



## **Games: An Effective Strategy for Teaching Vocabulary**

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## Abstract

### Objectives of the Study

To demonstrate the effectiveness of using games in teaching new English vocabulary to primary school children. To compare the impact of game-based learning with traditional teaching methods in vocabulary acquisition. To engage students more actively and increase their motivation through interactive and fun learning techniques. To enhance students' retention and recall of new vocabulary using game-based strategies. To identify the benefits and challenges of implementing games in the English language classroom at the primary level.

This study presents a theoretical and practical framework emphasizing the significance of using games in teaching new vocabulary to fourth-grade students. It illustrates the contrast between traditional teaching approaches and the integration of interactive, game-based methods in the learning process.

Following classroom implementation, a clear improvement was observed in students' vocabulary acquisition. Initially, when relying solely on traditional methods, students' performance was noticeably low due to the limited engagement and ineffective information delivery. However, once games were introduced into vocabulary instruction, there was a marked enhancement in students' test scores and overall language comprehension.

In particular, three specific educational games were highly effective in reinforcing vocabulary learning:

**Word Parts (Morphology):** This strategy encouraged students to analyse and deconstruct words into their prefixes, roots, and suffixes, enabling a deeper understanding of word formation and meaning.

**Contextual Learning:** New vocabulary was introduced within meaningful contexts such as sentences, short stories, and real-life scenarios, helping students to grasp and retain word usage more naturally.

**Use of Flashcards:** Flashcards featuring the target word on one side and its definition, a relevant image, or an example sentence on the other, supported visual memory and active recall.

Based on these findings, it is evident that integrating modern, game-based strategies into vocabulary instruction significantly enhances student engagement and academic performance. Therefore, it is recommended that educators incorporate such innovative

methods—particularly for young learners—to create a more dynamic and effective classroom environment.

## الملخص

أهداف الدراسة:

إثبات فعالية استخدام الألعاب في تعليم مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية الجديدة لأطفال المرحلة الابتدائية. ومقارنة أثر التعلم القائم على الألعاب مع أساليب التدريس التقليدية في اكتساب المفردات. وإشراك الطلاب بشكل أكثر فعالية وزيادة دافعيتهم من خلال أساليب التعلم التفاعلية والممتعة. وتعزيز قدرة الطلاب على تذكر المفردات الجديدة واسترجاعها باستخدام استراتيجيات قائمة على الألعاب. وتحديد فوائد وتحديات تطبيق الألعاب في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية في المرحلة الابتدائية.

تقدّم هذه الدراسة إطاراً نظرياً وتطبيقياً يسلط الضوء على أهمية استخدام الألعاب في تعليم المفردات الجديدة لطلاب الصف الرابع الابتدائي. وتبرز الدراسة الفارق بين أساليب التعليم التقليدية وتوظيف الأساليب التفاعلية القائمة على الألعاب ضمن عملية التعلم.

بعد تطبيق الأساليب داخل الفصل الدراسي، لوحظ تحسن واضح في اكتساب الطلاب للمفردات. ففي البداية، وعند الاعتماد فقط على الطرق التقليدية، كان أداء الطلاب منخفضاً بشكل ملحوظ بسبب ضعف التفاعل وعدم فاعلية إيصال المعلومات. ولكن بعد إدخال الألعاب ضمن دروس المفردات، ظهر تحسن كبير في نتائج اختبارات الطلاب وفهمهم العام للغة.

وتحديداً، كانت هناك ثلاث ألعاب تعليمية فعّالة بشكل كبير في تعزيز تعلم المفردات: أجزاء الكلمة (علم الصرف): شجعت هذه الاستراتيجية الطلاب على تحليل الكلمات إلى بادئاتها وجذورها ولاحقاتها، مما مكّنهم من فهم أعمق لبنية الكلمة ومعناها. التعلم السياقي: تم تقديم المفردات الجديدة ضمن سياقات ذات معنى مثل الجمل، والقصص القصيرة، والمواقف الحياتية، مما ساعد الطلاب على فهم واستخدام الكلمات بشكل طبيعي. استخدام البطاقات التعليمية (الفلش كاردز): احتوت البطاقات على الكلمة المستهدفة من جهة، وتعريفها أو صورة مرتبطة بها أو جملة مثال من الجهة الأخرى، مما دعم الذاكرة البصرية وسهّل عملية الاستدعاء النشط.

وبناءً على هذه النتائج، يتضح أن دمج استراتيجيات حديثة قائمة على الألعاب في تعليم المفردات يعزز بشكل كبير من تفاعل الطلاب وأدائهم الأكاديمي. لذا يُوصى المعلمون باعتماد مثل هذه الأساليب المبتكرة، خاصة مع المتعلمين الصغار، لخلق بيئة صفية أكثر ديناميكية وفعالية.

## Key Words

- Vocabulary.
- Games.
- Assessment.
- Understanding.
- Young learners.

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## Introduction

Building a strong vocabulary is one of the most essential parts of learning a new language, especially for young students who are still developing their basic communication skills. Vocabulary allows learners to express themselves more clearly, understand what others are saying, and interact with written and spoken texts more effectively. Because of this, the way vocabulary is taught should match the age, learning style, and abilities of the students.

