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***The Effectiveness of Using Board Games in Facilitating the Teaching of English  
Grammar***

**The Case of Second Year Pupils at Maansar Milad Middle School -Ain Kercha**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Master in Language Sciences and Teaching English as a Foreign Language**

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## **Dedication**

**In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, All the Praise is**

**due to God alone, the Sustainer of all the worlds**

To my Father's memory

To my dear mother and benevolent brother

To all my teachers

To all my friends

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## **Abstract**

This research work aims at investigating the effectiveness of using board games as a teaching technique to enhance and facilitate the teaching of English grammar, the case of second year pupils at Maansar Milad middle school, Ain Kercha. In order to check this correlation, we have hypothesized that if English teachers use board games in teaching English grammar, it would bring a significant improvement on learner's mastery of grammar rules. To verify the validity of this hypothesis, we have used two tools of data collection: teachers' questionnaire and an experiment. The first tool aims at investigating teachers' attitudes about using games in teaching English grammar to young learners. For the second tool, 30 pupils were chosen randomly and divided equally into two groups. Pupils in the control group have been taught within the usual grammar instruction, while pupils in the experimental group have been exposed to the new way of grammar instruction throughout the use of board games strategy introduced by the researcher. The analysis of the experiment results and the interpretation of the teachers' questionnaire showed that using board games can be very effective in facilitating the teaching/learning of English grammar for both the teacher and the pupils.

## List of Abbreviations

ALM	Audio Lingual Method
BG	Board Games
CLL	Community Language Learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
DM	Direct Method
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELL	English Language Learning
FL	Foreign Language
FLL	Foreign Language Learning
FLT	Foreign Language Teaching
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition

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# **General Introduction**

## **1- Statement of the Problem**

English grammar is not an easy aspect to master in learning a foreign language because it has many complicated rules which may cause many problems for learners. A lot of them struggle with these complicated rules and could not completely memorize and remember them. Most non-native learners, such as the Algerian learners, are unable to use the types of tenses in English accurately in their speaking and writing. When learners attempt to produce the language, most grammar rules are confusing, leading to the occurrence of many errors in their speaking and writing. Therefore, it is essential to look for a new approach in order to teach grammar more effectively to the learners, especially beginners or those of low proficiency level for example the middle school pupils. Conducting this research at one of the Algerian middle schools, we will try to use board games as a teaching strategy for English grammar.

## **2- Aims of the Study**

The primary purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of using board games in teaching English grammar as a foreign language in Algerian middle schools. Another aim to be explored in this research is to inquire into the teachers' beliefs and viewpoints about teaching English grammar using games.

## **3- Research Questions and Hypothesis**

Considering the purpose of the study and based on the problem specified above, the following research question is raised as:

Does using board games play any significant role in the teaching of English grammar?

Accordingly, we hypothesize the following:

If English teachers use board games in teaching English grammar, it would bring a significant improvement on learner's mastery of grammar rules.

#### **4- Means of Research**

##### **a- Population and Sampling**

The population in this study will be English teachers from different middle schools in Ain Kercha and second year pupils at Maansar Milad middle school.

As a sample:

- Concerning teachers we will select ten English teachers from the different middle schools in Ain Kercha.
- Concerning pupils we will select randomly two groups of 30 pupils at Maansar Milad middle school in their second year, always in Ain Kercha.

##### **b- Method**

In the field of education, different research methods (including case studies, surveys, ethnography, and action research) reflect different purposes and each one provides answers to different questions. The choice of the method is dictated by the nature of the subject to be treated. The aim of the research, the sample under investigation, and the collected data impose the use of a specific method.

As far as this study is concerned, we will use two types of data collection methods:

- 1- To inquire into the teachers' beliefs and viewpoints about teaching English grammar using games, a questionnaire is designed and adapted to the targeted level.
- 2- In order to find out whether using board games has an effect on pupils' results in grammar, the research will be conducted under an experimental method at the middle school of Maanser Milad, Ain Kercha.

In this study, we have two groups of 30 pupils: 15 pupils in each group, the control group and the experimental group. The two groups are given the same pre-test at the beginning of the experiment and the same post-test at the end of the experiment. The main point of this study is to use board games in grammar classes for participants in the experimental group in order to see the effects of these games on learners' performance in grammar. At the end, we compare the results of both groups to see the efficiency of this strategy in the learning process.

## **6- Structure of the Study**

This paper consists of two chapters: first chapter represents the theoretical background of the research paper and the second chapter represents its practical part. Chapter one is divided into three sections. Section one discusses the nature of grammar teaching, starting with the basic foundations of this concept and a brief historical overview of the area. Section two deals with educational games in general. The third section discusses the relation between games and grammar teaching. Chapter two will be the practical part of this study. In this chapter, the researcher presents the analysis of the results obtained from the experiment and the questionnaire and the interpretation of these results.

# Chapter One: Theoretical Background

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## **Chapter One: Theoretical Background**

### **Introduction**

The concept of grammar is often misunderstood in language teaching and learning. This misconception lies in the fact that grammar is viewed as a collection of rules about stable structures in language. For this reason, issues about its aspects such as its nature, how it is taught and its role in Second/Foreign language learning have been the concern of theoretical linguists as well foreign language teachers.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), teaching grammar has traditionally been dominated by the grammar-translation method where the use of the mother tongue and memorization are clearly important to elicit the meaning of the target language and its rules. According to Richard and Rodgers (2001), in such a method, learners are provided with the grammar rules and examples and told to memorize them, then they are asked to apply the rules to other examples.

In recent years, with the emergence and widespread of the use of Communicative Language Teaching approach, there has been a heated debate about the importance of teaching grammar, whether to teach it explicitly or implicitly, which method or methods have to be adopted (inductive or deductive) and how to make natural connections between grammar and communication.

In this chapter, we will mainly discuss some aspects about grammar and grammar teaching, namely, the nature of grammar, its role in English language teaching, how it is represented in the classroom and its place in the most common language teaching approaches / methods, ending with the different forms of grammar whether written or spoken.



## **1. The Nature of Grammar**

Grammar has been identified in different ways depending on the linguistic theory that sets the definition, either traditional, structural, transformational or cognitive theory of linguistics. There are many definitions for grammar. For Ur (1980), grammar is "the way a language manipulates and combines words or bits of words in order to form longer units of meaning" (p. 4). In other words, it is the formation of words and the construction of sentences and discourses in order to have a meaningful product. According to Harmer (2001), the grammar of a language can be defined as the descriptions of the rules through words that can be formed and that can change their meaning, in addition to the possible ways of their construction into sentences. It is then, grammar which tells us that "meaningful" is acceptable in English, but "meaningable" is not; and a sentence like "she says it is difficult" is appropriate in English, but " say difficult she it is" is not. For many writers (El-Moutawa & Kailani, 1989; Harmer, 2001; Thornbury, 1999; Ur, 1980), grammar consists of the study of Syntax and Morphology; however, for others (for example, Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002) it refers just to syntax.

### **1.1. Morphology and Syntax**

Morphology is simply the study of forms. In linguistics Morphology has to do with how words are formed, and how the forms of words may be systematically adjusted in order to accomplish communicative tasks. You can also think of morphology as the study of how meaningful units combine to form words.

Syntax, on the other hand, is how words combine to form sentences. According to Harmer (2001), syntax is "The way words are ordered and combined to make sentences" (p.13). Akmajin (1997) defines syntax as the study of "how words fit into the overall structure of sentences in

which it can be used" (p.12). Syntax, therefore, focuses on the rules that underlay the building of sentence.

## **2. Grammar as Form and Grammar as Function**

Sentences are made up of words. The classification of these words into grammatical categories, according to Williams (2005, p.53), is called "form". For example, a word like "table" is a noun; a word like "jump" is a verb and so on. Williams (2005) explains that the form of the word is usually not related to the sentence. That is to say, if "table" is a noun, it is a noun either in "This is a table" or in "I brought a beautiful table" or in "The broken table is there". Theoretical grammar has described eight possible forms of words in English: noun, verb, adjective, adverbs, conjunctions, pronouns, prepositions, and articles.

However, language exists in reality as sentences not as individual words. Williams (2005) defines "function" as "the state of words when they work jointly in several ways, when they are put together in sentences" (p. 54). There are two levels of function, function at the level of words within the sentences and function of sentences in discourse. For example, in a sentence, a noun can function as a subject, like in: "The man is talking now"; or as an object, like in: "Are you calling that man?"

At the level of the sentences, according to Al-Moutawa and Kailani (1989), "Function" refers to the intended meaning or speech act of that sentence such as greeting, offering, thanking and explaining. They are more related to the context and to the social environment. For example, If a father asks his son's friend "Do you drink?" it would not mean offering him a drink but asking him if he is a drinker or not. In this example, there is literal meaning "Are you a drinker of Alcohol?" and a situational meaning of certain contexts.

