

TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH PLAYING GAMES

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Abstract

Students typically find studying English to be dull, thus more engaging and dynamic approaches are required. Students' motivation, engagement, vocabulary mastery, and confidence in their ability to learn grammar and vocabulary spontaneously can all be enhanced by using games in learning exercises. The process for teachers to make sure the games are suitable for the students' skill levels in order to provide a meaningful learning experience is described in this article. It comprises the stages of analysis, design, development, and implementation.

Keywords: Teaching, Playing, Game.

A. INTRODUCTION

Learning English through games is an enjoyable and simple method. Students enjoy learning without getting bored when they play games in English. Students can become more engaged and enthusiastic about learning English by playing board or digital games (Hermawan, 2024).

Students can practice speaking, writing, listening, and reading English with this method of instruction. For instance, kids collaborate in groups and employ English vocabulary when playing board games and matching games. As a result, individuals communicate and comprehend English texts with greater assurance (Muhammad et al., 2023).

Playing games also helps students learn new English words naturally. In video games, students must read and listen to English words to continue the game. This way, they learn new words without feeling like they are studying because they are focused on playing (Wall Street English, 2021).

The main benefits are higher engagement and relevant learning. Students not only know the meanings of words, but also how to use them in real situations, like asking for directions, discussing strategies, or writing a short progress report.

Language levels can be increased step by step so beginners don't feel overwhelmed.

In this article, we will talk about how to improve vocabulary and grammar through the kinds of games that are good for learning English, how teachers use games in class, what students can achieve, the problems teachers might face when using games to teach, The Advantages of Using Games, and Games That Can Improve Vocabulary and Grammar.

B. METHODOLOGY

This study aims to examine how children's skills can be enhanced through games that can be used in English language learning. The method used by the author is a literature review. According to the ALA Glossary of Library and Information Science (1983), literature refers to reading materials used for both intellectual and recreational purposes. According to Setyosary (2010:72), a literature review is an overview or description of the literature relevant to a specific field or topic.

The effectiveness of game-based learning in improving English vocabulary and grammar is examined in this article using a qualitative descriptive method based on library research. In order to determine the essential steps analysis, design, development, and implementation for incorporating educational games into the classroom, the study methodically synthesizes scholarly sources and earlier research.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that this study employs a descriptive qualitative literature review method to synthesize scientific sources related to the effectiveness of game-based learning in English language instruction. This methodology focuses on the strategic stages of educational game implementation, which include analysis, design, development, and implementation.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Game can be defined as an activity with goal and element of fun. Game and teaching is related since many teachers already used game as a mean in teaching, especially in teaching English for young learners. The game is believed that game makes young learners focused with the material taught. Whenever the game used, young learners feel enthusiastic to learn. Teaching game mostly used to bring young

learners into more concentrate with learning English. learning today is growing with various interesting and effective methods. One method that is gaining attention is game-based learning. This method combines game elements in the learning process to create a fun, interactive atmosphere that makes students more active in understanding English material.

1. How Games Help Improve Vocabulary and Grammar

Learning new vocabulary and grammar using games is enjoyable. Students utilize English more naturally and joyfully when they play games, which improves their memory. Playing games makes learning more engaging, and learning is easier when you love the process. Research indicates that kids who use games to learn vocabulary retain the information better and find learning more enjoyable (Saleh, 2022).

Additionally, games foster a constructive rivalry that inspires children to concentrate and learn. However, in order for everyone to participate and learn effectively, teachers must ensure that the games are simple to grasp and appropriate for the students' level (Saputra, 2021).

from Saleh (2022), I believe that using games is a very effective strategy in language learning. Games help students become more active and emotionally engaged, which makes it easier for them to remember new vocabulary and grammar. I also think that a fun learning atmosphere reduces students' fear of making mistakes, so they feel more confident when using the language.

On the other hand, Saputra (2021) reminds us that games should not only be fun but also suitable for the students' level. In my opinion, this is very important because games that are too difficult or too easy can affect the learning process. Therefore, teachers need to design games that are not only enjoyable but also appropriate, so all students can participate and get the most benefit from the activity.

2. How Teachers Use Games in English Class

To make learning enjoyable and engaging, teachers employ a variety of games in the classroom, such as word puzzles, role-playing, and quizzes. With the

aid of these activities, students can practice speaking and listening in English fluently and without worrying about making mistakes. (Alibakhshi, 2025)

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From Alibakhshi's ideas (2025; 2021), I agree that using different types of games such as quizzes, role-plays, and word puzzles can make the learning process much more engaging and active. In my view, these activities really help students practice speaking and listening in a more natural way, without feeling afraid of making mistakes. When students feel comfortable, they become more confident and willing to use English spontaneously. Here the procedure using games to teach children:

a. Analysis

In this step, teacher has to find what kind of game want to be developed. Since the function of game is to match between one element to another, whether it is between words with words, pictures with pictures, or mixed. Then, teacher needed to determine the contents that are going to develop whether it is matching between two elements, three elements, or more. The most simple analysis could be done by determine the needs of young learners themselves.

b. Design

In designing the game, English teachers have to concern with the appropriateness of young learners' level in English. As suggested by Tuan & Doan (2010), games designed for different levels as well as topics, so that students with different language proficiency levels can enjoy and gain the best results from them. Therefore, the game should not too difficult or too easy as well. On the other hand, designing this game, English teachers have to determine these elements, such as: learning material, content of game, target of game, name of game, objectives of game, and applicable for every young learner

c. Development

In developing step, English teachers need to visualize the idea.

d. Implementation

In this step, English teachers determine the way to implement the way of the game is going to be used.