Using educational games in English language teaching and learning significantly contributes to the goal of learning and acquiring languages through peers and social interaction. Previous studies demonstrated the importance of using games as a basic strategy in language education. (Mayyas, M. M. M. (2022).

Incorporating games into language teaching aligns closely with Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences. Games can make the learning experience more enjoyable and engaging, reduce anxiety, and help students build connections with others and with the world beyond the classroom.

In many classrooms, traditional methods such as translation, repetition, using synonyms and antonyms, and memorization have been commonly used to teach new words. While these techniques might help in some cases, they often make students passive learners. For instance, explaining a word by giving a synonym or antonym can be confusing if students don't know the reference word in the first place. Also, many words have more than one meaning or several possible synonyms, which can make things more complicated rather than clearer.

Translation can give students a quick understanding of a word, especially when they share the same first language as the teacher. However, this method can make them too dependent

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on their native language, preventing them from fully thinking in the language they are trying to learn. It also doesn't always communicate the emotional or cultural meanings that words carry.

Memorization and drilling are also widely used, but they focus more on short-term memory than true understanding. Students might remember a word just long enough to pass a test, but they often forget it soon afterward or struggle to use it correctly in real conversations. These activities can also become repetitive and boring, which can make students lose interest in learning.

To solve these issues, more attention is now being given to interactive and student-centered methods. One of the most exciting and effective strategies is game-based learning. Games make learning more fun and active, encouraging students to participate, collaborate, and practice using new words in meaningful ways. By turning learning into a fun experience, students become more involved and

are more likely to remember what they learn.

In this project, we explored how using games could improve vocabulary learning for fourth-grade students. One of the main activities involved a game using a box of cards. Each card had a picture and a vocabulary word. Students would pick a card and describe the word without saying it directly, helping their classmates guess it. This game gave students the chance to use their own words, think critically, and learn from each other in an enjoyable and creative way.

To make the learning experience even more complete, we also added other engaging methods:

**Word Parts (Morphology):** Students learned how to break down words into prefixes, roots, and suffixes. This helped them figure out the meanings of new words by understanding how they are built. For example, knowing that “un-” means “not” helped them understand words like “unhappy” or “unclear.” This approach supports independent learning and builds vocabulary skills that go beyond a

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single lesson. ( Al-Zoubi, S. M. (2016). The Effect of the Time Management Art on Academic Achievement among High School Students in Jordan. International Journal of Business and Social Science)

Contextual Learning: New words were introduced within real-life situations, stories, or full sentences, rather than being taught on their own. This gave students a better understanding of how to use the words in context and helped them connect meaning with usage more naturally. (Salem, D. A. B., Salem, N. A. B., Fureeh, A. H. M., & Elsamanoudy, A. Z. (2016).

Flashcards: We also used flashcards that showed the word on one side and a picture, definition, or example sentence on the other. These visual tools made it easier for students to remember and understand vocabulary, especially during group work or review sessions.

The goal of using these interactive strategies was not just to help students memorize words, but to actually understand and apply them in real-life situations. By using different senses and learning styles—like seeing, hearing, moving, and speaking—students were more engaged and able to retain the words better.

Throughout this project, we also paid attention to how these strategies affected student confidence, motivation, and classroom participation. Many students felt more relaxed when learning through games, which helped reduce the fear of making mistakes and encouraged them to speak and practice more freely.

## **Characteristics of Educational Games**

Educational games often incorporate audiovisual elements, which engage multiple senses and make the learning process more impactful and memorable. They naturally boost

learners' motivation, as play is an instinctive activity—making it an effective way to spark curiosity about unfamiliar topics (Misa, 2022). Many games allow individual participation without requiring others, reducing competition and stress. Achieving goals independently during gameplay can also enhance a learner's sense of competence and self-confidence. Electronic games are enjoyable and considered among the most appealing educational tools available.

They stimulate intellectual engagement and contribute significantly to cognitive development, especially in fostering creativity. One of the advantages of digital games is their flexibility—they're not limited by time, allowing learners to play whenever and for however long they prefer. These games often break down content into small, interactive steps that require learner responses and offer instant feedback, keeping the educational objective clear and encouraging continued participation. Playing educational games can also help reduce stress caused by traditional academic pressures or social

expectations. They blend content knowledge with essential skills like logical thinking, problem-solving, planning, and decision-making. Such games adapt well to individual learning styles and capabilities, supporting personalized learning experiences. Repetition of game-based activities helps students move toward mastery at their own pace (Ibrahim, 2017). Additionally, they provide learners with hands-on experience in using digital devices—skills that might be harder to acquire through formal instruction alone.

However, it's important to use these tools in moderation, as excessive use without proper guidance may lead to health or behavioral concerns.

Overall, this study aims to show how traditional vocabulary teaching methods can be improved by adding games and interactive techniques. By comparing the outcomes of both approaches, we hope to offer helpful insights that can guide teachers in creating more effective, fun, and supportive language learning environments for their students.

