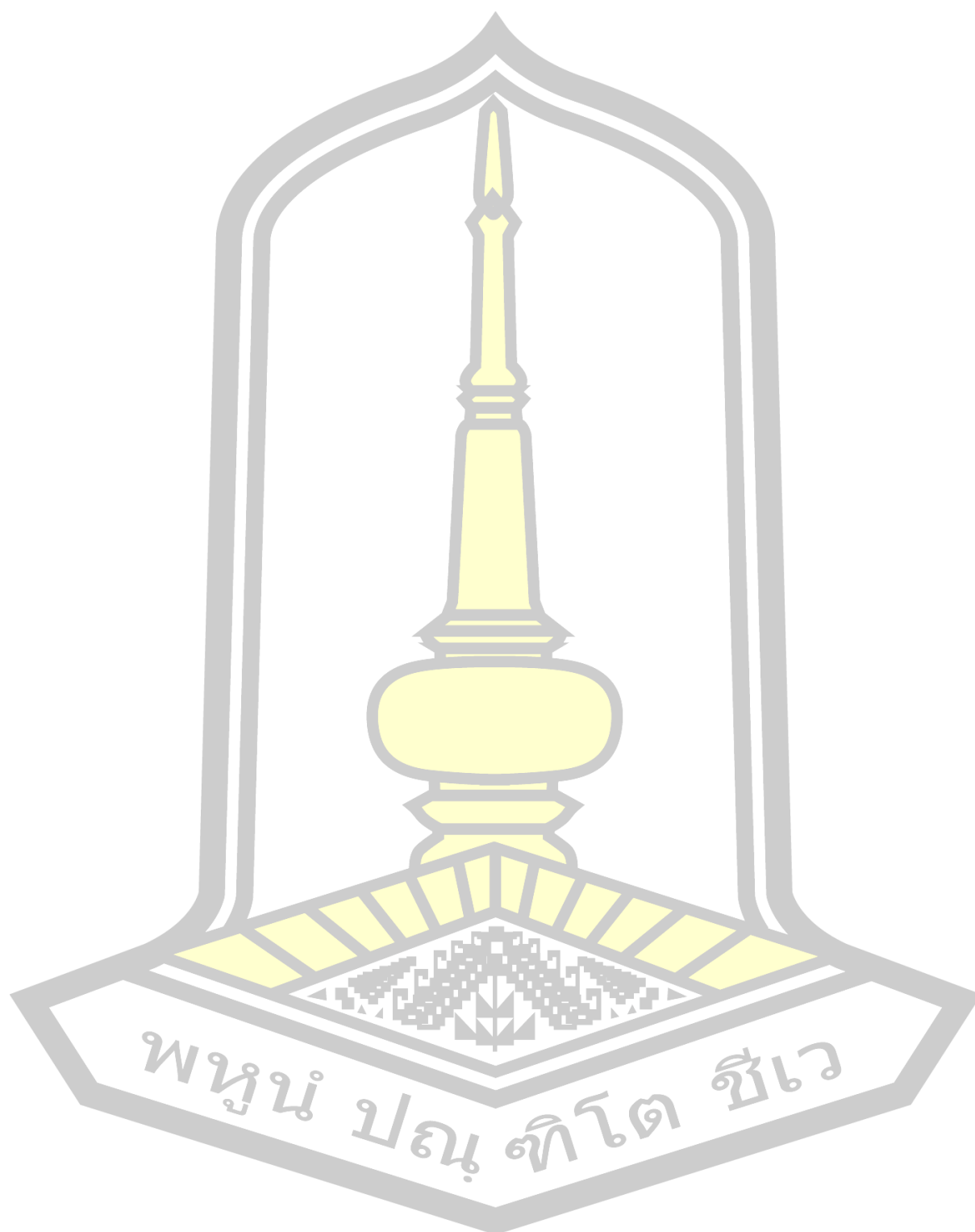
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APPENDICES