Williams (2005) believes that forms and functions can be related in several possible ways; knowing one of them would sometimes help us to determine the other. For example, the following question form "Do you study here?" would mean in certain cases a direct interrogative function. However, according to Thornbury (1999), it is not always the case because one form can express different functions as well as one function can be expressed through many forms. For instance, on the one hand asking for help can be expressed through the following forms:

- Can you help me, please?
- Would you mind helping me?
- If you can help me, I would be so thankful.
- I need your help

On the other hand, "If- clause" form, for example, can express many functions

- If I find out, I would kill you (It expresses warning)
- If you suffer from headache, take medicaments. (It expresses advice)
- If David didn't come, you must ring me (It expresses obligation)
- If they were not so busy, they would help you (It expresses explanation)

### **3. Written Grammar and Spoken Grammar**

According to Harmer (2001), grammar has initially told us how to produce a written language. For example, it is known that a written text is composed of grammatical sentences which are in turn composed, at least, of a verb and a subject; and sometimes, an object, a complement, or modifier is added. Grammar of written texts asserts on expressing ideas in full sentences, in addition to avoiding repetition and unnecessary details. Writing is usually used in formal situations, thus, it utilizes formal language which is reflected in vocabulary and also in grammar. Swan (2005) gave examples of using phrasal verbs like " get up" instead of " rise" and of

avoidance of constructed auxiliary phrases like, "I do not" instead of "I don't" to illustrate using formal grammar in writing.

On the other hand spoken grammar is different from the writing one (Harmer, 2001). Spoken grammar is used in informal situations and interpreted in a different way from that of writing. Eastwood (1994) thinks that in spoken grammar there are more words used and less structural clauses. More words are used in spoken grammar because the interlocutors clarify and correct what they say at the same time of speaking. Less structural clauses are applied because people would think that they are unnecessary details since they share the same contexts. Harmer (2001) argues that spoken grammar has its own constructional principles and organization and it has its own discourse markers like interjections (ah, oh, wow), hesitators (er, um) and so on.

#### **4. The Role of Grammar in English Language Learning (ELL)**

Studying any language helps us to use it more effectively. One central aspect for using the language accurately is the grammar of that language. Hedge (2000) claims that many teachers give grammar teaching their great attention in their classroom methodology. Grammar gains such importance because of its inevitable role. Pacheler (1999) stated that "the rules of grammar facilitate communicative economy" (p.94). That is to say that thanks to grammar we can produce an unlimited number of sentences with a limited number of words and sounds. Ur (1980) argues that units of the language can only be used successfully only if we know how to combine them appropriately; for this reason, grammar is important for acquiring a new language. Moreover, the role of grammar is not limited to the level of the sentence but it affects other longer discourses. This is argued by Williams (2005) who emphasizes the fact that the effects of grammar are essential for writing since it provides information about forms and functions of the words. Greenbaum and Nelson (2002) think that grammar has many applications on many aspects of the

language, among which punctuation, interpreting literally (or non-literally) texts and understanding discourses. As an example, if we do not know what a clause is or what are the types of clauses, we cannot put appropriate punctuation markers when clauses are combined together. In other words, Doff (2000) says that by learning grammar students can express meanings in the form of phrases, clauses and sentences. Long and Richards (1987) add that it cannot be ignored that grammar plays a central role in the four language skills and vocabulary to establish communicative tasks.

## **5. Direct and Indirect Representation of Grammar in the Language Classroom**

### **5.1. Prescriptive vs. Descriptive Grammar**

Prescriptive grammar describes when people focus on talking about how a language should be used. One way to remember this association is to think of going to a doctor's office. When a doctor gives you a prescription for medication, it often includes directions about how you should take your medication as well as what you should not do when taking your medication. In a similar way, a prescriptive grammar tells you how you should speak, and what type of language to avoid. This is commonly found in English classes as well as other language classes, where the aim is to teach people how to use language in a very particular way.

A descriptive grammar looks at the way a language is actually used by its speakers and then attempts to analyze it and formulate rules about the structure. Descriptive grammar does not deal with what is good or bad language use; forms and structures that might not be used by speakers of Standard English would be regarded as valid and included. It is a grammar based on the way a language actually is and not how some think it should be.

## **5.2. Explicit and Implicit Knowledge of Grammar**

According to Brown (2000) explicit knowledge is conscious knowledge of grammatical rules learned through formal classroom instruction. A person with explicit knowledge knows about language and the ability to articulate those facts in some way. For instance, Ahmed knows every rule about present perfect, but he frequently makes mistakes in speaking and writing. However, such knowledge is easy for him while having time to think of the rule and apply it (grammar exercise or a writing assignment). Explicit knowledge is also acquired through the practice of error correction, which is thought to help learners come to the correct form of a rule. This works if there is enough time to operate it; the speaker is concerned with the correctness of her/his speech/written production; and s/he knows the correct rules (Krashen, 1987).

On the other hand, implicit knowledge is automatic and provides a great role to building communicative skills. Implicit knowledge is unconscious, internalized knowledge of language that is easily read during spontaneous language tasks, written or spoken (Brown, 2000). Implicit knowledge is gained in the natural language learning process. It means that a person applies a certain grammatical rule in the same way as a child who acquires her/his first language (for example, mother tongue). According to Brown (2000), the child implicitly learns aspects of language (for example, syntactical, phonological, semantic, pragmatic rules for language), but does not know how to explain those rules explicitly. As an example, John speaks and writes English with good use of present perfect, although he has no idea about the grammatical rule behind it. In brief words, implicit knowledge is gained through a sub-conscious learning process. This is illustrated by the fact that native speakers of a certain language do not always “know” (consciously) the rules of their language (Krashen, 1987).

### **5.3. Deductive vs. Inductive Approach**

Thornbury (1999) defines deductive approach as the way of teaching grammar where rules are presented first and then their applications through examples and inductive approach as the way of teaching grammar through examples from which rules are understood. These two approaches are firmly rooted in linguistics and psychological theories.

According to Broughton et al. (1980), the deductive approach is supported linguistically by structuralists and psychologically by the behaviorists; while, the inductive approach is supported linguistically by the generative grammarians and psychologically by the mentalists. The behaviorists for examples emphasize the importance of reinforcement through repetition of correct form that characterizes the deductive approach and the mentalists emphasize the subconscious cognitive devices that are used in the inductive approach which are similar to those used in the first language acquisition.

Widodo (2006) suggests five advantages for each approach. Deductive approach could be time-saving since it points in a direct way to the rule; simultaneously, inductive approach trains learners to be autonomous through the indirect way of knowing the rule. It is the cognitive ability of adults which is developed in the inductive approach; at the same time, in the deductive approach, it is their cognitive process and its role to use metalanguage which is acknowledged. When teaching deductively, a number of applications and practice is immediately given, whereas, teaching inductively helps the learners to be more active in the learning process. On the one hand, learners with analytical style find themselves at ease when learning deductively; on the other hand, there are learners who are interested in the challenge presented in problem-solving ability found in the inductive way of teaching. There are some rules or aspects of rules, like form, which can be simply and clearly presented deductively not to confuse the learners; if the

problem solving is done collaboratively, learners will have more opportunities to use the language.

## **6. Grammar in the Most Common Language Teaching Approaches / Methods**

According to academic research, linguists have demonstrated that there is not one single best method for everyone in all contexts, and that no one teaching method is essentially superior to the others. Also, it is not always appropriate to apply the same methodology to all learners, who have different objectives, environments and learning needs. Yet, it is necessary to have a review of all the approaches in order to understand more clearly about the development and the history of grammar teaching and each approach's aspects as well.

### **6.1. The Grammar -Translation Method**

The GTM is one of the most traditional methods of teaching foreign languages, dating back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, derived from the classical (sometimes called traditional) method of teaching Greek and Latin. In grammar-translation classes, grammar is emphasized and taught deductively; students learn grammatical rules and then apply those rules by translating sentences between the target language and the native one, Larsen (1986). The GTM method has two main aims: to enable students to read and translate written literature in the target language, and to promote students' general intellectual development. This method focuses on reading and writing and has developed techniques which facilitate more or less the learning of reading and writing only. As a result, speaking and listening are overlooked. This teaching method is still common in many countries and institutions around the world, and still appeals to those interested in languages from an intellectual or linguistic perspective.



## **6.2. The Direct Method**

This approach, also known as the ‘Oral‘ or ‘Natural‘ method, originated around the 1900s as an alternative to the traditional GTM. At this time teachers were starting to question previous techniques because they failed to improve spoken communication. The Direct Method is based on the direct involvement of the student when speaking, and listening to the FL in everyday situations. Therefore, there is lots of oral interaction. In this approach grammar is taught inductively without translation and little analysis of grammar rules and syntax. In other words grammar is not important in the DM as in the GTM. The focus of the lessons is on correct pronunciation, often introducing learners to phonetic symbols before they see standard writing examples. The DM continues to provoke attention and interest today, but it is not an easy methodology to use in a classroom situation. It requires small classes and high student motivation, and it is difficult to create an artificial environment of a classroom which guarantees sufficient practice and understanding for everyone.

