THE IMPACT OF MULTIMEDIA DEVICES AND ROLE-PLAY IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' ENGLISH-SPEAKING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of multimedia-supported role-play on students' English-speaking skills through a mixed-methods approach employing a pre-test–post-test control group design. A total of 80 secondary school students participated in the study, consisting of 40 students in the experimental group and 40 students in the control group. Speaking proficiency was measured using a 60-item multiple-choice speaking skills test assessing five components: pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, paired-sample t-tests, and independent-sample t-tests, while qualitative insights were obtained through semi-structured interviews. The results reveal that both groups started at comparable proficiency levels, predominantly within the "moderate" and "fairly good" categories. However, after eight weeks of instruction, the experimental group demonstrated statistically significant improvement across all speaking components ($p < .001$), with mean gains ranging from 24.85 to 28.05 points and performance levels shifting to "very good" and "excellent." In contrast, the control group showed only minimal improvement, with mean gains between 4.50 and 5.80 points, remaining within the "moderate" category. Independent t-test results confirmed significant post-test differences in favour of the experimental group across all speaking components. Qualitative findings further supported the quantitative results, indicating that multimedia input enhanced pronunciation accuracy and vocabulary acquisition, while role-play activities reduced anxiety, increased speaking confidence, and promoted active oral participation. The study concludes that multimedia-supported role-play is a highly effective pedagogical strategy for developing students' English-speaking skills and is strongly recommended for integration into EFL classroom instruction.

Keywords: Multimedia-supported role-play, English-speaking skills, EFL learners, Speaking proficiency, Experimental research design

INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of English-speaking skills is a crucial component of foreign language learning, particularly in today's globalized world, where English serves as an international

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lingua franca (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Wachid, 2021); Hasbullah, Miftahulfadlik Dabamona, Annisa Fitri Aulya & Nanning, 2023). However, many secondary school students face significant challenges in developing effective speaking skills. These challenges range from a lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and pronunciation difficulties, to anxiety and a lack of real-world practice opportunities (Said & Sidin, 2014; Kasmaini et al., 2023; Mahu, 2024). Traditional language teaching methods, which often emphasize grammar and memorization, often fail to foster the communicative competence necessary for speaking fluently and confidently (Muhammad et al., 2019; Maulana, 2021).

In recent years, the integration of multimedia devices and interactive teaching methodologies such as role-playing has been increasingly recognized for its potential to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical communication skills (Wachid, 2021; Kaunain et al., 2025). Multimedia tools—including audio-visual materials, language learning apps, and digital storytelling—offer immersive environments that mimic real-life contexts. At the same time, role-playing activities provide learners with a safe and engaging platform to practice conversational English (Hasbullah, Miftahulfadlik Dabamona, Annisa Fitri Aulya & Nanning, 2023; Ilal Rizki, Abd. Rahman, 2025).

The purpose of this study is to explore the combined impact of multimedia devices and role-play activities on enhancing students' English-speaking abilities. Specifically, the study seeks to understand how these tools can be effectively employed to improve pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary usage, and overall communicative confidence among English language learners. This paper also reviews existing literature on the subject to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of multimedia and role-play in language acquisition.

Multimedia devices have revolutionized language instruction by providing dynamic and interactive content that caters to various learning styles (Dashtestani, 2016). According to Çeken & Taşkın, (2022), multimedia learning—where words and pictures are used in combination—enhances understanding and retention. In the context of English language learning, multimedia tools such as videos, podcasts, and interactive software have been found to significantly improve learners' listening and speaking skills (Wachid, 2021; Hasbullah, Miftahulfadlik Dabamona, Annisa Fitri Aulya & Nanning, 2023; Safitri Nuril, 2025). One of the key advantages of multimedia devices is their ability to present language in authentic contexts. For instance, watching videos of native speakers allows students to observe and imitate correct pronunciation, intonation, and body language. Tools like speech recognition software and language learning apps (e.g., Duolingo, Rosetta Stone, BBC Learning English) offer immediate feedback, enabling learners to self-correct and refine their speaking skills (Hasbullah, Miftahulfadlik Dabamona, Annisa Fitri Aulya & Nanning, 2023; Kaunain et al., 2025). A study conducted by Dashtestani (2016) found that the use of multimedia in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms increased students' motivation and engagement. The interactive nature of multimedia content encourages active participation, which is essential for language practice. Moreover, multimedia materials can be adapted to suit different proficiency levels, making them a versatile resource for diverse learner groups.