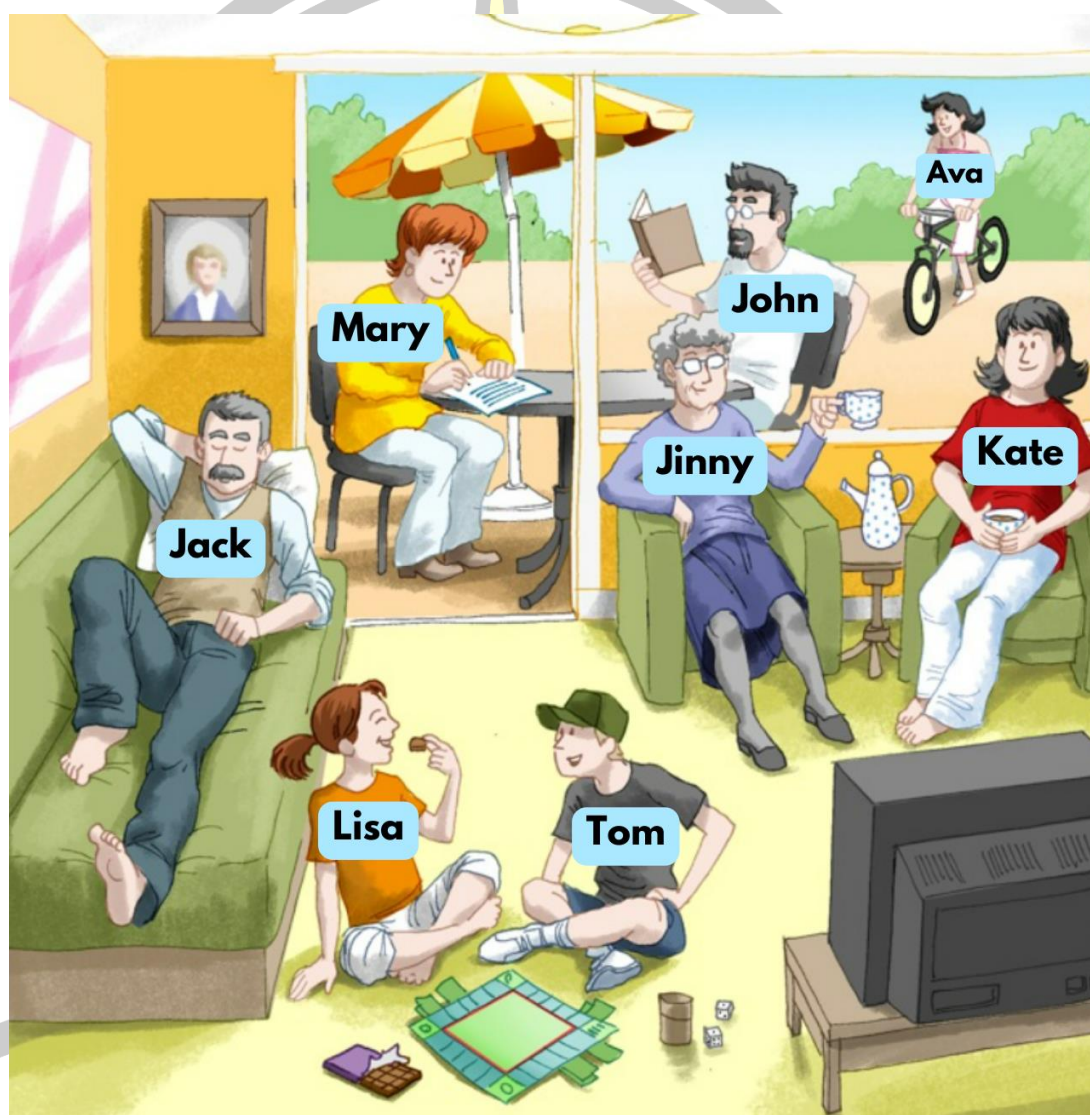


Appendix A: Speaking pre-test and post-test

1. Speaking pre-test: a limited picture-cued assessment task

Directions: Look at the picture and answer the following questions.

Test-takers see:



Test-takers hear:

1. Where was Jack? What did he do?
2. Where were Lisa and Tom? What did they do?
3. Where were Jinny and Kate? What did they do?
4. Where were Mary and John? What did they do?
5. Where was Ava? What did she do?

2. Speaking post-test: a limited picture-cued assessment task

Directions: Look at the picture and answer the following questions.