## **6.3. The Audio-lingual Method**

The Audio-Lingual method of teaching had its origins during World War II when it became known as the Army Method. It is also called the Aural Oral Approach. It is based on the structural view of language and the behaviorist theory of language learning. The ALM has a lot of similarities with the DM, both were considered as a reaction against the shortcomings of the GTM, both reject the use of the mother tongue and both stress that speaking and listening skills preceded reading and writing skills. But there are also some differences. The DM highlighted the teaching of vocabulary while the ALM focuses on grammar drills. The objective of the ALM is accurate pronunciation and grammar, the ability to respond quickly and accurately in speech situations and knowledge of sufficient vocabulary to use with grammar patterns. In this method

grammar is very important, it is believed that learning structures of grammar is the starting point for the student.

#### **6.4. Community Language Learning (CLL)**

As the Chomsky's linguistic revolution which turned linguists and language educators away from the ALM which focused on formal and boring types of exercises, innovative methods of language teaching were developed during the 70s to overcome the shortcomings of the ALM. One of these methods came to be known as Community Language Learning. CLL is different from other methods on how languages should be taught, it's based on an approach modeled on psychotherapy techniques that lessen anxiety, threat, personal and language problems a person encounters in the learning of foreign languages. In this type of education, learners in a classroom are seen as a group rather than a class. Students and teachers should work together to facilitate the learning process by valuing each other and constituting a supportive community. In this approach grammar is not strongly emphasized, there is no syllabus or textbook to follow and it is the students themselves who determine the content of the lesson by means of meaningful conversations in which they discuss real messages. Notably, it incorporates translation, transcription, and recording techniques.

#### **6.5. Communicative language Teaching (CLT)**

Communicative language teaching (CLT), or the communicative approach, is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of study. The idea of CLT has been extended since the mid-1970s. CLT was also greatly influenced by the early version of Long's (1983a, 1983b, 1996) Interaction Hypothesis. Since then, second language (L2) instructors have been encouraged to employ communicative ways of teaching in their classrooms. The main point of CLT is to reach a meaningful interaction through the use of

spontaneous speech during pair and/or group work. One controversial aspect of CLT is the role of grammar instruction. Krashen's (1982, 1985) Monitor Theory suggests that grammar instruction is unnecessary and has a very slight effect on second language acquisition (SLA). Pica (2000) argues that communicative teaching that focuses mainly on meaning with very little attention to forms are not suitable to prepare learners for achieving native-like proficiency. Larsen (1986) argues that grammar teaching can be accomplished either inductively or deductively but the focus should be on meanings and functions of forms derived from situational context and interlocutors roles. It can be concluded that Grammar can be taught inductively or deductively in CLT. It is a fact that some learners learn better by being given the context and then presented with the grammar rules afterwards while others need the rule in order to understand the rationale for the new grammatical structure.

## **Conclusion**

On the one hand, grammar is very important in learning a foreign language because grammar can help you to learn a FL more quickly and more efficiently. It is important to think of grammar as something that can help you, like a friend. When you understand the grammar (or system) of a language, you can understand many things yourself, without having to ask a teacher or look in a book. Moreover, learning grammar is really important to achieve the higher levels of the language. So think of grammar as something good, something positive, and something that you can use to find your way like a map.

On the other hand, the word grammar could be intimidating for students. It could be a hard task for the teacher to persuade his pupils that learning grammar could be fun. However, it depends on the teacher how he/she solves this problem. The teacher need not to follow traditional

methods in teaching grammar like setting the rules, filling the grammar exercises and testing, but the teacher can use another amusing ways like using educational games inside the classroom.

## Section Two: Educational Games

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## **Section Two: Educational Games**

### **Introduction**

There are a lot of definitions about what a game is. Everyone is able to imagine something when hearing the term “game” but to give a precise definition is difficult. The definition “Games are fun” is simple and exact. However, the game in education must be more than just fun; learners have to learn through playing games.

Although some teachers of English see language games as time consumers or classroom techniques for fun, games have a special role in any FLT program because they facilitate FLL especially for young learners. Games have become crucially important for English language learners and teachers not only because they provide enjoyment and relaxation, but also as they encourage students to use their language in a creative and communicative manner.

In this chapter, we will mainly discuss some aspects about games, namely, the definition of games, its classifications, and its advantages in language teaching and learning, ending with a specific type of games which is Board Games discussing its definition, history and its role in language teaching/learning.

### **1. Definition of Games**

There are many kinds of 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. According to Haldfield (1999) a game is an activity characterized by rules, a goal and an element of entertaining. Games should be viewed as an essential part of the language syllabus, not as an entertaining activity for the end of the term to kill the boredom. This definition highly evaluates the importance of games in teaching.

Haldfield (1999) adds that games can be used at all stages of the progression. They can be used as a memory aid and repetition drill or as a tool to use the language freely. They can also serve as a diagnostic tool for teacher, to follow the students' performance. Students are not always excited to do the tasks. Therefore, games are used suitably in the way in which learners are led to participate in the games so that learners can have a chance to practice or use the new language items they have just learnt excitedly and willingly instead of forcing them to do the tasks unwillingly. It is more effective in a way that students can play and learn at the same time.

According to Greenall (1990, p.6), "The term 'game' is used whenever there is an element of competition between students or teams in a language activity". When appears 'an element of competition', all above rules are most needed. Besides, games are, in this case, emphasized to encourage students' solidarity in teamwork in which they have to try their best to do the tasks. Therefore, games include many factors such as rules, competition, relaxation, and learning. The main focus of using games in class is not only to help students to learn more effectively but also to have fun. However, to use games in classrooms, it is equally important that before playing, the rules of the games should be clearly explained and well understood by the learners.

## **2. Classifications of Games**

Classifying games into categories can be difficult because categories often overlap. Hadfield (1999) explains two ways of classifying language games. First, language games are divided into two types: *linguistic games* and *communicative games*.

- Linguistic games focus on accuracy, such as supplying the correct antonym.
- Communicative games focus on successful exchange of information and ideas, such as two people identifying the differences between two pictures which are similar to one

another but not exactly alike. Correct language usage, though still important, is secondary to achieving the communicative goal.

Second, Hadfield (1990) classifies language games into many more categories. Together with the classification of games as linguistic games or communicative games, some games will contain elements of more than one type.

- *Sorting, ordering, or arranging games*: For example, students have a set of cards with different products on them, and they sort the cards into products found at a grocery store and products found at a department store.
- *Information gap games*: In such games, one or more people have information that other people need to complete a task. For instance, one person might have a drawing and his partner needs to create a similar drawing by listening to the information given by the person with the drawing. Information gap games can involve a one-way information gap, such as the drawing game just described, or a two-way information gap, in which each person has unique information.
- *Guessing games*: These are a variation on information gap games. One of the best known examples of a guessing game is 20 Questions, in which one person thinks of a famous person, place, or thing. The other participants can ask 20 Yes/No questions to find clues in order to guess who or what the person is thinking of.
- *Search games*: These games are yet another variant on two-way information gap games, with everyone giving and seeking information. Find Someone Who is a well-known example. Students are given a grid. The task is to fill in all the cells in the grid with the name of a classmate who fits that cell, e.g., someone who is a vegetarian. Students circulate,



asking and answering questions to complete their own grid, and help classmates complete theirs.

- *Matching games*: As the name implies, participants need to find a match for a word, picture, or card. For example, students place 30 word cards; composed of 15 pairs, face down in random order. Each person turns over two cards at a time, with the goal of turning over a matching pair, by using their memory.
- *Labeling games*: These are a form of matching, in that participants match labels and pictures.
- *Exchanging games*: In these games, students barter cards, other objects, or ideas. Similar are exchanging and collecting games. Many card games fall into this category, such as the children's card game Go Fish.<sup>3</sup>
- *Board games*: Scrabble<sup>4</sup> is one of the most popular board games that specifically highlight language.
- *Role-play games*: The terms role play, drama, and simulation are sometimes used interchangeably but can be differentiated (Kodotchigova, 2002). Role play can involve students playing roles that they do not play in real life, such as doctor, while simulations can involve students performing roles that they already play in real life or might be likely to play, such as customer at a restaurant. Dramas are normally scripted performances, whereas in role plays and simulations, students come up with their own words, although preparation is often useful.

Another distinction among games is that between competitive games and cooperative ones. Research suggests that learning, as well as affective variables are enhanced by a cooperative

environment. Millis (2005) outlines a number of advantages of cooperative games, such as appropriate anxiety levels and more constructive feedback.

According to Lee (2000) as cited in Pham (2007), games have been classified into nine kinds:

- Structure games which provide experience of the use of particular patterns of syntax in

Communication

- Vocabulary games in which the learners' attention is focused mainly on words
- Spelling games
- Pronunciation games
- Number games
- Listen-and-do games
- Games and writing
- Miming and role play
- Discussion games

Another classification of games by McCallum (1980) consists of seven kinds:

- Structure games
- Vocabulary games
- Number games
- Spelling games
- Conversation games
- Writing games
- Role play and dramatics

It is shown that the classifications of games from the above linguists are common in a way that each kind of games focuses on a language item or a skill for the purpose and the content of

the lesson. Therefore, teachers should be careful of choosing the most suitable game for each lesson so that learners and teachers can benefit the most from these games.