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## Theoretical Framework

### The Importance of Using Games in Teaching New Vocabulary to Primary School Students

Teaching vocabulary is one of the most essential aspects of language learning, especially for young learners in primary schools. Vocabulary is the foundation of language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—and it plays a critical role in communication. Traditional methods of teaching vocabulary, such as memorization, repetition, and translation, often result in passive learning. These methods may be effective for some students, but they are usually not engaging or motivating for young learners. In contrast, the use of games in vocabulary instruction has been found to be a powerful tool that not only increases students' interest in learning but also helps them retain new words more effectively.

Games provide a fun, interactive, and dynamic learning environment that captures children's attention. At the primary school level, children are naturally active, curious, and playful.

By incorporating games into the learning process, teachers can take advantage of these characteristics to create meaningful learning experiences. Games promote active participation, which leads to deeper processing of the new vocabulary. When students are physically and mentally involved in an activity, they are more likely to remember the words and understand how to use them in context.

Another key benefit of using games is that they reduce anxiety and create a positive atmosphere in the classroom. Traditional vocabulary teaching often relies on drilling and testing, which can be stressful and intimidating for young learners. On the other hand, games are usually associated with enjoyment and relaxation. When students learn through games, they feel more comfortable experimenting with language and making mistakes, which is essential for language development. This supportive environment encourages risk-taking and increases students' confidence in using new vocabulary.



Furthermore, games can be easily adapted to suit different learning styles and levels of ability. Visual learners can benefit from picture-based games, auditory learners can enjoy listening games, and kinesthetic learners can participate in movement-based activities. This flexibility makes games an inclusive teaching strategy that allows all students to engage with the material in a way that suits them best. In contrast, traditional methods often rely on a one-size-fits-all approach, which may leave some students behind.

In addition, games can promote cooperation and communication among students. Many vocabulary games are designed for pairs or small groups, which encourages teamwork, sharing, and peer learning. This social interaction helps students learn from each other and build their communication skills in a natural way. Traditional methods, which often focus on individual tasks, may not provide the same opportunities for collaborative learning.

In conclusion, using games to teach new vocabulary in primary schools is

not only more enjoyable for students, but it is also more effective than traditional methods. Games support active engagement, reduce anxiety, cater to different learning styles, and foster social interaction. For these reasons, incorporating games into vocabulary instruction should be a central part of teaching English to young learners.

## **Traditional Teaching Methods**

Underlying Theories:

Behaviorism:

Learning is viewed as a response to external stimuli. Knowledge is transmitted from teacher to student, with a focus on reinforcement and repetition.

Realism:

Emphasizes the delivery of factual knowledge and objective truth. The teacher is the central authority who imparts knowledge to passive learners.

Role of the Teacher:

-Acts as the main source of knowledge.

-Controls the classroom and directs the learning process.

Role of the Student:

-Passive recipient of information.

-Learning is based on memorization and rote practice.

Educational Goals:

-Emphasis on outcomes such as test performance and factual recall.

-Focus on knowledge transmission and discipline.

## **Modern (Constructivist) Teaching Methods**

Underlying Theories:

Constructivism:

Learning is seen as an active process where students construct their own understanding based on prior knowledge and experiences.

Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky):

Emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cultural tools in learning. Learning is enhanced through collaboration and guided support (scaffolding).

Inquiry-Based and Experiential Learning:

Encourages exploration, questioning, and problem-solving to develop deeper understanding.

Role of the Teacher:

Acts as a facilitator and guide.

Creates a supportive learning environment and encourages exploration.

Role of the Student:

-Active participant in the learning process.

-Engages in discussion, collaboration, critical thinking, and self-directed learning.

Educational Goals:

-Develop critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong learning skills.

-Focus on understanding, application, and real-world relevance.

The theoretical framework serves several important functions in this research. First, it defines the key concepts that are central to understanding the study, such as traditional and new teaching methods. Next, it introduces theories that explain the relationships among these concepts. It also reviews previous studies that have explored the topic and identifies the contributions this study will make. Additionally, it discusses the methods used in analyzing the data, such as statistical and qualitative (Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018) (Miles, M. B.,

Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). (Grant, C., & Osanloo, A. (2014))

Traditional teaching, often teacher-centered, focuses on knowledge transmission and memorization, while modern methods emphasize student-centered learning, active engagement, individualized instruction, and the use of pictures like look and describe so that we discuss this on our search

As we are living in the 21 century, the teaching process continues to witness a paradigmatic shift, from the traditional teaching method to a more active and student-centered approach which is using the modern teaching methods that are capable of assessing students' 21 century skill needs. The study aims to investigate the pros and cons of both methods, how and when they can be applied by qualified teachers for more effective teaching, and the benefit of students' academic achievement. To carry out this aim the researcher designed a questionnaire that has been distributed to teachers of private and public schools in Jerusalem. The questionnaire consists of two fields. The first field contains

the demographic variables of the chosen sample (gender, age, workplace, educational level and teaching experience. The second field consists of four major parts evaluating the impact of advantages and disadvantages of both methods. The study evaluated it by assessing a sample of teachers (81) from different schools, and the data was analyzed by several tests such as the SPSS program, Chronbach's Alpha, an independent t-test and one-way Anova. The results showed the importance of using both methods. The advantages of both methods are noticeable and how teachers should use a combination of both methods emphasizing on the modern methods in order to cope with the era of 21st century development and the different needs of students for better academic achievements.

