Unity in Diversity: The Nigerian Youth, Nigerian Pidgin English and the Nigerian Language Policy

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Abstract This study attempted to find out the perceptions of the Nigerian youth of pidgin, a mode of expression largely believed to be gaining ground in Nigeria, particularly among the youth. To accomplish this, the study investigated the influence of tribe, institution, age, location, sex and social status on their perceptions of the use of Pidgin English as a unifying factor and its consideration as a recognized official language in the Nigerian language policy. The study employed the survey research design. The population for the study consisted of the youth in Southwestern Nigeria. The quota sampling technique was employed in selecting 100 youths from each of the six geo-political zones of Nigeria making a total of 600 youths. A questionnaire was developed for the study by the researchers comprising three sections which solicited information from the youths on the variables of interest. The questionnaire was validated and a reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. Six research hypotheses were formulated and tested while four research questions were asked and answered. The data collected were analyzed using t-test and One-Way ANOVA statistics. The study concluded that Pidgin English with its neutrality had the potentials to become a wider language of unity, largely at the informal level, than the major indigenous languages; this would contribute positively to Nigeria’s search for unity in diversity.

Keywords: Unity, Nigerian youth, Pidgin English and Nigeria language policy.

1. Introduction

Nigeria, a very vast country with about 150 million people is located in West Africa. It is made up of 36 states plus Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory. Nigeria is a multi-lingual, multi-cultural, and multi-ethnic society with between 250 and 300 ethnic groups and 400 to 500 local languages, some of which have dialects. In spite of the multiplicity of languages, three indigenous languages are singled out as major languages in the Nigerian Constitution, namely, Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba. These languages are considered to be official languages alongside English, the lingua franca. English Language, a foreign language in Nigeria, enjoys the status of a second language.

English was introduced into Nigeria via trade with and colonization by the British. According to Alagoa (1980), the Niger Delta area was probably the most actively involved in overseas trade from about the 17th century. The trade started with the Portuguese, the Dutch, then the British. Contact with these foreigners who came with different unintelligible languages to the indigenes brought about the need for communication. Pidgin emerged particularly in the Niger Delta as a contact language which served the need for communication and interaction. The Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE) appears to have outlived any other pidgin; this is probably due to the fact that the British stayed the longest in Nigeria. According to Osuafor (2002), pidgin could be restricted or extended. Gani-Ikilama (1989: 15) explains further that “a restricted pidgin is one which arises as a result of marginal contact such as minimal trading or in tourist areas; it serves only this limited purpose and tends to die when the contact which gave rise to it is withdrawn”. Till today, the impact of this early interaction with NPE is still highly concentrated in this area. The NPE started in Nigeria as a language of the non-literate as observed by Bamgbose, Banjo and Thomas (1995: 287) who state that “Not everyone had access to a school and the process of acquiring English was decidedly longer and more tedious than that of ‘picking up’ Pidgin. It remains a hallmark of Nigerian Pidgin that its speakers use it with a lot of freedom and creativity”. Interestingly, over the years the situation in terms of geographical spread and status of individual users has changed.
2. The Nigerian Pidgin English

In everyday parlance, pidgin is defined as a simple form of a language with a limited number of words that are used together with words from a local language. Bakker (1994) however sounds a note of caution that not all simplified or ‘broken’ forms of a language are pidgins; each pidgin has its own norms of usage which must be learned for proficiency in the pidgin. It is used when people who do not speak the same language need to talk to each other. According to Da Pidgin Coup (1999) the vocabulary of a pidgin, which is quite restricted in use and variable in structure, comes mainly from one particular language (called the ‘lexifier’). Though the pidgin lexicon is derived from the ‘lexifier’, the grammar is unique, pidgin does not have any rule; it does not follow any specific order. The origin of pidgin generally is traceable to poor use of a language either by the speaker or the receiver. Pidgin is never originally the native language of any speech community; it is originally learnt as a second language. A pidgin may evolve to an extent that it actually becomes a mother tongue referred to as creole.