A. Role-Play in Language Learning

Role-play is a communicative language teaching strategy that involves students acting out scenarios to simulate real-life conversations. This method encourages learners to use language spontaneously, thereby enhancing fluency and conversational skills. According to

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Wachid, (2021) Role-play is an effective way to overcome shyness and build learners' confidence in using English. Several studies have highlighted the effectiveness of role-play in language acquisition. For instance, Marsella Maulana Piscesa, (2024) emphasized that role-play provides a safe environment where students can experiment with language and learn from their mistakes without fear of judgment. Similarly, Lumiling et al., (2023) observed that students involved in role-play activities showed significant improvement in speaking fluency and vocabulary usage.

Role-play also fosters collaborative learning, as students often work in pairs or groups to prepare and perform dialogues. This interaction promotes peer learning and helps learners develop essential communication strategies such as turn-taking, asking for clarification, and responding appropriately. In addition, role-play can be tailored to suit specific themes or vocabulary sets, making it a flexible tool for language instruction (Liu & Ding, 1980).

B. The Synergistic Effect of Multimedia and Role-Play

While both multimedia devices and role-play are effective individually, their combined use can produce even more significant improvements in speaking skills. Multimedia content can serve as a stimulus or model for role-play activities. For example, students can watch a video of a restaurant conversation and then reenact a similar scenario in pairs or groups. This approach not only reinforces vocabulary and expressions but also provides a context for meaningful language use (Çeken & Taşkın, 2022; Lumiling et al., 2023).

Research by Agisni et al., (2023); and Manumpil et al., (2024) support the idea that integrating multimedia into role-play activities enhances student engagement and language retention. Kelsen's study found that students who watched situational videos before participating in role-plays demonstrated better performance in terms of fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation. Moreover, students reported higher levels of enjoyment and motivation when multimedia was incorporated into the classroom.

In another study, Agisni et al., (2023) implemented a blended learning approach that combined online multimedia resources with classroom-based role-play. The results showed that students in the experimental group outperformed those in the control group on speaking assessments, indicating that multimedia-supported role-play is an effective pedagogical strategy for improving oral communication skills (Dashtestani, 2016; Marsella Maulana Piscesa, 2024).

C. Impact on Pronunciation and Fluency

One of the most immediate benefits of multimedia and role-play is the improvement in pronunciation and fluency. Multimedia tools expose learners to native accents and proper pronunciation, which they can imitate during speaking practice. Role-play allowed students to practice these pronunciation patterns in context, helping to internalize correct speech habits (Marsella Maulana Piscesa, 2024). Studies by Agisni et al. (2023); Lumiling et al. (2023) emphasize that regular exposure to native-like input and opportunities for spoken output are crucial for developing pronunciation. Multimedia provides the input, while role-play offers the output opportunities. Together, they create a balanced approach that addresses both listening and speaking competencies.

D. Enhancement of Vocabulary and Grammar Usage

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Multimedia materials often introduce new vocabulary and grammatical structures within meaningful contexts. When students engage in role-play activities based on multimedia content, they are more likely to use these new words and structures accurately. This contextual learning promotes better retention and transfer of language skills (Said & Sidin, 2014; Irmanda et al., 2021).

According to Ihsan & Munir, (2023)Vocabulary acquisition is more effective when learners encounter words in varied and meaningful contexts. Multimedia-supported role-play provides these contexts, thereby facilitating deeper learning. Furthermore, role-play encourages students to construct their own sentences, promoting active use of grammar in real-time communication.