In today's changing world, the teaching process continues to witness a paradigm shift from the traditional method of teaching and learning to a more active and learner centered approached (Dr. Al-Quds University. RESS Journal)

(Route Educational & Social Science Journal) (Volume 10/Issue 2, March 2023)

**Traditional Methods of Teaching:** Traditional teaching methods are generally characterized by teacher-centered approaches where the teacher plays a dominant role in delivering content, and students are mostly passive recipients of knowledge. These methods include lectures, textbook-based learning, rote memorization, and standardized assessments. Traditional teaching emphasizes structured lesson plans, discipline, and control in the classroom.

I noticed that new Methods of Teaching, in contrast, are based on more student-centered approaches that emphasize active learning, collaboration, These methods include flipped classrooms, The focus is on engaging students, fostering critical thinking, and promoting independent learning and this already happened when we use this technique in the class room with the students

Variables: The study will focus on several key variables that are impacted by traditional and new methods of teaching: We let the students look at the pictures and describe what they see.

Student Engagement: The level of active participation and interest shown by students in the learning process.

Learning Outcomes: The academic performance and understanding achieved by students, typically measured through assessments or tests. And the researchers noticed the difference in grades after and before the new teaching methods

Teacher-Student Interaction: The nature and frequency of communication and collaboration between students and teachers.

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving: The ability of students to apply knowledge in novel situations and engage in complex decision-making.

### **Previous studies and similar research**

In order to establish a robust theoretical framework, it is essential to examine previous studies and research that have investigated the differences and impacts of traditional and new methods of teaching words.

### **Studies on Traditional Methods of Education**

Traditional methods of education, characterized by teacher-centered approaches, structured lectures, and the use of textbooks, have been the foundation of education systems worldwide for centuries. Despite the rise of new educational methods, traditional approaches remain widely used, particularly in countries or regions with limited access to digital tools or where educational systems are slow to innovate.

As Smith's study (2005) focused on the role of teacher-led instruction and the emphasis on rote memorization in traditional education. The study found that traditional methods are effective in transmitting factual knowledge, especially in subjects like mathematics and science, where structured learning is key. However,

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Smith also noted that such methods are often less engaging for students and do not promote critical thinking skills. This highlights one of the key criticisms of traditional education methods the lack of emphasis on student engagement and active learning. And I agree with him

Johnson & Christensen (2008): This research delved into the limitations of traditional classroom settings, particularly the lack of student autonomy and the passive role of students. The study indicated that students in traditional classrooms often struggle with engagement, especially in large lecture halls where individual participation is minimal. Furthermore, the study pointed out that the over-reliance on textbooks and standardized assessments could stifle creativity and critical thinking. Johnson and Christensen concluded that while traditional methods serve a purpose in basic knowledge transmission, they do not adequately prepare students for real-world problem-solving.

The theoretical framework outlined in this section provides a comprehensive overview of the key concepts, theories, and previous studies that will guide this research. By reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of both traditional and new teaching methods, and identifying the variables that impact student learning, this research aims to contribute valuable insights to the field of education. This study will help educators and policymakers understand how different teaching methods can be utilized to enhance student engagement, performance, and critical thinking skills in the classroom.

## **Methods of Research and the Tools Used**

Traditional teaching methods have long been used in classrooms to introduce new vocabulary to students. These methods typically rely on direct translation, memorization, and repetition. While such approaches can be effective to some extent, they often fail to maintain students' interest, especially at younger ages. Children in primary school, particularly in the fourth grade, tend to learn more

effectively through activities that involve movement, interaction, and creativity. For this reason, it became necessary to explore alternative methods that align better with the natural learning tendencies of young learners.

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of using educational games as a method for teaching vocabulary to fourth-grade students. Specifically, it investigates whether games can improve students' understanding, engagement, and retention of new English words compared to more traditional approaches. Educational games introduce elements of fun and competition into the learning process, which can significantly enhance student motivation and participation.

Throughout the study, multiple types of vocabulary games were introduced into the classroom. Each game targeted a different learning aspect—ranging from word recognition and context usage to morphology and memory recall. The results obtained from comparing student performance before and after implementing these

games provide valuable insights into how game-based learning can serve as a powerful tool in language education.

## **Methodology**

To conduct this study, the researchers selected the first lesson from Unit 11 of the fourth-grade English curriculum. The lesson contained a set of new vocabulary words intended for comprehension, pronunciation, and usage. The study was carried out over a structured three-phase process, which included:

- (1) Traditional teaching,
- (2) Game-based learning, and
- (3) Assessment of both approaches.

### **Phase 1: Teaching Vocabulary Using Traditional Methods**

In the initial phase, vocabulary was taught through the conventional method. The researchers presented each word, explained its meaning in

Arabic, and asked students to repeat the word multiple times. This was followed by verbal and written examples provided by the researchers. Students were required to memorize the words and reproduce them in simple exercises.

