



Utilizing Games In Teaching English Vocabulary Inside Classrooms A Case Study Of Jordan

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ABSTRACT

The use of educational games as part of teaching and learning the English language makes a substantial contribution toward the objective of acquiring and learning languages via the interaction of one's peers and the social setting. Prior studies has shown that employing games as a fundamental instructional technique in language acquisition is quite important. Although it is particularly important for the growth of children, play is something that may be good for adults of any age. The idea of Different Intelligences developed by Howard Gardner is closely connected to the practice of using games to educate a target language. The use of games in the classroom may bring more happiness and enjoyment to the process of teaching and learning, as well as reduce stress and link students to both their peers and the globe surrounding them. Learning may be made more beneficial and pleasant via the usage of games, regardless of whether such games are performed in person or online. This study makes an effort to throw light on certain fundamental components that educational games have to contain, in addition to their characteristics, themes, and situations. In conclusion, the findings of this study provide numerous instances of instructional games that may be used by instructors in the classroom.

Keywords: Games, English vocabulary, Jordan schools, teaching vocabulary, classroom

1. Introduction

There is no denying that games play an important role in both the instruction and acquisition of vocabulary. On the other hand, in order to get the most out of vocabulary games, it is essential to choose games that are appropriate for the situation. When planning to play a game in class, it is important to take into consideration a variety of aspects, including the variety of students, their level of expertise, the cultural environment, the amount of time available, the material being studied, and the configuration of the classroom (Anggraeni and Arini, 2022).

Many students benefit from and respond positively to the encouragement that comes from playing games. The instructor may more easily construct situations in which the language is applicable and has significance with the use of games. Word games are a useful tool for teaching vocabulary, and one of the methods that can be utilized to do so is to have students work on them over an extended period of time. Since it's not true that every single word may be learned via playing word games, it stands to reason that the criterion for picking words should be given serious consideration (Mahmoud, 2022).

Yet, attention should be given to pick those terms that effectively communicate essential ideas, have a high level of practical application, are pertinent to the majority of the material that is being learnt, and have relevance to the students' everyday life. kids will be able to acquire word meanings at a deeper level of comprehension if the quantity of words they are required to learn is restricted, which may be regarded an essential concept of continuous vocabulary expansion. Another key aspect is that this will assist kids learn more words. In addition, certain student requirements may be met via the use of word games. This would imply that more conventional methods of teaching vocabulary are likely to be given less attention when working with students of an intermediate or advanced level. However, the usage of word games is a subject that is sometimes overlooked in the context of vocabulary instruction.

Over the course of the last decade, publications written for educators and students have increasingly focused on methods of arranging, rehearsing, and presenting new vocabulary in a manner that is both approachable and easy to remember for the students. Allo (2022) suggests that the topic of word games, as well as the means

by which we might raise students' knowledge of the topic, has received perhaps less attention than it deserves. For a long time, educators have been aware of the role that students' inner sentiments may play in helping children to study and have used this knowledge.

When teaching French to primary school pupils, some academics have found that using games to educate them is effective. Learning is best accomplished via the use of various educational pursuits such as crossword puzzles and board games. Playing with words is similar to playing tennis or cricket on the playground, or any other kind of practice game, in that it is an essential step in the process of becoming proficient. "When you first start playing a sport like cricket, for example, you use a soft ball and you bowl underarm, softly and straight. As you go through the game, you stop using the soft ball and you bowl pretty hard, with the odd spinner or off-break" (Wang and Dostál, 2018: 1). Because of this, it is essential that the game should be modified to accommodate the students' existing level of language competence.

1.1. Problem Statement

According to the findings of the study, it is challenging for pupils in Jordanian schools to learn English as a foreign language (EFL) in general and acquiring English vocabulary in particular. The retention of vocabulary is one of the most challenging elements of learning a foreign language, especially when the target language is EFL. The development of one's vocabulary is one of the most important factors in determining one's level of success in learning English. Some educators are of the opinion that students should only be exposed to a certain amount of new vocabulary words at any one point in time.