Though Pidgin English in Nigeria started as a language with restricted use, it now enjoys an extended use. The NPE which is also referred to as ‘Brokin’ is widely spoken and is said to be the native language of approximately three to five million people particularly in the Niger Delta (making it a creole in this sense) and a second language for at least another 75 million (Ihemere, 2006), many of whom acquire it right from childhood. In Faraclas’(2004: 828) view, he states: Well over half of the 140 million inhabitants of Nigeria are now fluent speakers of [NPE] making it the most widely spoken language in Nigeria, as well as the indigenous African language with the largest number of speakers. Given the rapid spread of [NPE] among younger Nigerians, this proportion should increase to cover over seventy or eighty percent by the time the present generation of children reaches adulthood. There is no creole worldwide with nearly as many speakers as [NPE].

Akande and Salami (2010) assert that NPE serves as a lingua franca across ethnic and regional boundaries. However, though each of over the 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria uses Pidgin English, it varies from place to place thereby assuming the status of a language with dialects. Such dialects have certain additional words added which however does not lead to a breakdown in communication. This is in line with the view expressed by Da Pidgin Coup (1999) that variation exists in pidgin on aspects of age and geographical origin. While there is a consensus about the spread of pidgin, there is no such consensus about the general status of its users. Researchers such as Jowitt (1991) and Agheyisi (1971), postulate that the less educated, those with little or no formal education, are the users of pidgin. Such views are expressed everywhere pidgin is used as discussed in Da Pidgin Coup (1999). However, other researchers, such as Akande (2008), submit that NPE is spoken by university graduates, professors, lawyers and journalists; used in both formal and informal settings. He concludes by saying that “...the claim that NPE is the code of the non-literate is invalid as a lot of educated speakers in Nigeria use both the Standard and Pidgin English proficiently.

3. The Nigerian Youth and Pidgin English

The period of youth is as distinct from that of the child as it is distinct from that of the adult. It is a period with a very definite culture noticeable in the behavior, thinking, dressing, style and language among others. Nigerian youths can be categorized into male and female, English literate/English non-literate, the southern/the northern, rural/urban, high/low social status, adolescent/young adult etc. This period appears to be one when there is a conscious departure from the norm and language is not exempt. Such a departure tends to give the youth a recognizable identity. Pidgin English appears to be doing this.

Scholars attest to the popularity of pidgin among the youth. Faraclas (2004) observes that the Nigerian Pidgin is spoken today by millions of people especially the younger generation representing various linguistic areas of the Nigerian society. He further explains that given the rapid spread of the language among the youth, the proportion of present speakers of NPE which he puts at well over half of the Nigerian population would have increased by over 70% or 80% by the time they reach adulthood. He summarizes that there is no creole worldwide with nearly as many speakers as the Nigerian Pidgin. Akande and Salami’s (2010) study also discusses the youth, their use of and attitude to NPE. According to Douglas (2011), NPE continues to serve as a lingua franca in higher institutions and even to some extent among graduates.

4. The Unifying Dimension of the Nigerian Language Policy

Language, with its diverse social, unifying and developmental roles can be considered to be the most important attribute of a society. Indeed, life without language will be meaningless. The role of language in education is as central to human
existence as it is in everyday use; this is why a nation's language policy must provide meaningful, practicable and achievable statements. Policies are also meant to be reviewed from time to time in order to keep abreast of developments and changes in the society.

Nigeria's language policy is incorporated into the National Policy on Education (2004). The policy recognizes the need for unity in a nation like Nigeria, full of diversities. Section 1, sub-section 10 (a) states “Government appreciates the importance of language as a means of promoting social interaction and national cohesion; and preserving cultures. Thus, every child shall learn the language of the immediate environment. Furthermore,... every child shall be required to learn one of the three Nigerian languages of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Section 2, sub-section 14 (c) also states that “Government shall ensure that the medium of instruction is principally the mother tongue or the language of the immediate community. Furthermore, Section 4, sub-section 19 (e) states that the medium of instruction in the primary school shall be the language of the environment for the first three years; (f) from the fourth year, English shall progressively be used as a medium of instruction and the language of the immediate environment and French shall be taught as subjects”.