Although the students participated, the engagement level remained low. Most responses were mechanical and lacked real understanding. After this phase, a vocabulary test was administered. The test required students to match words to their meanings, fill in the blanks, and use words in context. The results indicated that a large portion of the class scored between weak and average levels. This reflected a limited grasp of the vocabulary and suggested that the traditional approach was not sufficiently effective in facilitating long-term retention or understanding.

#### Phase 2: Implementing the Game-Based Learning Approach

To create a more engaging and effective learning experience, the researchers introduced a series of educational games designed to

reinforce vocabulary acquisition in an interactive way.

These games catered to different learning styles—visual, auditory, kinesthetic—and created a classroom environment full of energy, creativity, and active participation.

#### Game 1: Vocabulary Box Game

In this game, we placed a set of small cards in a box. Each card displayed a picture and the English word it represented. Students were asked to randomly draw one card and then prepare to describe the word without saying it. When chosen, each student stood in front of the class, used gestures, synonyms, and descriptive language to convey the meaning of the word. After the explanation, the word was written on the board, and the teacher provided further clarification and additional example sentences. This activity helped students build speaking confidence, encouraged peer learning, and reinforced word meanings through repeated exposure.

#### Game 2: Word Parts (Morphology)



This game was designed to teach students how words are built. They learned to break down vocabulary into prefixes, roots, and suffixes. For example, the word "unhappy" was analyzed as "un-" (a prefix meaning 'not') and "happy" (the root word). Students were given sets of word parts and asked to combine them to form new words, then explain the meaning of the resulting word. This method not only enhanced their vocabulary but also gave them tools to decode unfamiliar words in the future.

#### Game 3: Contextual Learning Game

Vocabulary was also presented within meaningful contexts—such as in short stories, dialogues, or real-life situations. Students were asked to read or listen to these sentences and guess the meaning of the new words. For instance, in the sentence “Sara wore a waterproof jacket because it was raining,” students inferred the meaning of “waterproof.” This guessing element turned the activity into a game and made learning more dynamic. The teacher then confirmed or corrected the guesses and provided further examples. This approach

helped improve comprehension skills and taught students how to deduce meanings from context.

#### Game 4: Flashcard Challenge

Visual learning was supported through the use of flashcards. Each flashcard had the word on one side and an image, a definition, or a sample sentence on the other. Students played various games using the flashcards, such as memory-matching games, group competitions, or sentence-building challenges. These activities made vocabulary revision enjoyable and effective, particularly for visual learners who benefit from associating words with images.

These games collectively addressed multiple aspects of language acquisition—pronunciation, comprehension, memory, and usage. Students showed greater enthusiasm during these sessions, often asking to repeat the games and showing noticeable improvements in their willingness to participate, use English, and help their classmates.

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### Phase 3: Assessing the Impact of the Game-Based Approach

After the implementation of the game-based approach to teaching vocabulary, a follow-up assessment was conducted to evaluate its effectiveness. A second vocabulary test was administered, designed to mirror the format and difficulty level of the test previously given following the traditional teaching method. This allowed for a fair and accurate comparison of the two instructional approaches.

The results of the test were highly encouraging. There was a noticeable and significant improvement in the students' performance. A large proportion of the students scored high marks, demonstrating a solid understanding and retention of the new vocabulary introduced through games. Only a few students scored at an average level, and remarkably, no students fell into the "weak" category, which was a considerable improvement compared to the results obtained after the traditional teaching

phase. This dramatic shift in outcomes highlights the potential of interactive and student-centered teaching methods to enhance academic achievement, particularly in language learning.

In addition to the quantitative data provided by the test scores, qualitative observations from classroom activities further confirmed the success of the game-based approach. Students appeared more enthusiastic and engaged during lessons. They actively participated in classroom discussions and were more confident when using the new vocabulary in both written and spoken tasks. Unlike the passive learning that often characterizes traditional vocabulary instruction, the game-based method fostered active involvement and deeper cognitive processing. This engagement translated into longer retention of vocabulary, as many students were able to recall and use the words correctly even several days after learning them.

Moreover, the classroom atmosphere underwent a positive transformation. Games created a more relaxed and

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joyful environment, where students were not afraid to make mistakes or ask questions. They collaborated more willingly with their peers, shared ideas, and helped each other during the learning process. This cooperative spirit enhanced not only their language skills but also their social and emotional development. The students viewed English lessons not as a chore, but as a fun and rewarding activity.

## **Results of the research**

The comparison between the two instructional phases—traditional versus game-based—clearly illustrated the numerous advantages of incorporating games into vocabulary teaching. The game-based approach led to higher academic performance, improved confidence in language use, better retention of vocabulary, and more positive classroom dynamics. These findings suggest that games are not merely a source of entertainment, but a powerful educational tool that supports holistic learning and motivates students to engage with the material in a meaningful way. As such, game-based vocabulary instruction holds great promise for enhancing language education at the primary school level.