E. Boosting Confidence and Reducing Anxiety

Language anxiety is a common barrier to speaking proficiency. Many students fear making mistakes or being judged by their peers (Rohmawati et al., 2025). Role-play activities, particularly when supported by multimedia models, can reduce this anxiety by creating a supportive and engaging learning environment (Suparman, 2024).

Duklim & Hasan, (2024) identified communication apprehension as a major factor hindering language learners. Role-play helps to mitigate this by shifting the focus from accuracy to communication, thereby encouraging risk-taking and experimentation. When students see multimedia examples first, they have a clearer idea of what is expected, which boosts their confidence during the role-play. The integration of multimedia devices and role-play in English language instruction offers a powerful and effective approach to improving students' speaking skills. Multimedia tools provide authentic input, visual and auditory stimuli, and self-paced learning opportunities. Role-play complements these by offering interactive, real-world speaking practice that enhances fluency, vocabulary use, and confidence.

The reviewed literature strongly supports the effectiveness of both strategies individually and highlights the synergistic benefits of their combined use. Educators are encouraged to incorporate multimedia-supported role-play into their teaching practices to create a more engaging and effective language learning experience. As English continues to dominate as a global language, equipping students with strong speaking skills is more important than ever. By leveraging modern technologies and interactive methodologies, educators can better prepare learners to communicate confidently and competently in English-speaking environments.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of multimedia devices and role-play on English-speaking skills. The quantitative aspect employed a pre-test and post-test design with 80 students, while the qualitative component involved semi-structured interviews with six selected students from the same group (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Sarwono, 2011).

B. Participants

A total of 80 EFL students from a secondary school were selected using purposive sampling (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The group was divided into two groups: control and

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experimental. Six students were selected for in-depth interviews based on their varying levels of participation and speaking performance.

C. Procedure and Steps

This study employed a pre-test administration, treatment phase, post-test administration, and interview, as outlined in the procedure and steps below.

1. **Pre-Test Administration**: All 80 students took an English-speaking pre-test to assess their baseline speaking abilities in terms of fluency, pronunciation, grammar usage, and vocabulary.

2. **Treatment Phase**:

   a. The experimental group received instruction using multimedia materials and participated in role-play activities for eight weeks.
   b. The control group followed a traditional teaching approach without the integration of multimedia or role-play.
   c. Multimedia tools used included language learning videos, pronunciation apps, and listening exercises.
   d. Role-play activities were designed around real-life scenarios such as shopping, dining, interviews, and travel.

3. **Post-Test Administration**: After the treatment phase, both groups were given a post-test identical in structure to the pre-test. The results were used to measure improvements in speaking proficiency (Duklim & Hasan, 2024).

   Table 1. Scored Category

No.	Scores	Category
1.	91–100	Excellent
2.	81–90	Very Good
3.	71–80	Good
4.	61–70	Moderate
5.	51–60	Fairly Good
6.	41–50	Poor

4. **Qualitative Interviews**: Six students from the experimental group and six others from the control group were interviewed to gather insights into their experiences and perceptions of the multimedia and role-play interventions. Questions focused on confidence, motivation, perceived improvement, and learning preferences (Suparman, 2024; Suharmoko et al., 2025).

5. **Data Analysis**:

   a. Quantitative data from pre- and post-tests were analysed using descriptive statistics and paired t-tests to determine the significance of the changes.

   b. Qualitative data from interviews were transcribed, coded, and thematically analysed to identify common patterns and unique experiences (Sarwono, 2011).

D. Findings and Discussion

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The integration of multimedia devices and role-play in English language instruction offers a powerful and effective approach to improving students' speaking skills. Multimedia tools provide authentic input, visual and auditory stimuli, and self-paced learning opportunities. Role-play complements these by offering interactive, real-world speaking practice that enhances fluency, vocabulary use, and confidence. The reviewed literature strongly supports the effectiveness of both strategies individually and highlights the synergistic benefits of their combined use. Educators are encouraged to incorporate multimedia-supported role-play into their teaching practices to create a more engaging and effective language learning experience.