The policy depicts a desire for unity and emphasizes the language of the environment. It however appears that not only is cognizance not given to some of these languages of interest, adequate guidelines are not provided for meaningful implementation which ultimately affects the achievement of this laudable desire.

In spite of the pervasiveness of NPE in the society particularly among the youth who are the ones found in the various institutions of learning highlighted, an examination of the policy shows that cognizance is not taken of its role and importance. This has been remarked by certain researchers such as Elugbe and Omamor (1991), Egbokare (2003), Igboanusi (2008), and Akande and Salami (2010). A familiar language is a much more effective way of capturing and retaining learners' attention. However, before policy statements are issued in respect of NPE, there is a need to find out how popular NPE is among the youth using a much larger and varied group of respondents different from many of the studies hitherto carried out on this aspect in Nigeria.

5. Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth on the basis of tribe.
2. There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth on the basis of institution attended.
3. There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth based on age.
4. There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth on the basis of location.
5. There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth based on sex.
6. There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth on the basis of social status.

6. Methodology

The study adopted the survey design. The population for the study comprised the youth in Southwestern Nigeria. Quota sampling technique was used to select 100 youths from each of the six geo-political zones of Nigeria making a total of 600 youths. A questionnaire titled “Nigerian Youth, Nigeria Pidgin English and the Nigerian Language Policy” (NYNPENLP) was developed by the researchers comprising three sections which solicited information from the youths on the variables of interest. The questionnaire was validated and a reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. The data collected were analyzed using t-test and One-Way ANOVA statistics.

7. Results and Discussion

Six hypotheses were formulated and summaries of results obtained are presented in the following tables:
Table 1: Summary of Analysis of Variance on the Use of Pidgin English based on Tribe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pidgin by tribe</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>17622.858</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3524.572</td>
<td>40.252</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>52012.814</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>87.564</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69635.673</td>
<td>599</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Summary of Analysis of Variance on the Use of Pidgin English based on Institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pidgin by Institutions</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>1435.316</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>358.829</td>
<td>3.131</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>68200.358</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>114.622</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69635.673</td>
<td>599</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Summary of Analysis of Variance on the Use of Pidgin English based on Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pidgin by Ages</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>156.704</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>52.235</td>
<td>.448</td>
<td>.719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>69478.969</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>116.575</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69635.673</td>
<td>599</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Use of Pidgin English as a Unifying Language as perceived by the Nigerian Youth based on Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pidgin English</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>48.3664</td>
<td>11.0439</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>-1.379</td>
<td>0.303</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>49.6076</td>
<td>10.3470</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>6.032</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Summary of t-table on the Use of Pidgin English as a Unifying Language as perceived by the Nigerian Youth based on Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pidgin English</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>51.1747</td>
<td>9.79455</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>6.032</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>45.9851</td>
<td>11.26593</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>-4.195</td>
<td>0.503</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Summary of t-table on the Use of Pidgin English as a Unifying Language as perceived by the Nigerian Youth based on Social Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pidgin English</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>47.2036</td>
<td>10.82248</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>-4.195</td>
<td>0.503</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>50.8635</td>
<td>10.40441</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>-4.195</td>
<td>0.503</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth on the basis of tribe.

The ANOVA Table 1 shows that there is a significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigeria youth based on tribe (F = 40.252; p<0.05). Since the value of F is significant, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth on the basis of institution attended.
The ANOVA Table 2 shows that there is a significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth based on institution attended (F = 3.131; p <0.05). The null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth based on age.

Analysis of ANOVA, as presented in Table 3, shows that there is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth based on age (F = 0.448; p>0.05). Since the F-value is not significant, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth on the basis of location.