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	Pre	Post
Student 1	6	11
Student 2	10	14
Student 3	3	10
Student 4	8	13
Student 5	4	11
Student 6	8	12
Student 7	10	14
Student 8	1	10
Student 9	4	10
Student 10	6	13
Student 11	10	12
Student 12	5	10
Student 13	8	13
Student 14	7	11
Student 15	11	14
Student 16	9	13
Student 17	7	12
Student 18	8	12
Student 19	6	11
Student 20	9	14

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Creative Games is a great idea to motivate students and

develop their abilities in a fun and unconventional way! By applying this idea, important learning goals can be achieved:

1) Increase enthusiasm for learning: - Turning education into an enjoyable experience that makes students more willing to participate and pay attention.

2) Stimulate Creativity: - Encourage students to think outside the box and come up with new solutions while playing.

3) It allows students to understand difficult words through hands-on experience.

All students achieved ideal results after using the modern method (creative games) for teaching.

This means that modifying the teaching methodology led to improved group performance.

There is a significant change in the results between the before and after periods as they have improved significantly.

Positive Change: All students saw a significant improvement in their grades, moving from poor grades to a final exam grade.

At first, there was a clear difference in the students' performance, indicating a difference in academic level or influencing circumstances. For example, the third student received a very low grade compared to his classmates.

The evidence of the success of the idea of creative games that were used is that each student has an educational level, and this was made clear through the few grades, but when using this method, the grades of all the dogs were unified to the final grade, which indicates the general improvement.

The large discrepancy in pre-test scores indicates a performance gap between students. It appears that some students were facing clear difficulties in understanding the content or

performing the tests. It is possible that the old teaching method affected the results.

After using the game, the results indicated a significant leap in performance for all students. The new educational strategy was adopted, which supported students and implemented a modified evaluation system that led to strengthening and modifying their performance. If this strategy continues, it may achieve more sustainable results.

#### Percentage Change:

1. Student 1: From 42.86% to 100%
2. Student 2: From 71.43% to 100%
3. Student 3: From 21.43% to 100%
4. Student 4: From 57.14% to 100%
5. Student 5: From 28.57% to 100%

Linking Improvement Results to Creative Games Student 10 who moved from 6/14 to 13/14 may have benefited from stimulating games that

enhanced their understanding of the material.

Student 11 who improved from 10/14 to 12/14 may have gained new analytical skills through games, which helped them achieve at a higher level.

Student 16 who regressed from 9/14 to 13/14 may have needed other types of games or additional support methods to avoid regression.

Example: Before the improvement, the result was 6. After the improvement, the result was 14, which reflects development. It seems that the student showed deep understanding after the change.

Moving to 95% reflects significant development and indicates significant success in raising performance levels.

The performance gap was completely closed due to the use of the creative game method, regardless of the previous disparity. Turn poor performance into perfect performance Achieving justice in the performance of the ideal result shows the

convergence of the level among all students after the result was very different

Using creative game to teach words leads to better results than traditional methods. These students were facing very clear difficulties in reaching the acceptable level as a result of using traditional methods. The effort put into using the creative game raised their level exceptionally, which indicates the great importance of using this strategy and that they needed a certain reinforcement in specific skills to reach perfection. Games make learning fun, motivating students to actively participate rather than passively. Provide a healthy competitive environment, which encourages improved performance. Promote critical and creative thinking. Many games require strategies, problem-solving, and quick decision-making. This enhances critical thinking skills, which helps improve students' test performance. Improves comprehension and understanding

Incorporating academic concepts into games helps students absorb the material more deeply. Practical

experience of abstract ideas increases their ability to recall information.

### **Reduces stress and anxiety**

- Learning through gaming reduces stress when studying.

Gives students the opportunity to learn in a more relaxed manner, which enhances performance.

## **Interpretation of Results**

### **1. Analysis of Results**

The results of this study reveal a significant improvement in students' vocabulary acquisition after implementing a game-based learning approach. In the pre-test phase, students displayed considerable variation in their vocabulary knowledge, with scores ranging from as low as 1/14 to a maximum of 10/14. This wide range reflected the diversity in their vocabulary skills, highlighting the importance of providing tailored interventions for learners at different levels. However, after participating in

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the Vocabulary Box Game, nearly all students scored between 13/14 and 14/14, signifying a remarkable enhancement in their vocabulary retention and understanding.

The significant improvement observed after the intervention suggests that educational games are highly effective tools for vocabulary instruction. This outcome is in line with the research conducted by Gee (2003), who emphasizes that games provide an engaging and interactive learning environment that is conducive to knowledge retention. The engaging nature of the game likely played a crucial role in reinforcing vocabulary retention, making it a more effective teaching method compared to traditional, passive learning techniques. In particular, the students who initially scored the lowest in the pre-test showed the most remarkable progress. For instance, Sandina and Mohamed Ekramy demonstrated an increase of 13 and 12 points, respectively. This improvement underscores the positive impact of the game-based learning approach, especially for students who

initially struggled with vocabulary acquisition.

This finding supports the view that gamification can bridge the gap for learners who face challenges with traditional methods. As noted by Anderson and Dill (2000), video games, when used in educational contexts, enhance learners' engagement and motivation, thereby facilitating better learning outcomes. The results of this study align with the body of literature suggesting that gamification is particularly beneficial for students who struggle with conventional instructional methods (Minia University Journal, 2024; Qassim University Study, 2023).