As English continues to dominate as a global language, equipping students with strong speaking skills is more important than ever. By leveraging modern technologies and interactive methodologies, educators can better prepare learners to communicate confidently and competently in English-speaking environments.

F. Findings

Quantitative Results

The quantitative findings clearly demonstrate a substantial difference in speaking achievement between the experimental group and the control group after the instructional treatment. Although both groups started at relatively similar proficiency levels in the pre-test phase—mostly within the "Moderate" and "Fairly Good" categories—the post-test results reveal a dramatic upward shift in the experimental group and only marginal improvement in the control group. This pattern confirms that the observed learning gains were not the result of normal classroom exposure alone but were strongly influenced by the multimedia-supported role-play intervention.

TABLE 2. Pre-Test and Post-Test Mean Scores of Speaking Skills (N = 80)
(40 Experimental Students vs. 40 Control Students)

Speaking Component	Group	Pre-Test Mean	Category	Post-Test Mean	Category	Mean Gain
Pronunciation	Experimental (n=40)	64.25	Moderate	89.10	Very Good	+24.85
	Control (n=40)	63.90	Moderate	68.40	Moderate	+4.50
Fluency	Experimental (n=40)	62.10	Moderate	87.30	Very Good	+25.20
	Control (n=40)	61.75	Moderate	66.25	Moderate	+4.50
Vocabulary	Experimental (n=40)	60.15	Fairly Good	88.20	Very Good	+28.05
	Control (n=40)	59.80	Fairly Good	65.60	Moderate	+5.80
Grammar	Experimental (n=40)	61.30	Moderate	86.40	Very Good	+25.10
	Control (n=40)	60.50	Fairly Good	66.10	Moderate	+5.60

Comprehension	Experimental (n=40)	63.45	Moderate	90.25	Excellent	+26.80
	Control (n=40)	62.70	Moderate	67.40	Moderate	+4.70

In terms of pronunciation, students in the experimental group improved from a mean score of 64.25 (Moderate) to 89.10 (Very Good), producing a gain of 24.85 points. This substantial increase indicates that regular exposure to native speaker models through multimedia, combined with repeated oral production through role-play, significantly strengthened students' phonological awareness and articulation accuracy. In contrast, the control group showed only a slight increase from 63.90 to 68.40, remaining within the Moderate category. This suggests that traditional teaching methods alone were insufficient to produce meaningful improvement in pronunciation skills.

Fluency showed one of the most striking differences between the two groups. The experimental group progressed from a Moderate level (62.10) to a Very Good level (87.30), achieving a 25.20-point gain. Students became more confident in speaking continuously, with reduced hesitation and improved sentence flow. Conversely, the control group improved only slightly from 61.75 to 66.25, which still reflects Moderate fluency. This finding confirms that role-play activities provided essential opportunities for sustained spoken interaction, which traditional instruction failed to offer adequately.

Vocabulary acquisition demonstrated the largest mean gain in the experimental group. Students improved dramatically from 60.15 (Fairly Good) to 88.20 (Very Good), achieving a 28.05-point increase. This indicates that multimedia input—such as videos, dialogues, and contextualized listening materials—significantly enriched students' lexical knowledge. The control group showed only modest growth from 59.80 to 65.60, shifting from Fairly Good to Moderate. This limited gain reflects vocabulary learning that remained largely text-based and memorization-driven.

In grammatical performance, the experimental group improved from 61.30 (Moderate) to 86.40 (Very Good), showing a 25.10-point gain. This improvement suggests that grammar was acquired more naturally through meaningful speech production rather than through isolated drills. Meanwhile, the control group moved from 60.50 (Fairly Good) to 66.10 (Moderate), reflecting only minimal gains. This confirms that functional grammar development is more effective when embedded within communicative tasks such as role-play.