### **3. The Advantages of Using Games in Language Teaching and Learning**

According to Richard-Amato (1996), even though games are often associated with fun, we should not lose sight of their pedagogical values, particularly in FL teaching and learning. Games are effective as they create motivation, lower students' stress, and give language learners the opportunity for real communication. Yet, there has been much prejudice that games are just for fun, not for educational purposes.

On the other hand, Kim (1995) disagrees with the above prejudice. He says that there is a common perception that all learning should be serious and if one is having fun and there is laughter, then it is not really learning. This is a misconception, it is possible to learn a language as well as enjoy oneself at the same time. One of the best ways of doing this is throughout games.

Though different in the viewpoints, the linguists want to emphasize the ultimate aim of using games in teaching is that teachers want a better lesson in which their students benefit much. Some of the common advantages of using games in language teaching and learning language are recapitulated as follows:

#### **3.1. Games Motivate Learners**

Harmer (1998, p.3) asserts that: "Motivation is some kind of internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a course of action....The motivation students bring to class is the biggest factor affecting their success". Finding an effective way to motivate learners is always the interest of teachers, researchers and linguists. As Hansen (1994, p.118) states, "Games are highly

motivating and entertaining, and they can give shy learners more opportunity to express their opinions and feelings.”

Games are highly motivating since they are amusing, interesting and at the same time challenging. The activities in a game get all the students to move around and activate their mental capacities, thus motivating learners in learning and retention. In addition, students who are shy also attend the activities with fun, forgetting their shyness and feeling of fear. Further, games add interest to what students might not find interesting. Sustaining interest can mean also sustaining effort (Buckby 2005).

Grammar lesson which is considered as a boring traditional teaching method can be taken as a typical example. If the teacher just follows the tasks given in the textbook, students have to do the tasks in writing and reading, then the teacher himself will lead a grammar lesson to a boring experience to his students and surely do not meet the need for a more interesting and effective grammar class. At that time, using games can help solve the problem because games employ meaningful and useful language in real contexts. They can be used to give practice in all language skills and grammar points in this case, and be used to practice many types of communication. If these games are good, then learners will be learning while they are playing.

### **3.2. Games Promote Learners' Interaction**

Interaction comprises the nature of classroom pedagogy and classroom behavior. Pair or group work is one of the main ways to promote interaction. As Jacobs and Liu (1996) express, many games can be played in pairs or in small groups, thereby providing a setting for students to develop their skills in working with others such as the skill of disagreeing politely and the skill of asking for help. In most games, learners have to play in groups in which everyone has a turn,

encouraging everyone to take a turn, rather than letting others do all the talking and other actions, and discouraging one or two people from shutting out others.

Naturally when playing games, students are trying to win or to beat other teams. They are so competitive while playing since they want to have a turn to play, to score points and to win. In the class, learners will definitely participate in the activities. Therefore, in groups or in pairs, they are more willing to ask questions, communicate and discuss with their partners and think creatively about how to use English to achieve the goal. The competition in the games gives students a natural opportunity to work together and communicate in English with each other a lot.

In the same way, on mentioning competitive games, Rinvoluci and Davis (1995, p.26) have asserted: “Competitive activities that hit pairs against pairs and threes against threes are excellent for fostering collaboration and mutual help within each team” Therefore, in this kind of games, learners interact a lot with one another.

### **3.3. Games Improve Learners’ Language Acquisition**

Thanks to the motivation and interaction created by games, students can acquire their lessons better and more attentively than other ways (Avedon & Sutton-Smith, 1971). Games can stimulate and encourage students to participate in the activity since naturally they want to beat the other teams. Apart from having fun, students learn at the same time; they acquire new language. Students begin to realize that they have to use the language if they want others to understand what they are saying (Schultz & Fisher, 1988). Furthermore, Richard-Amato (1988, p.147) emphasizes, “Games can lower anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input more likely” It is clear that in the easy, relaxed atmosphere which is created by using games, students remember things faster and better. According to Duong (2008), 90% of his students confided

that they could remember new words faster and better due to the relaxed atmosphere created by playing games.

In fact, it has been proved that an interested and involved class, learning through several fun-filled English language games takes in 100% of the lesson and retains 80% of it.” The meaning of the language students listen to, read, speak and write will be more vividly experienced in a game and, therefore, then they will better remember the language they learnt.

### **3.4. Games Increase Learners’ Achievement**

Games can involve all the basic language skills, i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and a number of skills are often involved in the same game (Lee, 1995). Further support comes from Zdybiewska (1994, p.6):

games are a good way of practicing language, for they provide a model of what learners will use the language for in real life in the future exercises that practice and utilize the new language have been completed, games can then be introduced as yet another means for enabling greater comprehension.

As strongly emphasized above, games can motivate learners, promote learners’ interaction, and improve learners’ acquisition. As a result, games can increase learners’ achievement, which means that learners’ test scores, ability of communication, knowledge of vocabulary, or other language skills can improve.

In brief, games prove to be a useful tool employed regularly in language teaching. Games not only offer learners a highly motivating, relaxing class, but most importantly meaningful practice to all language skills. Consequently, games can motivate learners, promote learners’ interaction, improve their acquisition and increase their achievement.

## **4. Board Games**

### **4.1. Definition of Board Games**

Board games are an important tool for FLL. Not only do well-designed games create an engaging atmosphere, they also provide a nonthreatening, playful, and competitive environment in which to focus on content and reinforce language learning.

Even though the realm of BG is of physical nature, if you do an extensive research on the subject matter, you will be surprised that most of the information on the topic comes from the online world: databases, forum discussions, articles in academic journals, gaming centers, educational websites, etc. It is also the online encyclopedia that provides the best definition for the word. According to Wikipedia a BG is a game that involves counters or pieces moved or placed on a pre-marked surface or "board", according to a set of rules. Games can be based on pure strategy, chance (e.g. rolling dice), or a mixture of the two, and usually have a goal that a player aims to achieve.

### **4.2. Origins of Board Games**

Board games have a long and rich tradition, being both entertainment and education means in ancient cultures. Their origins go back to countries like Egypt, India or Nigeria. The first board game ever known is 'Senet' which dates back from times of Nefertari, the Egyptian Queen who ruled until 1237 BC. Nefertari was portrayed in one of the wall paintings found in the Valley of the Queens. It is also in ancient cities in Egypt that first 'Mancalas' (board games) made of stone were discovered, carved into the roofs of ancient temples. Other board games 'Pachisi and Chaupar' were found in India made of rubies and ivory. It is curious to see how these early board games have been played for thousand years and yet they still provide the foundation for most classic and current board games.

### 4.3. Using Board Games in the Language Classroom

One of the main goals of language teaching is to equip our students with the ability to communicate in the TL. Using BG in the language classroom is an effective, low-anxiety, and fun way for students to learn and practice communication skills as well as develop their own communication strategies that can be readily applied to the real world. Board games are a versatile asset in the classroom because BG can be:

- used as intended for native speakers
- adapted to teach specific language forms and functions
- adapted for various ESL/EFL contexts, age groups, proficiency levels, and content
- adapted as communicative activities in the classroom
- adapted as a concept for making your own educational board game.

The benefits to using BG in the classroom are numerous, however, we would like to focus on the particular aspect of how BG promote communicative language learning through tasks, defined here as activities in which:

1. meaning is primary;
2. there is a communication problem of some type to solve;
3. the activity has some relationship to real-world activities;
4. task completion is usually required
5. task performance can be assessed in terms of the outcome (Skehan, 1998, p. 95).

The activities that we showcase in this demonstration are just a few of the things you can do with BG and games in general. When using BG, we should keep in mind how these five characteristics are exemplified in student interaction. Furthermore, it is important that lessons that implement BG should be composed of warm-up activities, formal instruction, tasks, and



wrap-up/reflection activities that integrate all language skills to provide learners with a holistic language learning experience.

### **Conclusion**

As seen above, using games in language teaching is not a waste of time. Employing games is beneficial for all students since it helps them to view the language as a living means of communication, enables them to try and use it without the feeling of being assessed according to their language skills and at the same time learning useful parts of the language and reinforce knowledge they have already gained. BG can help students memorize vocabulary or grammar better, also it can eliminate the anxiety aroused from using a foreign language or uncertainty about the correctness of the output. For all those reasons, it is advisable for the teachers to take the advantage of games, giving the students the opportunity to utilize the utmost of its benefits.

## **Section Three: Games and Grammar Teaching/Learning**

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## **Section Three: Games and Grammar Teaching/Learning**

### **Introduction**

English grammar can be taught using fun games and before knowing your students they will be more than willing to engage in the learning process. One may remember when he/she was in school, the dreaded grammar lessons of sitting in tables writing and rewriting sentences, memorizing dozens of rules and doing a lot of exercises in order to learn proper grammar usage. While some people may still teach grammar in this method, there is a movement towards teaching grammar with games. Just imagine the class when the teacher announces that it's time for a grammar lesson and instead of moans and whining, he/she gets smiles and excitement. It is possible and believe it or not, teaching grammar with games will be as effective, if not more effective, as just teaching them through repetitive writing and rewriting.