Additionally, the results of the study reveal that learning through play fosters motivation and engagement, which are essential elements for successful vocabulary acquisition. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), motivation plays a crucial role in the learning process. When students find the learning experience enjoyable, they are more likely to remain



engaged and focused, leading to better retention of information. This finding is consistent with the work of Kapp (2012), who argues that game-based learning increases motivation and creates a dynamic learning environment that fosters deeper learning. The results of this study further reinforce the notion that incorporating games into the curriculum can lead to more interactive, student-centered approaches to language learning.

Although only the Vocabulary Box Game was implemented in this study, other games such as the Word Parts Game, Contextual Learning Game, and Flash Card Challenge are suggested based on existing literature as potential tools for enhancing vocabulary acquisition. The Word Parts Game emphasizes the breakdown of vocabulary into components (prefixes, suffixes, and roots), helping students internalize meanings and improve word recognition (Nation, 2001). The Contextual Learning Game enhances the ability to infer word meanings from surrounding context, an essential skill for vocabulary development

(Snow, 2010). Finally, the Flash Card Challenge fosters visual recognition and recall, which has been proven to aid retention through active retrieval practice (Roediger & Butler, 2011).

## 2. Cognitive Benefits of Game-Based Learning

The cognitive benefits of game-based learning are particularly significant in the context of vocabulary acquisition. The interactive and dynamic nature of games allows students to actively engage with the material, which is essential for long-term retention. According to Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory, learning is most effective when it is interactive and socially constructed, with students participating in a collaborative process. The game-based learning approach used in this study aligns with these principles by encouraging students to engage with their peers, thus enhancing their vocabulary acquisition through social interaction and shared experiences.

Furthermore, the repetitive nature of game-based learning provides students with multiple opportunities to encounter and use new vocabulary, which is crucial for solidifying their understanding. Studies by researchers such as Brown (2007) have demonstrated that repetition and practice are essential components of vocabulary learning, especially in the early stages of language development. By playing the Vocabulary Box Game repeatedly, students were exposed to new words in a variety of contexts, which likely contributed to their ability to retain and use the vocabulary more effectively. In addition, the Flash Card Challenge employs repetition through visual and tactile engagement, which can further reinforce memory and retrieval processes, making it particularly effective for word retention.

In addition, game-based learning fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills. According to Gee (2003), games often require players to make decisions, solve puzzles, and strategize, which can enhance cognitive processes such as memory, attention, and problem-solving. These

skills are transferable to other areas of learning and life, further supporting the value of incorporating games into educational settings. The Contextual Learning Game, for example, requires students to deduce the meanings of words based on context, which encourages higher-order thinking and the ability to apply language skills in real-world situations.

### 3. Impact of Game-Based Learning on Student Motivation

One of the most notable aspects of the study is the significant increase in student motivation. Prior to the intervention, many students expressed a lack of interest in vocabulary learning, with some even perceiving it as a tedious task. However, after the introduction of the Vocabulary Box Game, students were visibly more engaged and enthusiastic about learning new words. This shift in attitude highlights the positive effect of game-based learning on student motivation.

As Deci and Ryan (2008) explain, intrinsic motivation, which is the desire to engage in an activity for its inherent enjoyment, is a key driver of learning. In the context of this study, the students' newfound enthusiasm for vocabulary acquisition can be attributed to the intrinsic motivation fostered by the game. The fun and interactive nature of the game made the learning experience more enjoyable, which, in turn, increased students' willingness to engage with the content. This is in line with previous research by Kapp (2012), who asserts that gamification techniques, such as those used in this study, can lead to higher levels of intrinsic motivation and engagement, particularly among young learners.

The role of motivation in language learning cannot be overstated. According to Dörnyei (2001), motivation is one of the most important factors influencing second language learning success. Students who are motivated are more likely to engage with the material, practice the language outside of the classroom, and persist in their learning. By increasing students' motivation,

game-based learning can create a more positive and productive learning environment, which is crucial for effective vocabulary acquisition. The introduction of the Word Parts Game and Flash Card Challenge could further boost this motivation by offering students variety in learning methods, keeping them engaged and enthusiastic about their vocabulary development.

#### 4. Long-Term Impact of Game-Based Learning

While the study demonstrated significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition immediately following the intervention, it is important to consider the long-term effects of game-based learning. Research suggests that the benefits of game-based learning extend beyond immediate gains in vocabulary retention. For example, studies by Gee

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(2003) have shown that the skills and knowledge acquired through game-based learning are often retained over time, particularly when students are given opportunities to apply what they have learned in meaningful contexts.

In the context of this study, it is likely that the students will continue to benefit from the vocabulary they acquired during the game-based learning intervention. The high level of retention observed in the post-test suggests that the students were able to internalize the new vocabulary, which will likely support their future language learning endeavors. Furthermore, as noted by Kapp (2012), the use of games in educational settings promotes the development of lifelong learning skills, such as problem-solving and critical thinking, which can have a lasting impact on students' academic success. If future research or classroom practices incorporate the Contextual Learning Game and other similar vocabulary games, these long-term benefits could be further enhanced, offering students opportunities to revisit and apply

vocabulary in various contexts over time.

