

International Journal Research Publication Analysis

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DEVELOPMENT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF A GUJARATI LANGUAGE SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR STANDARD VIII STUDENTS

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Article Received: 04 July 2026

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Article Revised: 24 July 2026

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Published on: 11 August 2026

DOI: <https://doi-doi.org/101555/ijarp.6438>

ABSTRACT

Language learning at the school level plays an important role in students' academic development, communication, confidence, and social participation. For Gujarati-medium students, proficiency in Gujarati is essential for effective learning and meaningful expression. The present study was undertaken to develop a Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme for Standard VIII students and to examine its effectiveness in improving their language skills.

An experimental method with an equivalent-group pre-test and post-test design was adopted. The sample consisted of 120 Standard VIII students from Gujarati-medium schools in Ankleshwar Taluka of Bharuch District. Sixty students were included in the experimental group and sixty in the control group. The experimental group participated in a structured 24-session programme conducted over eight weeks, with each session lasting 45 minutes. The programme included storytelling, questioning, picture description, dialogue, vocabulary activities, reading, creative writing, drama, debate, and book review.

A researcher-developed 100-mark Gujarati Language Skill Test assessed listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. The test comprised 10 marks for listening, 30 for reading, 35 for writing, and 25 for speaking. The programme and test were developed with reference to the Standard VIII Gujarati curriculum, textbook, language teaching principles, and NEP 2020. The findings showed greater improvement in the experimental group than in the control group. The programme was also effective across gender and intelligence levels.

KEYWORDS: Gujarati Language, Language Skills, Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Language Development Programme, Standard VIII, Experimental Study.

Development and Effectiveness of a Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme for Standard VIII Students

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential part of human development. People use language to communicate ideas, express emotions, understand experiences, acquire knowledge, and interact with others. In school education, language has an even broader role because it is both a subject of study and a medium through which students learn other subjects.

For Gujarati-medium students, Gujarati occupies an important place in everyday communication and educational learning. A learner who can listen carefully, speak clearly, read with understanding, and write effectively is better positioned to participate actively in classroom and social situations.

Language proficiency cannot be developed through a single activity. It requires regular practice across several interconnected skills. The four fundamental language skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening enables learners to understand spoken language. Speaking allows them to communicate their ideas orally. Reading helps them construct meaning from written material, while writing enables them to organize and communicate their thoughts in written form.

The present research therefore considers language development as an integrated process rather than treating the four skills as completely separate areas.

Standard VIII is an important stage in this development. Students at this level are expected to understand increasingly complex ideas, participate in discussions, interpret written texts, express personal opinions, and produce different types of written work. These expectations require a systematic approach to language teaching.

The researcher therefore developed an activity-based Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme specifically for Standard VIII students. The programme was designed to create regular opportunities for meaningful use of Gujarati rather than restricting learning to textbook reading and written exercises.

The research tools were developed with reference to the Standard VIII Gujarati curriculum, textbook, language teaching principles, and National Education Policy 2020.

2. Need and Significance of the Study

The need for the present study emerged from several considerations.

First, language learning requires balanced development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In classroom practice, however, some skills may receive greater attention than others.

Second, students need opportunities to use language in authentic and meaningful situations. Activities such as storytelling, dialogue, drama, discussion, picture description, and creative writing can provide such opportunities.

Third, Standard VIII represents an important stage for strengthening students' language foundation before they move towards higher levels of secondary education.

Fourth, the review of previous studies indicated that research had been conducted on individual language skills as well as on integrated LSRW skills, but there remained a need for a specifically designed Gujarati language programme for Standard VIII students.

The literature reviewed by the researcher includes studies on listening, speaking, reading, writing, LSRW development, creative writing, story reading, and drama-based language activities. For example, the reviewed studies report improvement in vocabulary through story reading, confidence through drama-based activities, and expression through creative writing.

The present study attempts to bring these types of language-learning experiences together within one structured programme.

3. Review of Related Literature

3.1 Listening Skills

Previous studies reviewed in the research indicate the importance of systematic listening activities in language development. Research in this area has examined listening comprehension, task-based activities, listening exercises, and the relationship between listening and broader academic language development.

These studies suggest that students benefit when listening is treated as an active process requiring attention, comprehension, identification of important information, and appropriate response.

3.2 Speaking Skills

Studies related to speaking have emphasized communication, oral expression, dialogue, and learner participation. Speaking development requires more than memorization of language forms. Students need opportunities to express personal ideas, respond to questions, participate in discussions, and communicate with peers.