According to Richards-Tutor et al. (2016), the traditional technique of teaching vocabulary, in which students are given up to twenty or more new words at a time and expected to remember them, is not an efficient strategy to assist children in developing their vocabulary. The researchers chose to explore the impact of using word games as a strategy on the accomplishment of primary stage male and female students learning English as a foreign language in Amman in Jordan. They saw that vocabulary acquisition was an issue for Jordanian students, so they decided to investigate the effect of using word games as a method.

The usage of games in EFL classes is often defended by the EFL professionals by referring to the incentive that the games might offer for the students. According to Baimbetova (2020), adolescents, adults, and even adults may love games just as much as children do, and if the reason of a game is revealed to them, they will not feel that it is juvenile. However, if the aim of a game is not told to them, they may feel that the game is immature.

According to Yolageldili and Arikan (2011), "language usage takes priority over language preparation" when it comes to video games; as a result, "games bring classroom closer to the real world." Each game focuses on one or more components of the English language, such as a particular point of grammar, a vocabulary topic, or a communication skill by its very nature. It is possible that there is no valid reason why games cannot be included into a class, given their potential to impart knowledge.

1.2. Significance of the Study

The current investigation is being regarded as noteworthy for a variety of important reasons. It is possible for it to give instructional applications that may be used by instructors, students, and authors of textbooks. To begin, the findings will assist educators in developing a more nuanced perspective on the use of a wide array of activities as games. The pupils' vocabulary would be significantly improved as a result of their use of this applicable strategy.

It's possible that this research may disprove the claims of some educators that using new teaching strategies in Saudi Arabian institutions is impossible or impracticable. The instructors are able to better construct settings in which the language is helpful and relevant with the assistance of games. Second, there are a lot of advantages that come with playing language games for pupils. Students engage in healthy rivalry with one another when language games are used in the classroom. In a similar vein, it may lessen inhibitions among timid and weak kids, encouraging them to take part in the games that are being played.

There has been a lot of recent interest among scholars in the use of games to teach vocabulary. As a result of this, a great number of research have been done on the topic of using fun activities for teaching English vocabulary. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, however, only a small number of studies have been done in Jordan on the topic of utilizing word games to teach English vocabulary. In conclusion, the authors of educational materials will also reap significant advantages from this research. They have the option to pick and integrate a variety of activities suitable for the many skills and aspects of language that are included in the curriculum of the course books.

1.3. Objective of the Study

The goal of this review is to explore the impact of employing word games on the accomplishment of pupils in the English language vocabulary in Jordan.

1.4. Research Questions

- What is the impact of game in improving the students' achievements in the English language vocabulary?
- Does the gender of the pupils affect their performance in the English language vocabulary tests?

2. Literature Review

Hong et al. (2009) seek to highlight the significance of the role that playing games may play in the English-language education of adolescents. The author of the study emphasized how important it was to select playing methods and incorporate them into the overall lesson description strategy. Instructors need to give some thought to which games to employ, when to use them, how to relate them to the instruction, textbook, or course, and, more precisely, how various games will assist learners in a variety of different ways.

Ibrahim (2017) intends to highlight the benefits of incorporating language-based games into the curriculum of primary schools in Sudan for the purpose of instructing students in English as a second language. One of the things that was discovered from the study was that teaching English as a foreign language using games is beneficial. Students may develop a positive association with the new language they are learning by playing language games. Following these results, the researcher provided a recommendation to the curriculum designers, suggesting that they include language games into the curriculum when appropriate. The use of games is also examined in this research as a potential means of enhancing vocabulary acquisition for students studying English as a second language or English as a foreign language.

Naderiheshi (2022) carries out research in which he demonstrates that games may also assist instructors in the creation of real circumstances in which language is helpful and meaningful. The investigation carried out by the researcher demonstrates that the game, when used in primary school English classrooms, is a very effective means of engaging with students. This is due to the fact that toys serve several purposes in the process of a child's growth, such as assisting in the facilitation of the learning process, assisting in the learning of topics that are expanding with each passing year, and indirectly acquiring the necessary competences.