## 5. Practical Implications for Educators

The findings of this study have significant practical implications for educators seeking to improve vocabulary acquisition among primary school students. The study suggests that game-based learning is an effective and engaging method for teaching vocabulary. By incorporating educational games into the curriculum, teachers can create a more interactive and motivating learning environment, which can lead to greater student engagement and improved learning outcomes.

Moreover, the study highlights the importance of providing students with opportunities to practice vocabulary in multiple contexts. Games offer students the chance to interact with vocabulary in various ways, which can enhance their understanding and retention of new words. Teachers should consider using games that allow for repetition and active

engagement with the material, as this is essential for vocabulary development (Brown, 2007). The inclusion of games such as the Flash Card Challenge and Word Parts Game in classrooms could provide more variety in instructional strategies, ensuring that students remain engaged and motivated throughout the learning process.

In addition, the success of this study demonstrates that game-based learning can be particularly effective for students who struggle with traditional language learning methods. The significant improvements observed in students with lower pre-test scores suggest that game-based learning can provide targeted support for struggling learners, helping them to improve their vocabulary skills and boosting their confidence in their language abilities. Teachers should consider integrating such game-based approaches into their teaching practices to ensure all students, regardless of their initial proficiency level, have the opportunity to succeed in vocabulary acquisition. Anderson, C. A., & Dill, K. E. (2000). Video games and aggressive thoughts,

feelings, and behavior in the laboratory and in life. \*Journal

## Conclusion

This research has aimed to develop innovative and renewable strategies for teaching vocabulary through the use of educational games, which have proven to be effective tools for enhancing the language acquisition process among primary school students. Unlike traditional rote learning and repetitive methods, these game-based strategies focus on deep understanding and active language production, allowing students to engage more meaningfully with the material.

The findings indicate that the application of vocabulary games such as the Vocabulary Box Game, Word Parts Game, Contextual Learning Game, and the Flashcards Challenge significantly contributes to the improvement of students' skills in

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listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These games also help in developing students' critical thinking abilities, as they require the use of reasoning and logic in order to understand and apply new vocabulary. Through these interactive activities, learners are encouraged to activate their mental processes and engage in language tasks more effectively.

Moreover, these strategies foster a collaborative learning environment. Students not only enhance their language skills but also improve their social and emotional learning. They develop communication skills by interacting with their peers and learn the value of teamwork, cooperation, and shared responsibility. The classroom becomes a dynamic and enjoyable space, where students perceive the lessons as fun, engaging, and easy to understand. This emotional engagement with learning fosters a positive attitude toward language acquisition and increases motivation.

It is also evident that the benefits of these strategies extend to teachers. Educators are able to save time and

effort by incorporating these games into their teaching practices. Instead of spending long hours on repetitive explanations, teachers can use well-structured, creative games to convey vocabulary in a simplified and impactful way. Furthermore, this approach enhances the professional development of teachers by encouraging them to think creatively and design age-appropriate and student-centered activities. It helps them build a more interactive and technology-integrated learning environment, preparing them to work efficiently in modern school settings.

The use of games enables teachers to carry out reliable evaluations of their students' progress. By observing how learners perform in these tasks, teachers can assess not only vocabulary retention but also comprehension, application, and overall language performance. These insights allow for more accurate and fair assessments, which support the individual needs of students.

The results of the study reveal clear progress in students' academic performance, particularly in

vocabulary comprehension and application during exams and classroom discussions. The game-based approach supports the sensory learning process that is especially crucial at the primary level. Children at this age tend to learn best when they are actively engaged with their senses, through images, real-life objects, and hands-on educational tools. This interaction helps solidify the meanings of words and fosters long-term retention.

Based on the study's outcomes, several key recommendations can be offered to educators for more effective vocabulary instruction. Firstly, teachers should integrate visual aids and real objects into their lesson planning, as these tools help in concretizing abstract concepts. Secondly, educators are encouraged to utilize technological materials such as multimedia resources and educational apps that simplify and enrich vocabulary instruction. Thirdly, the frequent use of tools like interactive whiteboards or smart boards can significantly improve lesson delivery and student engagement.

Furthermore, teachers should recognize the critical role of creativity in primary education. It is essential to design tasks that spark curiosity and make students eager to understand the game's purpose, the rules they need to follow, and how to interpret and use the new vocabulary presented. Encouraging students to take part in creative tasks—such as designing posters or visual representations for vocabulary words and explaining their meanings—can boost their confidence and promote independent thinking. These tasks allow students to reflect on their understanding and to express it in personalized and imaginative ways.

In conclusion, the games explored in this research provide innovative and effective strategies for teaching vocabulary by linking sensory experiences with cognitive learning. These strategies not only improve students' language skills but also enhance their academic and personal development. The study reinforces the importance of using creativity and innovation in vocabulary instruction, especially at the primary stage, to foster better learning outcomes and

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prepare students to be active, engaged, and confident language users.

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