In this section, we will mainly discuss the relationship between grammar and games, namely, background information of grammar games, functions of games in the field of grammar teaching, teachers and students roles in the game-activities, the different factors affecting grammar games, ending with the most common grammar games.

#### **1. Background of Grammar Games**

In the early 1970s, Harvey and Francis worked together in developing the notion of 'grammar games'. It is an undeniable matter that others such as Groberg, Fillmore and Sudlow have contributed as well to the concept and elaboration of this notion and gave prominence to what came to be referred as grammar games. Therefore, many books and articles have been written considering the notion of grammar and games. Rinvoluceri (1984), for example, demonstrates the fact that there is a place for 'an innovative approach to grammar' in the classroom. Today, there is hardly a language teacher who is not interested in using games to

engage L2 learners in game-like activities in order to develop their grammatical competence and communicative competence alike.

## **2. Functions of Games in the Field of Grammar**

Usually when L2 teachers think of grammar, they think of drilling methods and dictation of rules but this is not sufficient for acquiring a FL effectively as a language can be learnt only by using it. As Corder (1981) puts it “efficient language teaching must work with, rather than against, natural process, facilitating and expedite rather than impede learning” (p.7). Game-activities can be very useful at this point since they can provide a framework for the correct use of language and are at the same time a means of generating conversation in addition to their motivational value as an enjoyable form of activity. Needless to say that games provide a balance between encouraging learners to use the language freely and correcting their mistakes. Board games, for instance, do the job effectively.

Furthermore, Games are student-focused activities requiring active involvement of learners. In Crookal’s (1990) opinion, learners and teachers change their roles and relations through games and learners are encouraged to take an active role in their learning process. As a result, games provide learners with a chance to direct their own learning. From an instructional point of view, creating a meaningful context for language use is another advantage that games present. Meanwhile, Cross (2000, p.153) states that “using games, teachers can create contexts which enable unconscious learning” because learners attention is on the message, not on the language. Therefore, when they completely focus on a game as an activity, students acquire language in the same way that they acquire their mother tongue, that is, without being aware of it.

### **3. The Roles of Teachers and Learners in the Game-activities**

The problem of the relationship between teachers and learners must eventually be analyzed in all methods of language teaching. In the game-activities, the roles of the teacher and learners may be analyzed into two relatively different roles.

On the one hand, learners in game-activities are not any longer those passive students waiting to be filled with the good knowledge by the teacher. They are free to be themselves not someone else. Moreover, game-activities allow L2 learners to have some control in the classroom and show their personality whenever they participate in them and liberate them from the traditional passivity.

Despite the recent valuable focus on the learner, the teacher, on the other hand, is the most influential variable in the language classroom. Besides functioning as an instructor and classroom manager, the teacher may participate as a player himself. Moreover, he will be the one who chooses the appropriate game to fit the content and prepare students for the process of learning as “effective teachers consciously vary their behavior and their activities” (Moore, 1989, p.140). It is vital to say that only well-trained and qualified teachers are needed in this field because of its special requirements and difficulties.

What really matters at this stage is that games and game-like activities bring, as Lee (1965) explains, both teachers and learners closer in an agreeable way, and that also helps to ease the process of language learning and teaching. Games, therefore, empower both teachers and learners in their language learning/teaching and function as a force to unify them in the language classroom.

## **4. Factors Affecting Grammar Games**

### **4.1 Age**

It is beyond doubt that the age of learners determines the appropriateness of the game and whether a game will be meaningful to language learners. Moreover, it is generally accepted that the use of games is mainly restricted to the elementary stages when children are very willing to play games. In addition of being a way of manipulating structural patterns, games are considered to be among the most successful techniques of involving the child in practice. Through them, children happily and consciously can learn L2 structures willingly as they enjoy it. Games, then, represent a milestone in their learning process as Lewis and Bedson (1999) state that, “games are fun and children like to play them...playing games is vital and natural part of growing up and learning” (p.5).

Conversely, this useful teaching technique may be rejected by adults as “teenage learners might be reluctant to play games” (Wright, 1983, p.3). For instance, some adults may be offended if you ask them to jump on one foot in the classroom in order to learn the word ‘jump’. Moreover, they are not expected to sing or repeat a rhyme for their fear of being foolish to participate in such activities. Accordingly, adults dislike any activity that exposes them in public.

The real question that imposes itself here is ‘how appropriate is the game, and what is the role of the player in them?’ What I want to suggest is that successful game-activities may go beyond age. Their effectiveness is not restricted by age. For example, some individuals, regardless of age, may be less conscious of games than others. Consequently, language games play different roles at various stages of age (Lee, 1965). If, however, we have adults looking at games as unnecessary, we must clearly respect their point of view. Instead of making them play the game unwillingly, we must justify the use of the game in terms of the meaningfulness of the

practice it provides. Whenever they see the language learning point behind each game, adults will like playing it. For instance, using simple little games based on interesting themes like the ever-interesting theme of love ensures that it will attract all learners' ages.

#### **4.2 Ability in the Target Language**

Different games appeal to different learners' types and, consequently, they must be adjusted to the varying levels of language learners. It is important to note that learners can enjoy and value games if the content and language used are relevant to them and match their abilities and level of proficiency in L2. It is always argued that the problem in teaching grammar through games lies in the too many differences in learners' abilities in L2 within the same class. To overcome this problem, the teacher may team up stronger learners with weaker ones, so they can learn from each other. The more L2 learners can relate to what they are being presented with, the more successful the learners become.

#### **4.3 Motivation**

Another important factor is that games should have a clear objective to get the language right and, at the same time, to get the learners involved in practicing active language without necessarily realizing that they are practicing it. Games are not only relaxation activities in which learners are not really studying L2. On the contrary, they can be turned into lively and effective structure practices. Games derive their motivation from the interest of the activity itself. The key to effective language learning is basically an interested learner. Therefore, the more interesting the language presented to the learners the more possible it is to be learned. Students are unlikely to be successful at learning grammar unless they enjoy the process as Blair (1982) stated that "useful and fun is better than either alone" (p.46). Therefore, game-activities not only have the

capacity to engage and motivate learners in the process but also the power to make the course more memorable and more fun.

Epstein (1999), for example, suggests using Mr. Bean TV episodes as an enjoyable material for a variety of grammatical structures and language practices like employing Mr. Bean's exaggerated movements and facial expressions to focus on adjectives and adverbs. Bringing Mr. Bean into the classroom is, therefore, successful in the sense that language practice that follows is engaging, enjoyable, and at the same time productive. One may conclude that the more the teacher can shift the emphasis of grammar practices in this way, the more language learners may enjoy and benefit from it. Then, the motivation behind such activities will be achieved.

#### **4.4 Size of Group**

This is another important factor to be taken into consideration whenever games or game-like activities are put to practice. The size of group in the language classroom strongly affects the suitability of using games in this context. Mackey (1965) points out that game-activities which are devised for small classes may not be suitable for fairly large classes and quite impossible for big ones of more than a hundred. The problem is that if large groups of learners are located in the same classroom to practice the language, the learners' abilities to personally participate will, definitely, be reduced. Language teachers, on the other hand, will feel exhausted all the time as "games take too long to prepare for so many students" (Toth, 1995, p.8). Moreover, some game-activities involve students to speak throughout the whole activity and learners will get too excited and this, consequently, results in chaos in large classes as they will make much noise and some teachers will get annoyed as controlling large classes is one of the hardest tasks facing even the most experienced teachers. The larger the group is, the more difficult it becomes to set up game-activities.



## 4.5 Time

Lastly, the time factor is of great importance in deciding whether game activities can achieve the right balance between product and process and whether it is suitable for a particular group of learners. The real question here is ‘will the game take me a long time to prepare, compared with the amount of useful work learners will get from it?’ Mackey (1965) explains that learning a foreign language takes practice, and practice takes time, at least as much time as learning any other skill. What really matters here is to plan game-activities according to what the time structure of the course is. If little time can be devoted to language learning, the most suitable game-activity may be the one with the minimum learning load and the maximum range of meaning. However, it must not go unmentioned that using games in the same lesson will take up too great amount of the time devoted for the learning time. Moreover, dividing learners into groups in every class can easily be time-wasting.

In short, considering such factors as age, ability in the target language, motivation, size of group, time...etc., not only pave the ground for games and game-activities to play a part in the learners’ L2 acquisition but also make them available in the learning of their L1.

## 5. Grammar Games in the Classroom

Before using games in the classroom teachers should consider several aspects.

- **Preparation.** Being well-prepared for the lesson is a half of success. Teachers should think of the activity they want to use. Is it good for their pupils? Does it cover the grammar level? Does it need any special materials, space? Does the activity need group work, pair or individual work? If it is group work, how large will the groups be? Does it need preparation in the classroom or any copies of the worksheets?