Gozcu and Caganaga (2016) seek to determine the significance of games and the degree to which they are successful when used in teaching English to speakers of other languages. The study came to the conclusion that games should be employed in schools to teach foreign languages because they provide a positive environment for students learning English, one that is filled with greater enjoyment and motivation, which would undoubtedly lead to improved academic achievement.

In addition, a number of studies have shown that games are helpful in the process of acquiring vocabulary because they increase students' memorization skills, motivate students to connect with one another, help them become more effective communicators, and strengthen their communication abilities. Research on the significance of acquiring a broad vocabulary has been carried out throughout the course of the past few decades (Lessard-Clouston, 2013; Rabadi, 2016). These studies were published in academic journals. According to Azriel et al. (2005: 9), "irrespective of age or financial, cultural, or social situation, individuals comprehend the language of play" when discussing the use of games to acquire new words.

According to Harmer (2008), the use of language games ought to be methodical since it necessitates instructors to prepare for what they need to do while offering pupils with the supplies they require. In addition, educators ought to offer learners with the encounters which render the class more interactive and intriguing for pupils. In addition, Huyen and Nga (2003) came to the conclusion that games offer an appealing and entertaining atmosphere for students to become confident in, which in turn leads to greater learning and retention of words on the part of the students. Furthermore, Freeman (1989) noted out that the use of games is effective since it resembles actual life when it needs interaction, which motivates players to share thoughts with one other and it enables them to accept immediate input from teammates and their instructor. This makes the use of games an effective learning tool.

Bakhsh (2016) studied the use of games as a medium for imparting knowledge of English language to Saudi Arabia's younger students. The researcher used word games that were centered on the utilization of visuals and various hues. The findings demonstrated that games are useful instruments that may be conceived of to teach vocabularies and that they make it simpler to retain the meanings of the terms.

Shanahan et al. (2006) conducted research to determine how students might overcome apathy and disengagement in the classroom with regard to their classes. His research stressed that students' lack of interest in the learning process leads to poor performance on their part. In the course of his research, he used the Karaoke Jeopardy game. The findings imply that the installation of that game increased the achievement of pupils, and that aspects such as games being relevant to learning objectives, games being intelligible to students, and games inspiring students to participate are vital for the success of the learning process.

Akrimah (2017) investigated the effectiveness of utilizing visualizing games to educate pupils in the first grade about vocabulary. According to the findings, playing the game Pictionary is an efficient method for expanding children's vocabularies. Research articles such as Wulanjani (2016), Gruss (2016), and Marius (2018) are just a few examples of the many additional research that have shown the value that games provide to the process of vocabulary acquisition.

3. Types of Games used in Classroom

Both Huyen and Nga (2003) found that pupils detest conventional approaches to acquiring vocabulary. According to the findings of the first two writers, pupils seem to prefer learning a language in an informal setting. For instance, according to Freeman (1989), one of the most successful and desirable techniques of learning is playing games. Therefore, it is needed of instructors to discover approaches that are exciting and

appealing to their pupils in order to stimulate their talents. The following are among the games that are played in Jordan:

Taboo

In this game, one player is responsible for convincing the other players, via either verbal explanation or gestures, to guess a given word. According to Darfilal (2015), an allotted amount of time is specified for the individual to explain. According to Darfilal (2015), a crazy eraser is when a teacher rubs the board, erasing certain words, and then challenges the pupils to rebuild what had been written previously.

Crossword

It is a type of word puzzle (Darfilal, 2015). The objective of the game is for each participant to fill in the problem by forming phrases that cross and descend. According to Darfilal (2015), the objective of the board game Scrabble is for each player to form a word by placing a certain number of independent letters on a board.

Memory box

Memory box is another game that has the potential to be used in the process of imparting vocabulary to younger students. The students are required to either sit in pairs or create small groups of their own. Every group has three minutes to jot down as many words as they can recall from the previous session (for instance, animals) and place them in a container. According to Bakhsh (2016), the winning team would be the one that can remember the most terms.