The present programme therefore included self-introduction, dialogue, group discussion, debate, drama, and oral presentation activities.

3.3 Reading Skills

The literature reviewed in the study indicates that reading comprehension is influenced by vocabulary, previous knowledge, reading habits, and the nature of instructional activities. Guided reading and intervention-based approaches have been used to improve comprehension.

The present programme therefore included reading comprehension, identification of main ideas, vocabulary work, book review, and interpretation activities.

3.4 Writing Skills

Writing development involves vocabulary, sentence construction, organization of ideas, paragraph development, accuracy, and creativity. Previous research reviewed by the researcher includes studies on writing courses, writing interventions, process writing, communicative writing, self-regulated writing, and writing packages.

The present programme incorporated paragraph writing, creative writing, story writing, letter writing, and other forms of written expression.

3.5 Integrated LSRW Skills

The review also included research related to integrated Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing skills. One important study reviewed by the researcher examined an LSRW skills development package for secondary students.

The literature table also includes a conceptual study on LSRW development and a descriptive study focusing on language-skill integration.

3.6 Research Gap

The review indicates that:

- many studies focus on one particular language skill;
- relatively fewer studies integrate all four skills within one programme;
- Gujarati-medium Standard VIII students require greater attention in this area;
- activity-based Gujarati language programmes need further empirical investigation;
- there is a need to examine the effectiveness of such a programme using an experimental design; and
- gender and intelligence level provide useful dimensions for examining programme effectiveness.

These gaps provided the basis for the present investigation.

4. Statement of the Problem

The problem investigated in the present study was:

“Development and Effectiveness of a Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme for Standard VIII Students.”

5. Aim of the Study

The main aim was to develop a Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme for Standard VIII students and to determine its effectiveness.

6. Objectives of the Study

The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- 1) To develop a Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme for Standard VIII students.
- 2) To develop students' listening skills.
- 3) To develop students' speaking skills.
- 4) To develop students' reading skills.
- 5) To develop students' writing skills.
- 6) To examine the effectiveness of the developed programme.
- 7) To examine the effectiveness of the programme with reference to gender.
- 8) To examine the effectiveness of the programme with reference to intelligence level.
- 9) To promote vocabulary development and language accuracy.
- 10) To develop students' confidence in using Gujarati.
- 11) To encourage group work and communication.
- 12) To encourage appropriate use of Gujarati in everyday situations.

The programme documentation specifically identifies vocabulary development, language accuracy, interest and confidence in Gujarati, group work, communication, and everyday language use among its objectives.

7. Hypotheses

The study examined null hypotheses concerning differences between experimental and control groups in pre-test and post-test performance.

The hypotheses also considered the effectiveness of the programme among male and female students and among students belonging to different intelligence levels.

The statistical findings indicate that the pre-test comparison did not show a significant difference, whereas significant differences were found in the relevant post-test comparisons.

8. Methodology

8.1 Research Method

The experimental method was adopted for the study.

8.2 Research Design

An equivalent-group pre-test and post-test experimental design was used.

Table 1.

Group	Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
Experimental Group	O ₁	Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme	O ₂
Control Group	O ₃	Regular Teaching	O ₄

The control group continued with the regular teaching process and did not receive the special programme. After completion of the intervention, both groups were administered the same post-test.

9. Population and Sample

The population comprised Standard VIII students studying in Gujarati-medium schools of Ankleshwar Taluka, Bharuch District.

The sample consisted of **120 students**.

Table 2.

Group	Boys	Girls	Total
Experimental Group	30	30	60
Control Group	30	30	60
Total	60	60	120

The sample was divided into experimental and control groups for the purpose of the intervention.

10. Variables

Independent Variable

Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme

Dependent Variable

Performance on the Gujarati Language Skill Test

Moderator Variables

- Gender
- Intelligence level

11. Research Tools

Two major tools were used:

Tool 1: Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme

Tool 2: Gujarati Language Skill Test

Both tools were developed by the researcher with reference to the Standard VIII Gujarati curriculum, textbook, language teaching principles, and NEP 2020.

Expert opinions were obtained to ensure the quality, appropriateness, and scientific suitability of the programme and test.

12. Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme

The programme was designed as an **activity-based and learner-centred programme**.

Programme Structure

Table 3.

Component	Details
Programme	Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme
Class	Standard VIII
Subject	Gujarati
Duration	8 weeks
Total Sessions	24
Duration per Session	45 minutes
Total Instructional Time	18 hours
Approach	Activity-based
Orientation	Learner-centred

These details are documented in the programme material.