The results indicate that there is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth based on location (t = -1.379; p>0.05). The null hypothesis is hereby retained.

Hypothesis 5

There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth based on sex.

The results show that there is a significant different in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth based on sex (t = 6.032; p<0.05). The null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 6

There is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as a unifying language as perceived by the Nigerian youth on the basis of social status.

The results show that there is no significant difference in the use of Pidgin English as perceived by the Nigerian youth on the basis of social status (t=-4.195; p>0.05). The null hypothesis is hereby retained.

Results in this study as presented in Hypothesis 1 imply that NPE may actually be more dominant in some tribes than in others as results show a significant difference in the use of NPE as a unifying factor among the Nigerian youth on the basis of tribe. This means that while some tribes and ethnic groups are more favorably disposed to NPE, some are not as favorably disposed.

Of interest is the fact that there is no significant difference in the use of NPE by Nigerian youth on the bases of age, location and social status. This in effect means that NPE is used alike by the youth irrespective of whether they are younger or older youth, living in rural or urban areas, with parents with high or low social status. Almost paradoxically, a significant difference is found in the use of NPE by the youth on the basis of institution. One would submit that if the use of NPE is not a function of age, then it will also not be a function of institution since the expectation will be that those who are in secondary school will be younger than those in tertiary institutions. The interesting thing however is that in this study, secondary school students are found to be more predisposed to the use of NPE than students in tertiary institutions. Could this have anything to do with differences in students’ levels of proficiency in Standard English at these stages? Not much has been done on NPE and students outside higher institutions to confirm or refute this speculation. This finding does not support the general trend that university students are the largest group of users (note, for example Akande and Salami’s (2010) assumption that university towns are strong factors influencing students’ use of and attitudes to NPE.

Equally interesting though not surprising is the fact that there is a significant difference in the use of NPE by the youth on the basis of sex. Could this be related to the fact that females tend to appreciate correctness in language use more than the males? For as long as one can remember, research has consistently shown that girls tend to perform better than their male counterpart in language. Could it simply be a case of self-consciousness? Again, not much has been done in this area to shed more light on these grey areas.

Results of these hypotheses are complemented by those obtained from the four research questions asked presented as
Research Question 1

What is the extent of use of Nigerian Pidgin as a unifying language among the youth? The extent of the use of NPE does not appear to be as high among the youth as generally claimed as only 52% of the youth sampled claim that they speak Pidgin English very well while 48% state that they do not speak Pidgin English at all. This underplays the popularity of the language as noted by Douglas (2011), Akande and Salami (2010) and Faraclas (2004). A probable reason for this difference may be the much larger and more diversified sample used in the present study.

Research Question 2

What are the attitudes and perceptions of the Nigerian youth to NPE? The attitudes and perceptions of youths to the NPE are again not as high as expected as a positive attitude to its use as perceived by them yielded an average percentage index of only 54%. Furthermore, 52% of the youths indicate their preference for the NPE. However, it is worthy of note that youths do have some reservations about the use of Pidgin. These findings buttress the ambivalent status of the NPE in the view of the youth as reported by Shnukal (1992); Siegel (1993); Bakker (1994); and Akande and Salami (2010).

Research Question 3

What are the reasons for the choice and use of NPE by the Nigerian youth? Reasons given include: (i) the unifying role of the NPE; (ii) large coverage and accessibility; (iii) freedom of use, ease of communication and better understanding; (iv) ability to overcome self-consciousness and prevent lack of self-esteem; (v) ability to remove social barriers. The preference of the youth for NPE echoes Douglas’ (2011) findings. However, the fear expressed in her study that the NPE may send indigenous languages into extinction may be more real in some areas where the NPE is more dominant than in others.