Test-takers see:



Test-takers hear:

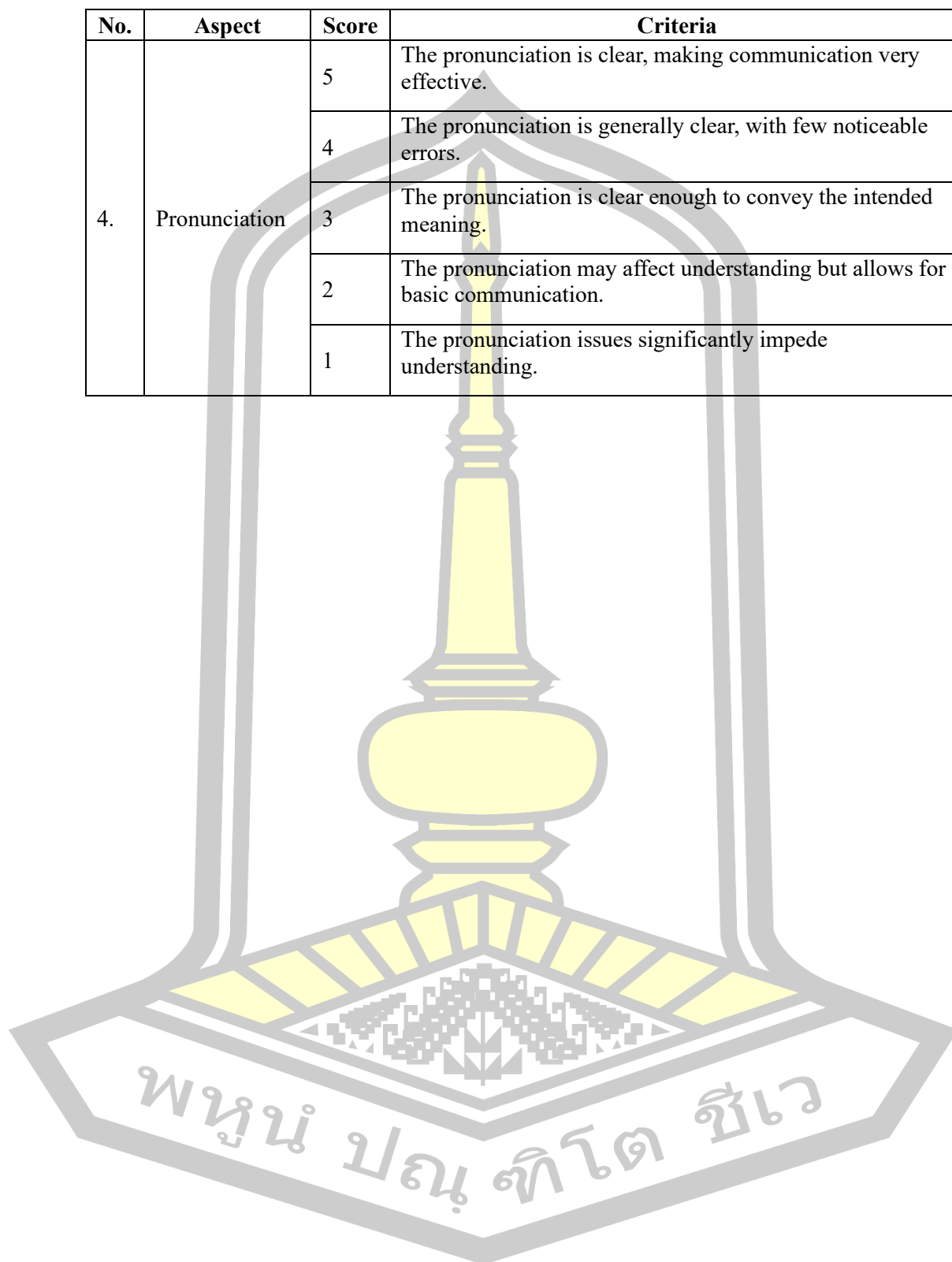
1. Where was Thomas? What did he do?
2. Where were May and Alice? What did they do?
3. Where were the Adams? What did they do?
4. Where was Maria? What did she do?
5. Where were Mark and Jackson? What did they do?