Major Programme Activities

The 24 sessions incorporated activities such as:

- introduction to Gujarati language;
- listening to stories;
- question-answer exercises;
- self-introduction;
- reading practice;
- picture description;
- story construction;
- vocabulary development;
- dialogue;
- paragraph writing;

- creative writing;
- letter writing;
- report writing;
- drama and role-play;
- debate;
- group discussion;
- book review;
- revision and reinforcement.

The programme was designed to give students repeated opportunities to use Gujarati meaningfully.

13. Gujarati Language Skill Test

A 100-mark test was developed to assess the four major language skills.

Table 4.

Skill	Marks
Listening	10
Reading	30
Writing	35
Speaking	25
Total	100

The test therefore covered the four fundamental language skills rather than assessing only written achievement.

The purposes of the test included measuring students' Gujarati language skills, assessing all four language skills, comparing pre-test and post-test performance, examining programme effectiveness, and identifying students' strengths and limitations.

The same test was used for both pre-test and post-test administration.

14. Procedure of the Study

The study was conducted in the following sequence:

Selection of schools and students → Formation of groups → Pre-test → Implementation of programme → Post-test → Scoring → Statistical analysis → Interpretation

The experimental group received the Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme, while the control group continued with regular teaching. The same post-test was administered to both groups after completion of the programme.

15. Statistical Analysis

The collected data were analysed using:

- Mean
- Standard Deviation
- Independent t-test
- Degrees of freedom
- 0.05 level of significance

16. RESULTS

16.1 Pre-Test Equivalence

The pre-test comparison showed that the experimental and control groups did not differ significantly before the intervention.

One reported analysis gave the following values:

Table 5.

Group	N	Mean	SD	t
Control Group	60	42.15	6.84	0.68
Experimental Group	60	43.02	7.11	

df = 118

Table t at 0.05 level = 1.98

The calculated t-value of 0.68 was below the table value of 1.98. Therefore, the difference was not statistically significant.

This finding indicates that the two groups were reasonably comparable before the intervention.

17. Post-Test Improvement

The post-test results showed a clear difference in the amount of improvement made by the two groups.

The experimental group had a mean increase of **29.47 marks**, representing **69.59% improvement**. In contrast, the control group increased by **16.99 marks**, representing **40.96% improvement**.

The difference in improvement indicates that students who participated in the specially designed Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme made greater progress than students who continued with regular classroom teaching.

The statistical analysis further reported that the experimental group obtained significantly higher post-test mean scores than the control group.

18. Gender-wise Effectiveness

18.1 Female Students

The post-test comparison among female students produced a calculated t-value of **7.62**, with **58 degrees of freedom**. The result was statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

This finding suggests that the programme was effective in improving the Gujarati language performance of female students in the experimental group.

18.2 Male Students

The analysis of male students also showed a statistically significant difference in favour of the experimental group. The reported calculated t-value was **6.98**, indicating that the programme had a positive effect on male students as well.

Thus, the programme was not restricted to one gender. It produced positive outcomes among both male and female learners.

19. Effectiveness with Reference to Intelligence Level

19.1 High Intelligence Group

The analysis showed that the programme was effective for students with high intelligence levels. The reported calculated t-value was **7.86**, which exceeded the corresponding table value at the 0.05 level.

19.2 Moderate Intelligence Group

The results for students with moderate intelligence levels were:

Table 6.

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	df
Experimental	20	71.42	5.03	6.71	38
Control	20	58.84	5.49		

The calculated t-value of **6.71** was higher than the table value of **2.02** at the 0.05 level. The difference was statistically significant.

The result indicates that the programme was effective for students with moderate intelligence levels.

19.3 Low Intelligence Group

The analysis also reported that the programme was effective for students with low intelligence levels. The relevant null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant improvement in the experimental group.

20. Major Findings

The study produced the following major findings:

- 1) The experimental and control groups were comparable at the pre-test stage.
- 2) The Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme produced significant improvement in students' language performance.
- 3) The experimental group showed greater improvement than the control group.
- 4) The experimental group showed a 29.47-mark increase, compared with a 16.99-mark increase in the control group.
- 5) The programme was effective for female students.
- 6) The programme was effective for male students.
- 7) The programme was effective for students with high intelligence levels.
- 8) The programme was effective for students with moderate intelligence levels.
- 9) The programme was effective for students with low intelligence levels.
- 10) The findings support the use of structured, activity-based language instruction for Standard VIII Gujarati-medium students.

21. DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study are consistent with the general direction of the studies reviewed in the literature.

The literature review showed that different forms of language intervention can contribute to improvement in specific language skills. Story reading was associated with vocabulary development, drama-based activities with increased confidence, and creative writing activities with improved expression.

The present study extends this perspective by combining different language-learning experiences within one programme. Instead of concentrating on a single skill, the programme provided students with repeated opportunities to listen, speak, read, and write.

The stronger improvement in the experimental group can reasonably be related to the structured nature of the intervention. Students were not merely exposed to language content. They were asked to respond, communicate, perform, read, write, discuss, and create.

Another important finding is that the programme was effective across gender groups. This suggests that the activities provided learning opportunities that could be used by both male and female students.

The findings related to intelligence levels are also important. Significant improvement was observed among students in the different intelligence groups examined in the study. This suggests that activity-based language learning may provide opportunities for students with different levels of academic readiness.

The study therefore provides empirical support for integrating active language use into Gujarati language teaching at the Standard VIII level.

22. Educational Implications

The findings have several implications for educational practice.

For Gujarati Language Teachers

Teachers can incorporate structured listening, oral expression, reading, and writing activities into everyday classroom teaching.

For Students

Students should be given regular opportunities to speak, read aloud, discuss, narrate stories, write creatively, and express personal opinions.

For Schools

Schools can organize language clubs, reading activities, storytelling sessions, debates, drama activities, and book-review programmes.

For Teacher Education

Teacher education programmes can provide prospective teachers with practical training in integrated language-skill development.

For Curriculum Planning

Curriculum planners may consider greater integration of activity-based language learning with the existing Gujarati curriculum.

23. Limitations

The findings should be interpreted within the scope of the study.

- 1) The study was restricted to Standard VIII students.
- 2) The study was conducted in Gujarati-medium schools.
- 3) The geographical scope was limited to Ankleshwar Taluka of Bharuch District.
- 4) The sample consisted of 120 students.

- 5) The programme consisted of 24 sessions.
- 6) Programme effectiveness was assessed using the researcher-developed Gujarati Language Skill Test.

Therefore, the findings should not automatically be generalized to all Gujarati-medium students without further investigation in different settings.

24. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1) Gujarati language teaching should include regular activity-based learning.
- 2) Listening and speaking should receive attention alongside reading and writing.
- 3) Teachers should use stories and real-life situations for language development.
- 4) Picture-based activities can be used to stimulate oral and written expression.
- 5) Drama and role-play may be used to strengthen speaking and confidence.
- 6) Debate and group discussion can encourage communication and reasoning.
- 7) Creative writing activities should be included regularly.
- 8) Reading activities should be connected with vocabulary development.
- 9) Teachers should provide additional support to students who experience difficulty in language learning.
- 10) Similar programmes may be developed for other school standards.
- 11) Digital resources may be incorporated into future versions of the programme.
- 12) Further research should examine the programme in different districts and school settings.

25. CONCLUSION

The present study was undertaken to develop and examine the effectiveness of a Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme for Standard VIII students.

The programme was structured around the four fundamental language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It consisted of 24 sessions delivered over eight weeks and used a range of activity-based learning experiences.

The pre-test results indicated that the experimental and control groups were comparable before the intervention. After implementation of the programme, the experimental group showed substantially greater improvement than the control group. The experimental group recorded a 29.47-mark improvement, while the control group recorded a 16.99-mark improvement.

The programme was also found to be effective among male and female students and across the intelligence levels examined in the study.

The overall findings support the view that language development becomes more meaningful when students are given opportunities to use language actively. A structured programme that combines listening, speaking, reading, writing, storytelling, discussion, drama, creative expression, and other participatory activities can make language learning more engaging and purposeful.

The study therefore concludes that the **Gujarati Language Skill Development Programme developed for Standard VIII students was effective in improving their Gujarati language skills.**

26. Practical Contribution of the Study

The practical contribution of the study lies in the development of a ready-to-use Gujarati language programme for Standard VIII students.

The programme provides teachers with a structured sequence of activities rather than isolated exercises. Its 24-session format can be adapted according to school schedules and learner needs.

The programme can particularly be useful where teachers wish to move from predominantly textbook-centred language teaching towards more participatory classroom practice.

The accompanying 100-mark test also provides a framework for assessing the four major language skills separately while maintaining an overall measure of language performance. The assessment structure gives 10 marks to listening, 30 to reading, 35 to writing, and 25 to speaking.

27. CITATION

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