Research Question 4

What are the social and educational implications of the choice and use of NPE by the Nigerian youth? The social implications identified in the study include: (i) the fact that Nigeria cannot afford to neglect a language that has powerful unifying features such as the NPE; (ii) the social and communicative nature of the NPE, which as an important group marker, creates unique identities. However 52% of the youth claim that the NPE has made the use of the mother tongue difficult when necessary. As regards educational implications, the study reflects the NPE as an unofficial, informal language that presently has no educational value in Nigeria. These results are consistent with those of other studies; as regards social implications, Akande and Salami (2010) talk about the marginalization of the NPE as no major roles are not assigned to it.

In relation to educational implications, findings in this study are in line with Igboanusi’s (2008) study which shows that there is no agreement among his subjects as to whether NPE should be given any official national status. Likewise, Siegel (1997: 87) explains that “pidgins and creoles rarely have any official use in formal education, even in countries such as Jamaica where the creole is the mother tongue of the vast majority. Instead, the standard variety of the lexifier, most often the former colonial language, is usually the sole language of education”. In spite of this observation, however, he shows that initial instruction in Melanisian Pidgin is actually more of a help than a hindrance to learning English and other subjects when used to teach pre-school children as such children continued to outperform those who were not exposed to the program. Likewise, Rynkoff’s (1993) study does not show any disadvantage or negative effect on the acquisition of Standard English when pidgin is used in the classroom. According to Da Pidgin Coup (1999), many non-standardized varieties have been successfully included in classrooms in the US and Australia using the home language in a variety of ways. However, due to the marginalization of NPE, some researchers suggest that NPE be given the status of an official or national language (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991; Egbokhare, 2003); others such as Igboanusi (2008) call for its use as a medium of instruction for NPE children in the early stage of primary school. Igbonuasi (2008: 69) remarks that “education is the most important institution through which to raise the value of NP [Nigerian Pidgin]".
8. Conclusion

One can therefore summarize by saying that since NPE has a neutral code without an ethnic bias, it has the potentials to become a wider language of unity largely at the informal level than the major indigenous languages. Its use in the school setting as a medium of instruction could help transition of students from a familiar language (NPE) for those in this category to an unfamiliar language (the Standard English). Unlike suggestions being made in certain quarters, once it becomes a language to be taught in the formal setting of the school, most of the advantages listed by respondents in this study will no longer apply, which will in effect diminish from its potency to be an informal language of unity. In this regard, educators need to be proactive and look for ways of maximizing the strengths in the NPE for the benefit of the entire nation in a way that it can bring about unity in diversity.

References


The Learning of Mathematics Supported by GBL – A Novelty for Albanian Preschool System

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Abstract This study aims to explore the impact of including digital technology in teaching, compared to the traditional teaching methods that are actually being used in our school environment. Digital technology is a novelty in Albanian schools and based on the priorities of this method we suggest that it should be used extensively in our education system, for all the pupils comprising those with disabilities. The use of GBL (Games-Based Learning), especially in Elementary Education helps to promote a more consistent learning, improve students' communication with each other, especially within the class environment, enable pupils to put ideas into practice, as well as make them familiar with new technologies at an early age. This is a qualitative study that will analyze various theories concerning teaching with digital technology, especially the use of GBL in front of traditional teaching methods. It will also be illustrated with numerous examples from practice, which will make the difference between these two methods of teaching clearer and more convincing. The results of the study will be based on the observation of the phenomenon from the point of view of traditional teaching methods, as well as from the perspective of digital technology methods in teaching. Furthermore, in this paper will also be listed and analyzed the main advantages and disadvantages of implementing this contemporary method in the Albanian school and further on. As a conclusion, we should emphasize that the findings of this study will be of use to all pupils, especially the disabled ones and to the teachers, because it facilitates teaching and learning processes as well as his/her communication with pupils.