พหุ ประถมศึกษา

Appendix B: The analytic rubric for speaking assessment

No.	Aspect	Score	Criteria
1.	Fluency	5	The speech flows smoothly with minimal to no hesitations or pauses, any pauses are very brief (1-2 seconds), no need to search for words, and an excellent volume.
		4	The speech flows smoothly with occasional minor pauses (2-3 seconds) or minimal hesitations, a slight search for words, and occasional inaudible slips of a word or two.
		3	The speech is relatively smooth, with noticeable pauses (3-5 seconds) or some hesitation and unevenness resulting from rephrasing and searching for words; the volume fluctuates.
		2	The speech frequently pauses (5-7 seconds) or is often hesitant, with some sentences left incomplete, and the volume is very soft.
		1	The speech is slow, with long pauses (7 seconds or more) or hesitant, and strained, except for short memorized phrases; there's difficulty in perceiving continuity, and parts are inaudible.
2.	Grammar	5	The grammar use of language patterns taught in class is effective with complete sentences and no mistakes. Demonstrate a deep understanding of the focus grammar.
		4	The grammar use of language patterns taught in class is effective with complete sentences and few (1-2) mistakes. Demonstrate a high understanding of the focus grammar.
		3	The grammar use of language patterns taught in class is good with few incomplete sentences and some (3-4) mistakes. Demonstrate some understanding of the focus grammar.
		2	The grammar use of language patterns taught in class is average with some incomplete sentences and several (5-6) mistakes.
		1	The grammar use of language patterns taught in class is poor with numerous mistakes and a lack of mastery of sentence construction which hinders the message.
3.	Vocabulary	5	The vocabulary range is varied, well-chosen, accurate, and appropriate to the context.
		4	The vocabulary range is good and well-chosen, but slightly inaccurate in the context.
		3	The vocabulary range is moderate. The speaker sometimes needs help identifying the correct words. There are only occasional problems with the correct meanings of words.
		2	The vocabulary range is moderate. The speaker needs help identifying the correct words. There often are problems with the correct meanings of words.
		1	The vocabulary range is limited and incorrect words are often used.

No.	Aspect	Score	Criteria
4.	Pronunciation	5	The pronunciation is clear, making communication very effective.
		4	The pronunciation is generally clear, with few noticeable errors.
		3	The pronunciation is clear enough to convey the intended meaning.
		2	The pronunciation may affect understanding but allows for basic communication.
		1	The pronunciation issues significantly impede understanding.



Appendix C: The Dream on! game

DREAM ON!

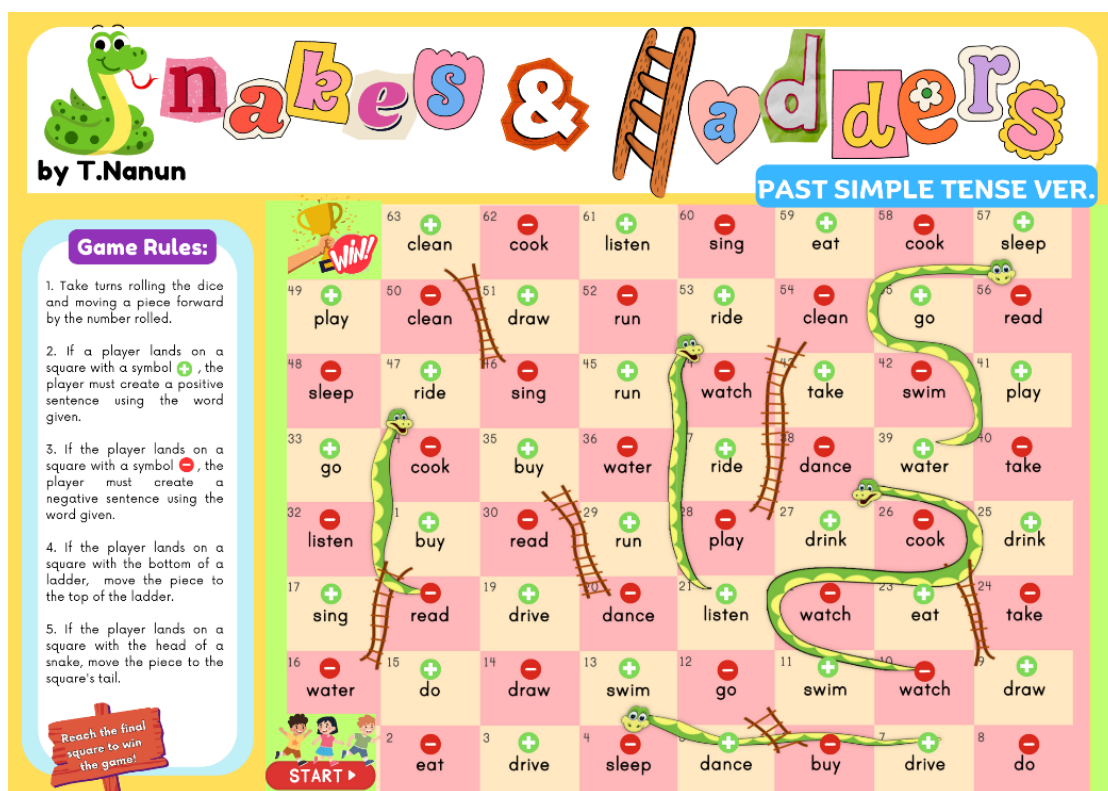
GAME RULES:

- **Setup:**
 1. Place the three Scoring cards and Timer aside.
 2. Shuffle all the Dream cards into one deck and put it face down in the middle of the table.
 3. Choose a player to start.
- **Gameplay:** The game consists of two phases: Dreaming and Remembering.
 - Phase 1: Dreaming**
 1. The first player draws the top card from the deck and puts it face up next to the deck, creating the Dream pile. They use the image on the card to start the story and flip the Timer.
 2. The Dream begins, and any player can play a Dream card from their hand onto the Dream pile, connecting it to the previous card.
 3. After playing a card, draw a new one from the Dream deck to maintain a hand of three cards.
 4. The Dreaming Phase ends when the Timer runs out.
 - Phase 2: Remembering**
 1. All players discard the remaining cards in their hands. Place the three Scoring cards in the center.
 2. With everyone contributing to a unique dream, each player must now try to recall the dream sequence.
 3. If you were the last player to add a card, pick up the Dream pile, holding it face down.
 4. As the active player, recall the first part of the Dream and reveal the top card.
 5. If you correctly remember the next part without help, place the card near the Individual Scoring card for 2 points.
 6. If you need assistance, teammates raise their hands to offer help.
 7. If you correctly remember with help, place the card near the Collective Scoring card for 1 point.
 8. Failing to remember results in placing the card near the Faulty Scoring card for -2 points.
 9. Once a card is scored, pass the Dream pile to the next player, who becomes the active player.