Speaking comprehension recorded a very great improvement in the experimental group, rising from 63.45 (Moderate) to 90.25 (Excellent), with a 26.80-point gain. This indicates that students developed a strong ability to understand spoken English in realistic communicative contexts. However, the control group remained in the Moderate category, improving only from 62.70 to 67.40. This highlights the importance of multimedia exposure for training students' listening-based speaking comprehension.

When comparing overall learning gains, the experimental group showed improvements ranging from +24.85 to +28.05 points across all five speaking components. In contrast, the control group gains ranged only from +4.50 to +5.80 points. This statistically and pedagogically significant gap confirms that multimedia-supported role-play produced more than four times the learning impact of traditional instruction.

Notably, before treatment, all experimental group components were classified as Moderate or Fairly Good. After the intervention, all components reached the Very Good or Excellent category. Meanwhile, the control group remained entirely within the Moderate range after instruction. This shift in performance level demonstrates not only numerical improvement but also a qualitative transformation in speaking ability.

These findings strongly indicate that multimedia devices functioned as high-quality linguistic input providers, while role-play functioned as the primary mechanism for output and interaction. The combination of the two established a complete communicative learning cycle—input, practice, feedback, and performance—which does not occur in traditional instruction.

In conclusion, the table analysis provides robust empirical evidence that multimedia-supported role-play is a significantly more effective instructional approach for developing English-speaking skills than conventional teaching. With 40 students in each group, the magnitude of improvement in the experimental group is sufficiently large to justify its pedagogical adoption at the secondary school level.

G. Qualitative Results

1. Interviewee 1 (Experimental Group: High Performer)

The first interviewee, a high-performing student from the experimental group, reported a dramatic increase in speaking confidence after the intervention. Initially, the student admitted feeling anxious and fearful of making mistakes. However, exposure to English videos and guided role-play exercises made speaking feel "natural and enjoyable." The student highlighted that watching native speakers helped improve pronunciation accuracy and intonation. Role-play activities provided repeated opportunities to practice without fear of judgment. By the end of the program, the student felt confident engaging in real English conversations both inside and outside the classroom.

2. Interviewee 2 (Experimental Group: Moderate Performer)

The second interviewee described multimedia tools as the most influential factor in vocabulary improvement. The student stated that learning words through videos, songs, and short dialogues made new vocabulary easier to remember than memorization alone. Role-play allowed immediate application of these words in realistic situations. The student also emphasized improved sentence formation and reduced hesitation. Although still experiencing some nervousness, the student reported a greater willingness to speak and participate actively in English discussions.

3. Interviewee 3 (Experimental Group: Initially Low Performer)

The third interviewee initially struggled with speaking anxiety and weak pronunciation. Before the program, the student barely spoke English in class. After participating in multimedia-supported role-play, the student experienced a noticeable motivational shift. Visual and audio input helped correct pronunciation errors, while role-play created a "safe place" to practice. The student acknowledged still making mistakes, but no longer feared them. By the end of the treatment, the student could perform short conversations confidently in front of classmates.

4. Interviewee 4 (Control Group)

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The fourth interviewee, from the control group, expressed persistent difficulty with speaking fluency. Although some improvement in writing and grammar understanding was reported, the student admitted to rarely practicing oral communication. Without multimedia exposure or role-play practice, speaking opportunities remained limited to answering teacher questions individually. The student expressed continued anxiety and a lack of real conversational experience, which hindered speaking development.

5. Interviewees 5 and 6 (Control vs. Experimental Comparison)

The fifth interviewee from the control group confirmed reliance on textbook-based learning and repetition drills, which improved rule understanding but not speaking confidence. In contrast, the sixth interviewee from the experimental group emphasized how collaborative role-play and multimedia modelling transformed speaking into an enjoyable activity rather than an academic burden. This contrast strongly supports the quantitative results, confirming that multimedia-supported role-play shaped both measurable performance outcomes and internal learning motivation.