- **Organization.** Before the activity, teachers should announce what pupils are expected to do. They should explain all rules carefully and ask pupils if they understand. Then they are supposed to change seating or make groups if it is necessary. Whilst pupils are playing the game, it is better for teachers only watch or help if it is needed. It is good to finish the game at a fixed time.
- **Expectation.** Being prepared for unexpected is really important. At any time something could go wrong. The activity could be difficult for children or they do not understand the rules, they have problems within the game, problems whilst making groups, problems in the group etc.

## 6. Most Common Grammar Games

### 6.1. Noughts and Crosses/Tic-tac-toe

This game can be used for different levels, it depends only on the teacher. The class is divided into two groups. One group has noughts and the second has crosses. A teacher prepares a large table on the board and writes words intent on various grammar (adjectives, irregular verbs,) in the fields. Pupils must say opposites, comparatives or superlatives, past forms.....The team is expected to make a line of three or five crosses or noughts.

<del>strong</del>	o tall	o long	hot	cheap
nice	<del>boring</del>	<del>high</del>	curly	narrow
easy	dirty	short	b o iful	difficult
hard	fast	good	bad	interesting
funny	weak	short	wet	ugly

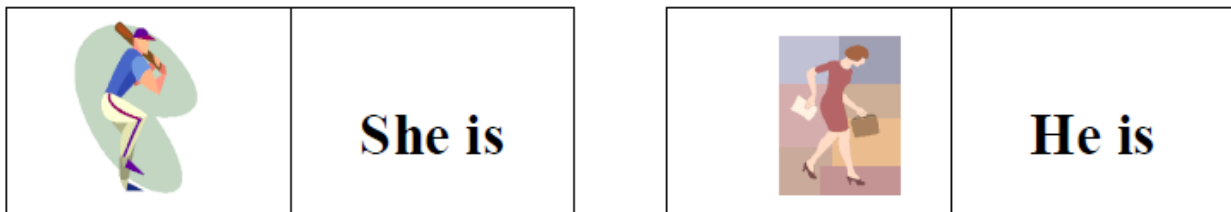
**Figure (1) Game Tic-tac-toe**

**Advantage:** very variable, you can use it for different grammar features.

**Disadvantage:** it needs some time to prepare it on the board, the game could be a bit chaotic when you have got a large group of pupils. This game would be suitable for smaller groups of pupils.

## 6.2. Dominoes

It is a very old game, it was probably invented in China in the 12th century. It consists of plastic, wooden or paper blocks which are divided in two halves. On each part there is something different written or drawn. Before starting the game you must first turn dominoes face down and mix them. The players choose the blocks (mostly about five), they must not show them to anyone. One player begins with putting one block on the table, and then other continues with putting another block with the same picture next to the first one. If he has not got an acceptable block, he must take another block from the pile and another player continues in playing. The winner is the player who has not got any block. You can practice various kinds of grammar: irregular verbs, adjectives, pronouns etc.



**Figure (2) Picture of dominoes**

**Advantage:** variability, it can be played in pairs or in groups of more pupils, children know the rules, so you need not explain the game for a very long time. You do not need large space for playing, one table is enough, and you do not need any proprieties for playing except the domino.

**Disadvantage:** -----

### 6.3 Board Games

Board games are really very popular with pupils. They are very variable and teachers can practice any grammar they want. Board games are made for pair work or group work. Everything you need are some figures, a dice, a board and sometimes paper and a pencil. The game has Start and Finish. A pupil is supposed to throw the dice and according to the number he goes through the game. The field where he stays has some task, which he must fill in. The winner is the pupil who reaches Finish first.



**Figure (3) Picture of Board Game**

**Advantage:** variability, you can use it for pair work or group work. You can use your own game or download some from the Internet.

**Disadvantage:** you must have enough copies for the whole group. It is difficult to check all the groups and to correct their mistakes.

#### **Conclusion**

Language games are not just time fillers or ice-breakers. They can be motivating, and encourage students to discovery learning and solve problems. They give the opportunity to learners to learn and use language in a meaningful way and help teachers to understand the students' needs. The first and main purpose of this section was to investigate the relationship

between grammar and games. By tracing the history of grammar games we hope to have elaborated a clear picture of its background and its place nowadays. It has been noted that game activities have many functions in the field of grammar with special regards to the use of group work. Moreover, the roles of teachers and learners are analyzed in terms of game-activities. Perhaps the greatest contribution of game-activities in the field of grammar depend on such factors as age, ability in the target language, motivation, size of group, time...etc. These factors are crucial in the sense that they pave the way for game activities in the field of EFL. Ending with a brief presentation of some prominent grammar games and how it should be implemented in the FL classroom.

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## **Chapter Two: Data Collection and Experiment Procedure**

### **Introduction**

The present research is designed to investigate the effectiveness of using board games as a teaching strategy to facilitate the teaching of English grammar. Accordingly we hypothesize that if English teachers use board games in teaching English grammar, it would bring a significant improvement on learner's mastery of grammar rules .To serve the needs of our hypothesis, we have used two research methods. From one side, the teachers' questionnaire which serves as a guide-line to collect data about teachers' attitudes about using games in teaching EG for middle school pupils. From the other side, the pupils' experiment in which we attempt to catch up empirical data vis-a-vis pupils' application to BG. The experiment is divided into three stages: a pre-test, a treatment period and a post-test. Thirty pupils have been randomly chosen to take part in the experiment and have been divided equally into two groups. One control group and one experimental group. Pupils in the control group have been taught within the usual grammar instruction, while pupils in the experimental group have been subject to the new way of grammar instruction throughout the use of board games strategy introduced by the researcher. A concrete analysis and interpretation of the results is provided to enable the researcher to validate the hypothesis or not.

### **1. Research Design**

The present study is performed as a quasi-experimental case of research due to the nature of the variables being under the scope which are; board games and grammar teaching. Therefore, to ensure the accurateness of the findings, two methods of data collection were used in this research to answer the proposed research question, which is stated as follows:

Does using board games play any significant role in teaching English grammar?

While the proposed hypotheses to answer the provided question are as follows:

- If English teachers use board games in teaching English grammar, it would bring a significant improvement on learner's mastery of grammar rules (H1).
- Board games will not bring a significant improvement on learner's mastery of grammar rules (Null hypothesis).

As it was stated above, this study will tackle only one independent variable (board games) and one dependent variable (grammar teaching). Since the study is in the form of a quasi-experimental design, it can be illustrated in the table below as follows:

Sample	Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
Experimental group	Ge1	T	Ge2
Control group	Ge1	-	Ge2

**Table 1: Research Design**

**Notes:**

**Experimental group:** 15 pupils at second year middle school randomly selected to receive the treatment.

**Control group:** 15 pupils at second year middle school randomly selected as a control group to compare the test results of both groups.

**Pre-test:** made up of 2 grammar exercises.

**Treatment:** two board games for the experimental group.

**Post-test:** it is done the same as the pre-test.

**Ge1:** the grammar knowledge of the control/experimental group in the pre-test.

**Ge2:** the grammar knowledge of the control/experimental group in the post-test.



## **1.1 The Choice of the Method**

There is no best way of classifying research methods in the field of education. The choice of the research method is dictated by the nature of the subject to be treated. i.e. the topic, the aim of the research, the sample under investigation and the collected data impose the use of a specific method. As far as our research is concerned, the most suitable method is qualitative quantitative data.

## **1.2 Population and Sampling**

### **1.2.1 Teachers' Questionnaire**

The administration of the questionnaire and its collection is held from hand to hand. The questionnaire was given to ten EFL teachers and was collected a day after (all questionnaires were given back).

### **1.2.2 Students' Experiment**

#### **1.2.2.1 Population**

Population is defined by Polit et al (2001, p. 233) as “the entire aggregation of cases that meet a specified set of criteria”. The present study deals with second year pupils at the middle school of Maansar Millad – Ain Kercha. Pupils were supposed to have studied English for at least one year.

#### **1.2.2.2. Sampling and Randomization**

According to Polit et al (2001, p. 26):

Sampling involves selecting a group of people, events, behaviors, or other elements with which to conduct a study. When elements are persons, they are known as subjects who are selected from the delineated target population in a way that the individuals in the sample represent as nearly as possible.

Hence, two small groups are chosen as subjects in this study, each group is taken randomly from a larger classroom. Each group consists of 15 subjects. .

This study has lasted three weeks. Two sessions in the first week, First one for the pre-test and the second one for the 'WH' question board game. The third session took place in the second week and it was about the Present perfect board game. In the last week we had one session for the post test. The time devoted for each session was an hour and each group has its own sessions separated from the other group.

### **1.3. Description of the Tools**

#### **1.3.1. Description of the Questionnaire**

The teachers' questionnaire seeks to collect data about teachers' attitudes about using language games in teaching EG for middle school pupils. The teachers were required to answer 22 questions divided into 6 sections by ticking the appropriate box and making statements whenever required.

- **First Section: Background Information (1-4)**

It is intended to gather general information about the participants, their gender, age and experience in teaching English.