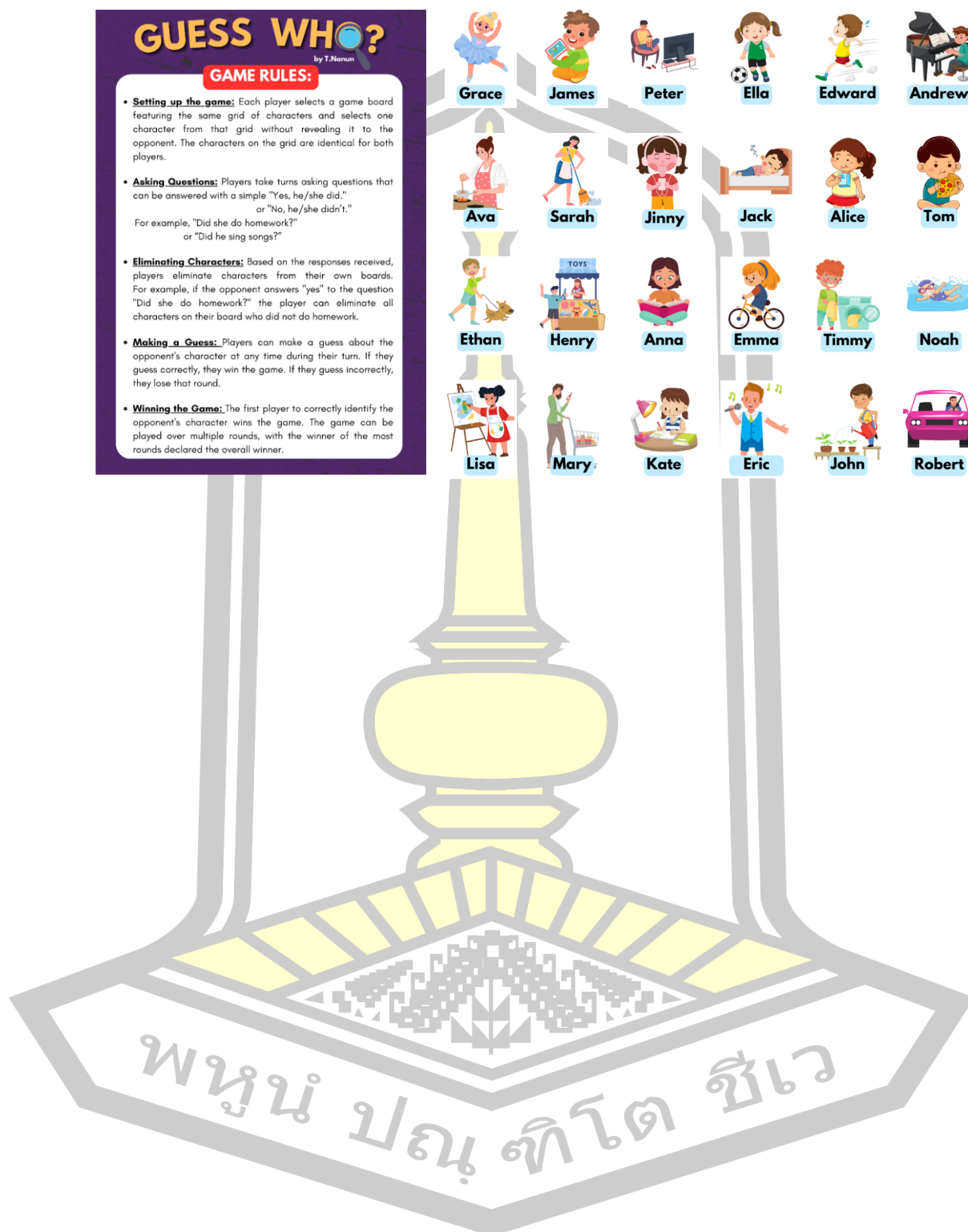
End of the Game: After scoring all the cards and attempting to remember the entire Dream, count up the points to determine the winner.

พหุ ประถมศึกษา

Appendix D: The Snakes and Ladders game



Appendix E: The “Guess Who?” game



Appendix F: The Spyfall game

Movie Fans
Spyfall
by T. Itanon

GAME RULES:

- **Setup:**
 1. Randomly select four representatives to choose the character card.
 2. Shuffle the character cards and deal one to each representative player, keeping it secret.
 3. The player who gets the card with no information will play the role of a spy while other characters will be assigned according to the information on the card.
 4. The rest players will play the role of detectives by asking the representative players questions related to the information sheets.
- **Gameplay:**
 1. The detectives take turns asking each representative player questions about the information without being too revealing.
 2. The spy must try to blend in and ask questions without giving away the fact that they don't know the information.
 3. Non-spies try to ask questions that will reveal whether the other players know the information.
 4. Detectives can discuss their suspicions and, at any point, vote on who they think the spy is. If the majority correctly identifies the spy, they win. If the spy is not caught, they win.
- **End of Round:**
 1. At any point, detectives can vote on who they think the spy is.
 2. If the majority votes for the spy, the non-spies win.
 3. If the spy is not caught, the spy wins.

Who is the spy?