Hot Potatoes

In this game, the class will be split into group A and group B, with each team seated on the opposite side of the room. There are two chairs positioned in the centre of the classroom so that whomever sits in them will face their respective teams, and the board must be behind them at all times. The instructor continues by writing a word on the board, but the student who is sitting in the chair is unable to see it. After the referee has given the indication that the game is about to begin, each side will have one minute. The standing students provide a description for their sitting teammate to use in order to guess the word that is posted on the board. They should refrain from saying the words printed on the board word for word (Bakhsh, 2016).

Bingo

In this version of the game, the instructor will write 10 words on the board, and then each student will select five of those words and write them down. After that, the instructor will select a word at random without uttering it before providing the class with either the definition of the term or a synonym for it. According to Bakhsh (2016), the student who correctly identifies the word is the one who gets to yell "BINGO!" and wins the round.

Last One Standing

The students in the class are given a subject, such as fruit, to discuss during the game "Last One Standing." They are required to stand in a circle, and after the instructor reaches the count of three, they are given the subject. Following that, the first student in the circle is tasked with providing a term that is connected to the discussion, and so on. The student who is unable to utter a new word or who cannot repeat what the previous student said is required to take a seat. According to Bakhsh (2016), the winner will be determined by the student who is the last one standing.

Piece of pizza

The instructor gives the class a pizza and instructs them to write words on it that are associated with the lesson's subject matter. For instance, a vegetarian pizza has the names of vegetables inscribed on the individual slices of pizza (this was a concept conceived by the researchers).

Painting images

The teacher may provide the students with a list of terms related to a certain subject, such as nature, and then require the students to create an image that incorporates the words. (This was an original thought by the researchers).

4. The Significance of Playing Games

Learning a new language is a challenging endeavor that, at times, can be very frustrating. Understanding, producing, and manipulating the target language all need consistent effort on the learner's part. It is crucial to emphasize the significance of games in the process of teaching vocabulary in this context. Games have been shown to be beneficial and useful in acquiring vocabulary in a variety of ways, including the following:

- Vocabulary games bring real-world context into the classroom and enhance students' use of English in a flexible, communicative way.
- Games are highly motivating and they give students more opportunity to express their opinions and feelings.
- Games typically involve friendly competition and they keep learners interested.
- Games help students relax and have fun, which makes it easier for them to learn and remember new words.

- Games not only "break the ice" and provide a welcome respite from the typical activities in a classroom, but they are also used to present novel concepts.

The word "fun" is often connected with gaming. Even while it is true that games are often enjoyable, one must not lose sight of the educational value that they possess, especially when it comes to the instruction of a second language (Wright et al., 2006: 1).

Playing games may reduce feelings of worry, which in turn makes the gathering of information more possible. In addition, they are often very motivating, pertinent, fascinating, and understandable (Isakulova, (2023: 48). In the classroom, games may be utilized for a variety of purposes, including but not limited to: developing and reinforcing ideas (such as word meanings, numbers, shapes, and colors); adding diversion to the routine tasks of the classroom; and even breaking the ice.

A successful user of games in the foreign language classroom is not always the instructor who has a huge list of them in his brain; rather, it is someone who has actually thought about them and understands their components and how they may be altered to bring forth various actions and abilities from the participants. If a teacher has this kind of understanding of a game, he or she has a far better chance of being able to locate or build games that will assist their pupils learn anything while they are playing them (Alexiou et al., 2019). Masri and Najjar (2014) reported that games are often viewed of as beneficial instruments for such learning comprehension, and they are one of the numerous methods that may make learning more successful.

When talking about games, there are a lot of different things to think about, and one of those things is whether or not they are appropriate. According to Bavi (2018: 631), educators need to use extreme caution when selecting games to play in the classroom in order to ensure that students benefit from their participation. If games are to bring about the intended effects, they must either relate to the level or age of the learner, or they must correspond to the content that is to be presented or practiced.

There is no denying the important part that games play in both the teaching and learning of vocabulary. On the other hand, in order to get the most out of vocabulary games, it is essential to choose games that are appropriate for the situation. According to Masri and Najjar (2014), there are a number of considerations that need to be made prior to the execution of a game. These include the number of students, their degree of expertise, the cultural context, the timing, the learning subject, and the classroom conditions. If they provide students with the opportunity to study, practice, and review the English language in an enjoyable environment, games may help to the development of students' vocabulary. In a variety of settings, it has been shown that they are beneficial and successful in terms of vocabulary acquisition.