- **Second Section: Teachers' Perceptions about Teaching Grammar (5-7)**

It investigates teachers' attitudes toward grammar teaching. The extent to which teachers value the importance of grammar teaching in FL and which method/approach they use in teaching EG.

- **Third Section: Pedagogical Value of Using Games in Language Teaching (8-11)**

This section aims at investigating teachers' perception about how much they value using games in EFL classes. If they agree or disagree that games are fun and full of pedagogical value and their opinions about whether games present any opportunities to learners to show their skills or not. lastly, they were asked about whether games should be given a special role in a foreign language teaching program or not.

- **Fourth Section: Board Games as a Teaching Strategy (12-15)**

This section deals with an important element in our research which is BG. It investigates whether teachers of English language use such a technique as a teaching strategy in their grammar classes, as well as teachers' attitudes toward the use of them. i.e. their perception about the impact of BG on students' grammar learning.

- **Fifth Section: The Impact of Games in teaching EG to Young Learners (16-21)**

Games can bring many benefits to grammar teaching like lowering pupils' anxiety, teaching and promoting fluency, motivating and entertaining pupils to learn grammar more effectively. In this section the main concern is exploring teachers' opinions and attitudes concerning the impact that games may have on grammar teaching whether positively or negatively.

- **Sixth Section: Further Suggestions (22)**

In this section, teachers are supposed to add some comments and extra suggestions to the topic under investigation.

### **1.3.2. Description of the experiment**

To collect data about the learners' knowledge development in the area of grammar the case of present perfect tense and 'wh' questions, a pre-test, a treatment period and a post-test were organized.

### **1.3.2.1. Description of the Pre-Test**

In the pre-test, one session is devoted for solving two grammar exercises. The first exercise is about English present perfect and the second exercise deals with English 'WH' questions. The two exercises were taken from 'Longman Grammar Practice for Elementary Students 2000' book. In the first exercise pupils were given five sentences and asked to put the verbs in brackets into the present perfect tense, all the verbs in this exercise are regular because irregular verbs may present many difficulties to the pupils' (Second year middle school pupils). In the second exercise, the pupils were provided with a written conversation between two peoples. The 'WH' question markers are removed from the conversation and collected in a table and the pupils are supposed to choose the correct word from the table to fit the missing space (9 spaces). The teacher has explained in few minutes to the pupils how to use the present perfect and has given them some examples before taking the Pre-test.

### **1.3.2.1 Description of the Treatment**

The targeted group for the treatment, experimental group, was provided by two board games taken from the internet (<http://bogglesworldesl.com/>) . The first BG was about WH questions and it took the whole session (1hour). The pupils were divided equally into two groups and each group is divided into two teams. The first group was playing the game with the teacher and the second group was playing the same game with the researcher. After dividing the pupils into groups, the teacher explains to the pupils how the game is played. Before starting the game each group is given a counter and a dice; the two teams place their counters on 'START' and throw the dice to start playing. Pupils make questions using the words in the squares in order to move along the board and reach the end. The board contains also some tasks which may be beneficial for the players or the opposite; they can slow them down or give them shortcuts to finish first.

Players who make correct questions have the right to move forward while the others who fail to formulate the questions they miss the turn. The teacher or the researcher is helping the pupils throughout the whole game by explaining the meaning of words and correcting the pupils' errors. The dice contains 6 numbers and each number is associated with a specific question word (what, when, why, who, where and how) for example if the number is 1 the player should use 'what' to formulate the question. The second game is almost played the same as the first one, the pupils conjugate the verbs in the squares to the present perfect tense. The team who finishes first wins the games and gets awarded from the teacher.

#### **1.3.2.2. Description of the Post-Test**

The post test is the same as the Pre-test. It consists of two grammar exercises, the first one deals with the present perfect tense and the second one deals with English 'WH' questions.

#### **1.3.3 Scoring**

The test was out of 14 points that represent 14 sentences distributed in two exercises. The first one consists of five sentences in which pupils are asked to put the five verbs in brackets into the present perfect tense. In the second exercise, the pupils were provided with a conversation between two people. The first person is asking nine questions and the second one is answering him/her, the 'WH' words are removed from the conversation and collected in a table, the pupils are supposed to choose the correct word from the table to fit the missing space. Each item is scored as 1 point in case the learner had a correct answer and zero for the incorrect one.

## 2. Analysis of the Results

### 2.1. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

#### ❖ Section One: Background information

Q1: Gender		Q2: Age	Q4: Teachers' Teaching Experience
Male	Female	20-30: 04	First year: 02
03	07	30-40: 06	2-5 years: 01
		40-50: 00	More than 5 years: 07

**Table 02: Teachers' Background Information**

Q3: was about the middle school they work in (the teachers).

As shown above in table 02, the majority of participants (70%) are females. 40% of participants are between 20 to 30 years old and the other 60% are over 30 years old and under 40. Concerning the teaching experience, the majority of the teachers (70%) have more than 5 years in teaching English as a FL.

#### ❖ Section Two: Teachers' Perceptions about Teaching Grammar

- **Q5: How much do you value the importance of grammar in teaching a foreign language?**

Options	N	%
Very much	4	30
much	2	20
Little	4	50
Not important	0	00
Total	10	100

**Table 03: The Importance of Grammar in Teaching FL**

The table 03 indicates that 40% of the teachers give a little value for grammar importance in teaching English as a FL. On the other hand, the majority of teachers (60%) give much importance to grammar in FLT.

- **Q6: Which method do you use when teaching grammar rules?**

Options	N	%
Explicitly	8	80
Implicitly	2	20
Total	10	100

**Table 04: The Most Used Method for Teaching EG**

The table 04 indicates that the majority of the participants (80%) teach the grammar rules explicitly in their classes in which grammar rules are clearly presented and explained for the pupils. This implies that teachers are still using the traditional ways of teaching grammar.

- **Q7: Do you face situations where students produce sentences that are incorrect grammatically, though they sometimes know the rules?**

Options	N	%
Yes	10	100
No	0	00
Total	10	100

**Table 05: Problems of Grammar Rules**

The table 05 indicates that the whole majority of the participants (100%) agree with the fact that pupils sometimes produce sentences that are incorrect grammatically, though they know the rules. This implies that sometimes the learners know the rules but they do not know how to use them or did not have the chance to practice them in real life situations.

❖ **Section Three: Pedagogical Value of Using Games in Language Teaching**

#	Statement	Agree	Disagree
8	I believe that games are both fun and full of pedagogical value.	100%	0%
9	I believe that games should be given a special role in a foreign language teaching program.	90%	10%
10	I believe that games present many opportunities to learners to show their skills not only in grammar but also in many language areas.	100%	0%
11	I think that teachers must use games for fun only for breaking down boredom.	20%	80%

**Table 06: Pedagogical Value of Using Games in Language Teaching**

The results of the question 08 show that the whole majority of EFL teachers (100%) believe in the pedagogical value of using games in FLT. Q9 asked participants whether games should be given a special role in the FLT program or not, the results of this question reveal that nearly all of the participants (90%) agree with this idea. Results of Q10 indicate that all of the participants (100%) also agree that games provide learners with a chance to show their skills not only in grammar, but also in many areas of language. Lastly, Q11 was directed to inquire about whether participants think of games as tools designed only for fun or alternatives that can be used to make instruction more effective. Results show that only 20% of the participants think of games as tools for fun, the others and the majority of teachers (80%) think of games as the best alternatives to make the grammar instruction beneficial for learners. From all the results of this section we can say that teachers do really believe in the pedagogical value of using games in FLT.



❖ **Section Four: Board Games as a Teaching Strategy**

- **Q12: Do you use language games in class?**

Options	N	%
Yes	7	70
No	3	30
Total	10	100

**Table 07: Teachers who Use Language Games in Class**

The table above indicates that the majority of teachers (70%) use language games. This implies that the teachers are aware about the benefits and the advantages of using language games in class.

- **Q13: If yes, which ones?**

The teachers, who said that they use language games in class, mentioned some games like puzzles, song games, guessing games, and crossword puzzles. Only three teachers mentioned board games.

- **Q14: Do you use board games in class?**

Options	N	%
Yes	03	30
No	07	70
Total	10	100

**Table 08: Teachers who Use Board Games in Class**

Only three teachers (30%) use board games in their classes, this implies that the majority of teachers (70%) do not know about board games or they do not use them in their EFL classes.

**Q15: Do you think that the practice of board games will facilitate the teaching of English grammar?**

Options	N	%
Yes	8	80
No	0	0
I don't know	2	20
Total	10	100

**Table 09: Teachers' Perception about Board Games Facilitating the Teaching of EG**

Most of teachers (80%) agree with the statement that BG facilitate the teaching of EG. Only two teachers corresponding to 20% answered "I don't know" this confirms that teachers do believe in a way or another that board games are so effective in teaching EG to young pupils.