Avatar

Mila	sister	Peto
SF	Major	MVP
cinema	cinema	cinema
last month	last 2 months	last 2 weeks

Barbie

Lucy	my dog	Gino
cinema	my house	Bangkok
last 2 weeks	last night	last month

Ant-Man

dad	Mark	Jane
school	my house	Mark's house
at the weekend	last night	after school

Rango

Nick	Mike	Amy
cinema	my house	Amy's house
last week	last 10 years	yesterday

Madagascar

my family	class mates	Sarah
cinema	Penny's house	school
last 4 months	last 5 years	last 3 days

Twilight

James	Adam	brother
cinema	Adam's house	my house
last week	last 3 days	yesterday



Appendix G: An example lesson plan incorporating the “Guess Who?” game

Lesson plan 10: Guess who is it?		
Grade: 6	Semester: 2	Academic year: 2023
Teacher: Nantapit Pittayanantakul	Duration: 1 hour	

Indicators:

- **F1.1 Gr. 6/3** Choose or specify the sentences or short texts corresponding to the meanings of symbols or signs read.
- **F1.2 Gr. 6/1** Speak or write in an exchange in interpersonal communication.
- **F 1.2 Gr. 6/4** Speak and write to ask for and give data about themselves, their friends, families, and matters around them.
- **F2.1 Gr.6/1** Use words, tone of voice, gestures, and manners politely and appropriately by observing the social manners and culture of native speakers.

Learning Objectives:

1. Students are able to comprehend the use of past simple tense in describing events that happened in the past.
2. Students are able to ask for and give data about the events that happened in the past by using the past simple tense structure.

Content:

- **Structure:** the past simple tense

1. Affirmative form

Subject + past tense verb + object.

Example sentence: She **did** homework last night.

2. Negative form

Subject + did not + infinitive + object.

Example sentence: She **didn't play** games last night.

3. Interrogative form

Q: Did + subject + infinitive + object?

A: Yes, subject + did.

No, subject + did not.

Example sentence Q: *Did* she *read* a book last night?

A: No, she *didn't*.

- **Vocabulary:** infinitives and past tense verbs

Infinitives	Past tense verbs
play	played
dance	danced
watch	watched
water	watered
cook	cooked
clean	cleaned
listen	listened
buy	bought
do	did
draw	drew
drink	drank
drive	drove
eat	ate
go	went
read	read
ride	rode
run	ran
sing	sang
sleep	slept
swim	swam
take	took

Materials:

- Digital presentation on topic past simple tense
- “Guess Who?” game
- Happy Campers 6 student’s book

Evaluation:

- Students can correctly explain the use of past simple tense in describing events that happened in the past.
- Students can ask for and give data about the events that happened in the past by using the past simple tense structure.

Teaching Procedures:

Teacher	Students
Introduction (5 minutes)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher greets students and checks students' attendance. • The teacher asks students to review what they have learned in this unit. • The teacher gathers students' answers and repeats them to the class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students greet the teacher. • Students answer the teacher. <i>Expected answer:</i> Past simple tense • Students listen to the teacher.
Pre-game (15 minutes)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher presents the revision content of past simple tense involving three types of sentence forms: affirmative, negative, and interrogative. • The teacher asks students questions related to the content to check their understanding. • The teacher evaluates and explains more in the part that is still confusing for students. • The teacher introduces the "Guess Who?" game to students by explaining the rules and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students notice and review the content of past simple tense. • Students answer to the teacher's questions. • Students listen to the teacher. • Students listen to the teacher and observe the gameplay.

Teacher	Students
<p>demonstrating how to play the game.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher asks students questions to let them practice and check if they clearly understand the game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students practice for the game by answering to the teacher.
Game cycle (25 minutes)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher administrates the “Guess Who?” gameplay and facilitates students to learn while playing the game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students learn while playing the game.
Post-game (10 minutes)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher asks students to discuss and reflect on their language uses in the game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students discuss and reflect on their language uses in the game.
Wrap up (5 minutes)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher asks students to review what they have learned in the class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students brainstorm and answer the teacher’s question.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher gathers students’ ideas and sums them up to the class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students listen to the teacher.

Comments:

BIOGRAPHY

NAME	Miss Nantapit Pittayanantakul
DATE OF BIRTH	December 5, 1995
PLACE OF BIRTH	Buriram, Thailand
ADDRESS	277 Village no.10 E-san sub-district, Muang Buriram district, Buriram, 31000
POSITION	An English teacher
PLACE OF WORK	Anuban Buriram School, Phithak Road, Mueang Buriram district, Buriram, 31000
EDUCATION	2013 High School Buriram Pittayakhom School 2018 Bachelor of Education (B.E.) in English, Srinakharinwirot University