Keywords: GBL, smart board, digital technology, disabled pupils

1. Introduction

Being an innovative and advanced practice, GBL has recently appeared even in Albanian educational system as a novelty that we believe should be implemented throughout our educational system. Smart board - a new interactive tool – is a way of learning by playing in groups. It is used in class as "Smart table with her magic stick." This "magic class" which works with the motto: THINK-PLAY-DANCE-SING-ENJOY-LEARN, describes the philosophy of our school. Smart board, connected to the Internet and placed in front of the pupils and between two classic blackboards is a near and far away dream for the Albanian pupil. "The Magic Blackboard" provides the advantage of functioning as an open window of the world contemporary Encyclopedia which is updated every moment from the web, as a tireless assistant of every teacher and what is more, as a friend for children.

2. Research Literature

The interest in game-based learning has increased considerably in these recent years. This way of learning has become more popular, among others, because of the increasing power of PCs. Games today are recognized for their universal attraction and ability to involve learners in concepts that are otherwise difficult to teach and understand. Both, teachers and learners appreciate the effectiveness of games in overcoming apparent barriers to learning. Most importantly, games are no longer regarded as just tools for kids.

Marc Prensky (2001) explains that “the emergence of digital game-based learning came in the last decades of the 20th century, when there was a global technology boom. He adds that recent generations of students in grades K-12 have lived their entire lives with access to technology — not only computers, but also digital music and video players, cell
phones, video games, and a host of other gizmos that require technology." Because of this he argues that today's students "think and process information fundamentally differently than their predecessors."

When using computer games, and games in general, for educational purposes several aspects of the learning process are supported: learners are encouraged to combine knowledge from different areas to choose a solution or to make a decision at a certain point, learners can test how the outcome of the game changes based on their decisions and actions, learners are encouraged to contact other team members and discuss and negotiate subsequent steps, thus improving, among other things, their social skills. This supports the view of most researchers in the field of GBL who conceptualize learning as a multidimensional construct of learning skills, cognitive learning outcomes and attitudes. Akilli (2007) in his study about GBL mentions that cognitive abilities as e.g. visual abilities or problem-solving skills are improved by game based learning. For example the lessons of history and geography would be much more interesting if students would visit the places described their virtually.

The GBL model is implemented in formal education very successfully. If used effectively and in a relevant way, it can support both the option of more choice for how the learner can learn as well as offering the potential for personalizing the learning experience. In addition it offers a way of integrating a range of different learning tools (e.g. social software) into a more coherent view of learning from the learner's perspective. There are specific educational domains where game-based learning concepts and approaches have a high learning value. These domains are interdisciplinary topics where skills such as critical thinking, group communication, debate and decision making are of high importance. Such subjects, if learned in isolation, often cannot be applied in real world contexts. Duchenaut et al. (2006) assume that collaborative online games can foster mutual support and encouragement. Thereby collaborative online games can help learners to learn more effectively.

Furthermore, the use of GBL can influence motivation and engagement of the learners in a positive way. As we know, motivation is a key aspect of effective learning, but it needs to be sustained through feedback responses, reflection and active involvement in. Game-based learning offers a particular strength of motivating users and this is why many learning games have been developed for particular groups that have difficulties with sustaining motivation. This view is also supported by Malone (1980) who suggests that general, computer games are supposed to result in positive effects because of the increase in motivation.

3. Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to analyze the positive impact of introducing digital technology in contemporary game based teaching. This study aims to argument that the involvement of GBL in teaching process, particularly in primary education will help:

- To promote a more stable learning;
- To improve communication of pupils with each other;
- To create a climate of cooperation within and outside the classroom;
- To enable pupils to use their knowledge in everyday life;
- To familiarize pupils with digital technology at an early age;
- To implement this new technology in pupils with disabilities;

4. Methods

Methods we have used in this paper to process the data are: analysis, comparison, and observation.

4.1. Subjects

The study was conducted in the private college “Turgut Ozal” and in a public school. Furthermore, students of “Aleksander Moisiu” University, Albania, more specifically, those who study in the branch of Elementary Education were part of the survey. The target- groups included in the survey were: pupils in primary school, teachers, students of “Aleksander Moisiu” University and parents.

4.2. Instruments

The instrument used to collect the data was a Likert type questionnaire, which consisted of eight questions. The people