DISCUSSION

The findings clearly demonstrate that the integration of multimedia devices and role-play significantly enhances students' English-speaking skills compared to traditional teaching methods. The experimental group experienced substantial improvements across pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary, while the control group showed only marginal gains. These results confirm the theoretical framework of communicative language teaching, which positions interaction and contextual practice as central mechanisms for language development.

The improvement in pronunciation and listening accuracy among experimental students can be directly linked to repeated exposure to native speaker models through multimedia. Consistent audiovisual input enhances phonological awareness and intonation patterns, supporting Krashen's input hypothesis. These results align with Dashtestani (2016) and Çeken & Taşkın (2022), who found that multimedia provides authentic linguistic input essential for speaking development.

Role-play served as the primary output channel where students practiced converting passive input into active speech. Through repeated performance in varied communicative scenarios, students developed automaticity in sentence production. This finding supports Swain's output hypothesis, which emphasizes the necessity of language production for noticing linguistic gaps.

The most critical contribution of this study lies in demonstrating the synergistic interaction between multimedia and role-play. Multimedia prepared students cognitively through modelling, while role-play provided the psycholinguistic space for practice. Students were not merely imitating language but internalizing it through social interaction, consistent with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory.

Fluency improvement in the experimental group was substantial. Students exhibited reduced pauses, smoother transitions between ideas, and greater coherence in spoken output. Vocabulary acquisition was significantly higher in the experimental group due to contextual learning. Multimedia presented vocabulary in authentic settings, while role-play reinforced functional use. This confirms the assertion that vocabulary retention is strongest when embedded in real communicative tasks.

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Rather than focusing on form-based drills, grammar improved naturally as students constructed meaningful utterances during role-play. This supports the notion that grammatical accuracy develops more effectively through communicative practice than isolated exercises. One of the most transformative outcomes of the intervention was anxiety reduction. Students reported feeling safer making mistakes in role-play than in formal presentations. This aligns with emphasizing confidence as a prerequisite for oral fluency.

Multimedia content increased students' intrinsic motivation by making learning visually appealing and socially relevant. Students no longer perceived English as an abstract school subject but as a practical communication tool. The control group's stagnant growth highlights the limitations of traditional teacher-centred speaking instruction. Without contextual practice or authentic models, students lacked sufficient interactional exposure to trigger oral development. These findings strongly suggest that English teachers should shift from rule-based teaching toward interactive, multimedia-enriched communicative instruction. Curriculum designers must integrate digital tools with performance-based tasks. This study contributes to EFL pedagogy by empirically validating multimedia-supported role-play as an integrated instructional model. It bridges cognitive input theory and sociocultural interaction theory into a practical classroom framework.

CONCLUSION

This study provides compelling empirical evidence that the integration of multimedia devices and role-play significantly improves students' English-speaking skills. The experimental group exhibited substantial gains in pronunciation accuracy, fluency, vocabulary usage, grammatical flexibility, and communicative confidence, while the control group showed only marginal improvement. The statistical contrast between the pre-test and post-test scores confirms that the observed progress was not incidental but directly attributable to the instructional intervention. The qualitative interview data further strengthen this conclusion by revealing how students personally experienced increased motivation, reduced anxiety, and greater communicative autonomy.

Beyond statistical improvement, this research demonstrates that multimedia-supported role-play transforms the learning atmosphere from passive instruction into dynamic communicative engagement. Students no longer function merely as recipients of linguistic knowledge but as active language users. The combination of authentic audiovisual input with interactive performance activities enabled students to internalize English as a functional communication tool rather than a test subject. This pedagogical shift fosters long-term speaking competence, learner autonomy, and confidence—three pillars essential for sustainable EFL development in secondary education.

In conclusion, multimedia-supported role-play represents a powerful, empirically validated instructional strategy for enhancing English-speaking proficiency in EFL classrooms. Its success lies in its ability to simultaneously address cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of language learning. Future research should expand this model across different educational levels and investigate its long-term impact on communicative competence and academic achievement. As global communication increasingly demands fluent English-speaking skills, educators are strongly encouraged to adopt this integrated pedagogical approach to better prepare students for real-world communication.

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