Playing games helps students to unwind and have fun, which in turn makes it easier for them to acquire and remember new vocabulary. Moreover, they often involve friendly rivalry, which helps learners remain engaged in the activity. These things provide the incentive for people who are learning English to become interested and actively participate in the activities that are part of their education. Vocabulary games bring the context of the real world into the classroom and improve students' ability to utilize English in a flexible and conversational manner (Jannah et al., 2020).

According to Chen (2007), utilizing games as a teaching tool is an efficient and helpful way since it captures the attention of students, inspires them to interact with one another, and propels them to take action. The relevance of employing games stems from the capability of games to provide students with a meaningful opportunity to interact with their professors and with each other, all while reducing the levels of stress that are present in the classroom (Gozcu and Caganaga, 2016). If the concepts are not obvious, intelligible, or properly arranged by utilizing the conventional ways, the most suitable approach is to use games to make the ideas clearer. This is because games are fun and engaging for people of all ages. In addition, employing games assists students in arranging their ideas in a logical fashion (Li et al., 2020). The process of reaching one's aims in teaching is influenced by a wide variety of elements to varying degrees.

For instance, the objectives of games should be appropriate to the ages of the students and their skill levels; they should encourage students to think, notice, observe, and compare; and they should be constrained to a certain amount of time (Crompton et al., 2018). Krashen (2003: 183) makes the case that "learners with strong motivation often perform better, and learners who learn self-confidence and a positive self-image tend to be more successful". Because it encourages students to speak before, during, and after the game, the most important advantage of utilizing games in the classroom is the creation of an environment of meaningful communication, which is the major benefit of using games in teaching (Wright et al., 2006).

According to Rachmadhany et al. (2020), playing vocabulary games with pupils promotes them to speak the language. Students will have the opportunity to strengthen their creative language abilities by expressing their ideas and emotions via the use of games (Giri et al., 2018). The use of word games has been shown to reduce students' feelings of uneasiness and shyness, which in turn has a favorable effect on the students' overall performance (Isakulova, 2023). It provides a setting that is fascinating, entertaining, and comfortable, which makes it easier for pupils to remember words and helps them remember them quicker (Baimbetova, 2020).

Moreover, O'Riordan and Kirkland (2008) stated that games have a significant impact on the process of education because they transform a monotonous class into a fascinating and thrilling adventure that encourages students to discover more about themselves. It provides students with the chance to take an active role in an important competition, which in turn encourages students to employ language in an effective manner

(Albashtawi and Al Bataineh, 2020). Therefore, it is impossible to deny the importance of games in the process of teaching and acquiring vocabulary.

5. Conclusion

Employing games for learning English represents one of the instructional instruments and methods utilized in contemporary schooling, which relies on capitalizing on the effect of games on pupils throughout young age and transforming this effect into an advantage, beneficial learning tool to encourage pupils to communicate effectively with their learning resources and boost their verbal conversations with one another, thereby acquiring fresh words in the language. Instructional games are described as an expenditure of kid's muscular power, which represents their physical activity cognitively and helps to gain a great deal of knowledge by using instructional approaches that are fun and enjoyable. Learning via games has a more profound effect on memorization since the learner will pick up a great deal of linguistic material and be able to use it effectively in the learning environment.

Children have a wonderful chance to strengthen their speech, language, and listening abilities via the process of learning English through games. When children play, they converse with one another and listen to others, both of which contribute to their development into independent language users. Youngsters are able to acquire a wide variety of new skills via the use of games. Some of these skills include expertise, discovery, and custom, all of which assist youngsters in achieving the developmental goals of their lifetime. Children are better able to find out themselves and their surroundings around them when they are allowed to play and learn at a young age. It is interesting to note that the authors of textbooks include certain games in their publications so that they may act as a guide not only for inexperienced instructors but also for those with more years of teaching under their belts.

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