The variety of games used by teachers can prevent boredom and keep students motivated. With the right games, the classroom becomes more lively, and students can learn English in a way that is enjoyable yet still effective. Moreover, games can encourage active participation from all students, including those who are usually shy or less confident in using the language. Through interactive activities, students have more opportunities to practice speaking, listening, and even critical thinking in a relaxed environment. In addition, well-designed games can strengthen teamwork and communication skills, as many activities require students to collaborate to reach a common goal. As a result, learning becomes not only more engaging but also more meaningful and memorable for the students.

3. What Students Can Achieve Through English Games

With games, students can accomplish a variety of objectives. They improve their speaking, listening, grammar, and vocabulary. Playing games gives pupils the confidence and enthusiasm to utilize English in everyday situations. Additionally, they learn how to solve problems and collaborate with others, which improves their social and cognitive abilities. (Saleh, 2022)

There are several benefits to using games in English instruction, particularly when it comes to maintaining students' motivation and engagement. Because they feel like they are having fun rather than studying, pupils are more inclined to participate and practice language skills, which helps reduce anxiety. As students work in groups or couples to complete challenges, the engaging and interactive nature of games also promotes cooperation, communication, and problem-solving skills. Due to the necessity of communication, negotiation, and concept expression during gameplay, this learning environment helps students develop greater confidence in utilizing English in real-life circumstances (Surayatika, D. 2024)

Based on these ideas, writer believes that games offer more than just fun they create a learning environment where students can actively use English without

pressure. When learners are engaged and enjoy the activity, they are more willing to participate, experiment with new language, and support each other. This combination of enjoyment and interaction makes games a powerful tool for developing both language skills and confidence.

Compared to merely listening to lecturers speak, pupils learn more effectively and retain information longer when they actively participate in games (Alibakhshi, 2025).

4. Teacher Problems in Using Game

It can be challenging for teachers to employ games because, if not controlled, they can take up too much class time. In order for classes to be completed correctly and for students to continue having fun, teachers must balance the time (Nuriyanti, 2025).

Seeing these challenges, I think that using games in the classroom requires careful planning. Games can be very engaging for students, but without proper time management, other learning activities may be disrupted. Therefore, teachers need to organize the steps of the game in a structured way, including the duration of each stage, so that the learning process continues to run according to the lesson objectives.

Teachers must select the appropriate games for each student because some may find them too simple or too difficult. Additionally, educators must be imaginative in selecting games that effectively connect to teachings and provide a clear explanation of the game's objective once it has concluded (Ghazy, 2021).

Teachers may face difficulties when using games in the classroom, especially when games are not well-managed and take up too much time. This situation requires teachers to plan activities carefully so the lesson can run smoothly without reducing the fun aspect for students. Another challenge is that not all students share the same ability level some may find a game too easy while others struggle with it. For this reason, teachers need to select games that are suitable for the whole class and connect well with the lesson goals. It is also important for teachers to explain the purpose of the game afterward, so students understand what they have learned rather than seeing the activity as only play.

5. Games Can Improve Vocabulary and Grammar.

A variety of games are useful for enhancing students' grammar and vocabulary. Through repetition and context, vocabulary-building games like Spelling Bee, Word Matching, Scrabble, and Running Dictation assist children in picking up new terms organically. Digital learning platforms and interactive grammar games, such as Kahoot Grammar Quizzes, Quizizz Sentence Structure Challenges, and ESL Grammar Board Games, offer instant feedback on grammar, which helps students recognize and fix their errors. These games facilitate gradual mastering through repetition and reinforcement in addition to making grammar instruction more interesting (Edutopia, 2023).

From my perspective, using games in English learning is a powerful approach because it transforms the classroom atmosphere into a more positive and supportive space. When students feel less anxious, they can focus better and are more willing to speak or participate, even if they are not confident. I believe that games create an environment where mistakes are seen as part of the learning process rather than something to be afraid of. This makes learning English feel more natural, similar to how people learn a language through daily interaction. The collaborative nature of games also helps students build not only language skills but also important soft skills such as teamwork, communication, and strategic thinking.

From the explanation above, we can conclude the use of vocabulary and grammar games is highly effective because students learn through meaningful practice rather than memorization. Games like Spelling Bee, Scrabble, or Kahoot challenges allow students to repeatedly encounter words and structures in a fun way, which improves retention. When students receive immediate feedback during gameplay, they can quickly identify mistakes and correct them on the spot, making the learning process more efficient. I also believe that these games make lessons more dynamic and inclusive, as every student whether they are shy, advanced, or still struggling can participate actively and learn at their own pace.

D. CONCLUSION

Game-based learning is an effective method to improve students' vocabulary and grammar. By using games, students can practice English in a fun and engaging way, which helps them remember new words and grammar rules better. The interactive nature of games encourages active use of language and reduces the boredom often associated with traditional learning methods.

Teachers use games to make the classroom more lively and interactive. Games such as quizzes, role-playing, and word puzzles allow students to practice their speaking and listening skills in a supportive environment. Properly designed games also help teachers monitor student progress and provide immediate feedback, making learning more efficient.

Students benefit greatly from learning through games, gaining not only language skills but also social skills like teamwork and problem-solving. Playing games boosts their confidence and makes learning English feel less intimidating. This active participation leads to better retention and practical application of language skills.

Despite the many advantages, teachers face challenges such as managing class time and choosing games that fit all students' levels. Some students may find certain games too difficult or too easy, so teachers must carefully select and adapt games to maintain motivation and focus. Overall, when used well, games are a valuable tool in language education that makes learning enjoyable and effective.

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