**❖ Section Five: The Impact of Using Games on Grammar Teaching to Young Learners**

#	Statement	Agree	Disagree
16	I believe that using games can lower pupils' anxiety towards grammar learning.	100%	0%
17	I believe that games are not very effective in grammar teaching.	10%	90%
18	I believe that grammar games encourage, entertain, teach and promote fluency.	100%	0%
19	I believe that games are highly motivating and entertaining way of teaching grammar especially for weak pupils.	90%	10%
20	I believe that while playing a game, learners are not concerned about focusing on the structures, but learn them unconsciously.	90%	10%
21	I use games in my grammar class as much as possible.	90%	10%

**Table 10: Games' Impact on Teaching Grammar to Young Learners**

The results of Q16 indicate that the whole majority of EFL teachers (100%) believe that games lower pupils' anxiety towards grammar learning. Therefore, games help pupils overcome their anxiety, feel relaxed and be enthusiastic to learn. Q17 reveals that most of the EFL teachers (90%) believe that games are effective in grammar teaching. Q18 shows that the whole majority of teachers (100%) are with the idea that grammar games encourage, entertain and promote fluency. Q19 reveals that a great majority of teachers (90%) think that games are motivating and entertaining way of teaching grammar, especially for weak pupils. The results of Q20 indicate that a great majority of EFL teachers (90%) believe that while playing a game, learners do not focus on the structures only, but they learn them unconsciously. Lastly, Q21 was directed to the participants to reveal how frequent they use games in their EFL classes to teach grammar; the results indicate that the majority of the participants (90%) try to use games as much as possible in their classes. As a result, Table 10 reveals that a great majority of EFL teachers are aware of the fact that games are effective in many ways in grammar teaching.

#### ❖ **Section Six: Further Suggestions**

In this section, most of the teachers agree that games are a beneficial tool for teaching grammar by creating a positive and encouraging atmosphere in the class. One of the participants raised the point of adding more seminars about how to use games in teaching EG.

#### **2.2.1 Discussing the Results of the Questionnaire**

The results of question five indicate that the majority of teachers give much importance to grammar in FLT. These results confirm what is said before in section one that grammar is an important component in FL teaching and learning. Question six shows that the explicit way to grammar teaching is the most used method by the participants of the study, this implies that teachers still believe that it is better to present and explain the grammar rules for the learners so

they can memorize and use them correctly. This is not the case with the new teaching methods which rely mainly on the mental capacities of the learners in order to involve them more in the learning process. The results of question seven indicate that all the participants agree with the fact that pupils sometimes produce sentences that are incorrect grammatically, even though they know the rules. This implies that the old methods of grammar teaching do not give learners the opportunity to master and practice those rules in real life situations.

The results of the question eight and nine show that almost all the participants believe in the pedagogical value of using games and agree that these games should be given a special role in FLT program. Similarly to question nine and eight the results of question ten indicate that all of the participants also agree that games provide learners with a chance to show their skills not only in grammar, but also in many areas of language teaching which may open the door for more research about the use of these games in other domains of language teaching. The last question in section three was directed to inquire about whether participants think of games as tools designed only for fun or as alternatives that can be used to make instruction more effective. The results show that the majority of participants think of games as the best alternatives to make the grammar instruction more beneficial for learners.

Section four deals with the practical use of games inside the EFL classes. The results of question twelve indicate that the majority of teachers do use language games. This implies that the teachers are aware about the benefits and the advantages of using language games in language teaching. The teachers, who said that they use language games in class, mentioned some games like words pyramid, guessing games, and crossword puzzles. Only three teachers mentioned BG. This implies that the majority of teachers do not know about BG or they do not

use them. Even though most of teachers do not use BG they agree that BG are so effective in teaching EG to young pupils and can facilitate the teaching of EG in a way or another.

The results of section five indicate that the whole majority of EFL teachers believe that games are effective in grammar teaching in many ways. They can lower pupils' anxiety towards grammar learning, help pupils overcome their anxiety, feel relaxed and be enthusiastic to learn. Also they can create a fun and entertaining way of teaching grammar, especially for weak pupils. The results of question twenty indicate that playing a game, learners do not focus on the structures only, but they learn them unconsciously. In this way of instruction learners will be more engaged, active and autonomous. The last question in section five was directed to the participants to reveal how frequent they use games in their grammar classes; the results indicate that the majority of the participants try to use games as much as possible but they do not use games as frequently as expected in their classrooms.

As the findings of this study show and according to these teachers, games are an important and necessary part of English language teaching and learning in the context of middle school level simply because they provide EFL teachers with many instructional advantages. However, some of the results of this study point out that despite this recognition teachers do not feel comfortable in using new methods and techniques inside the classroom, maybe they feel more comfortable with the traditional teaching methods because they were taught that way or maybe they are corseted with the course book and the time frame. This is why games are seen only as techniques for killing boredom and creating a fun environment in the class.

## 2.2 Analysis of the experiment

### 2.2.1 Results of the Pre-test

#### 2.2.1.1 Control Group versus Experimental Group Scores in the Pre-test

The table below represents the pre-test scores of pupils in both groups.

Control group	Pre-test	Experimental group	Pre-test
1	2	1	1
2	4	2	3
3	4	3	4
4	4	4	5
5	4	5	5
6	5	6	5
7	5	7	5
8	5	8	5
9	5	9	6
10	6	10	6
11	6	11	7
12	7	12	7
13	7	13	7
14	9	14	8
15	10	15	12
	$\bar{X} = 5.53$		$\bar{X} = 5.73$

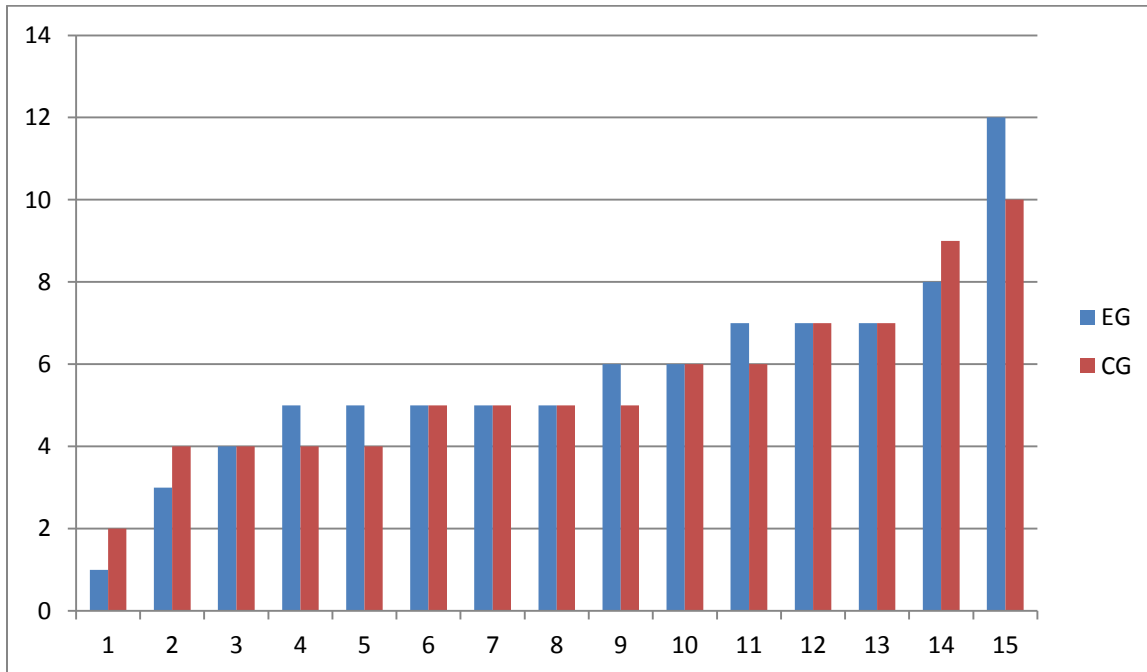
**Table 11: Experimental and Control Groups' Scores in the Pre-test.**

The table above represents the pre-test scores of the experimental and the control groups. It is designed in order to know the level of subjects in both groups before starting the treatment. The experimental group with a mean  $\bar{X}_{pre} = 5.73$  and the control group with a mean  $\bar{X}_{pre} = 5.53$ . We can notice that both groups have almost the same mean. Further we can notice that the lowest score obtained by the control group is 02/14, and for the experimental group is 01/14. Whereas the highest score for the control group is 10/14, and for the experimental group is 12/14.

For a total number of 30 scores in both the control and the experimental group, we get the following:

**Experimental group:** 05  $\geq$  07  $\longrightarrow$  33%  $\geq$  07  
 10  $<$  07  $\longrightarrow$  67%  $<$  07

**Control group:** 04  $\geq$  07  $\longrightarrow$  26%  $\geq$  07  
 11  $<$  07  $\longrightarrow$  74%  $<$  07



**Figure 04: Experimental and Control Groups' Scores in the Pre-test.**

## 2.2.2 Results of the post-test

### 2.2.2.1 Control Group versus Experimental Group Scores on the Post-test

Table below represents the post-test scores of pupils in both control and the experimental groups.

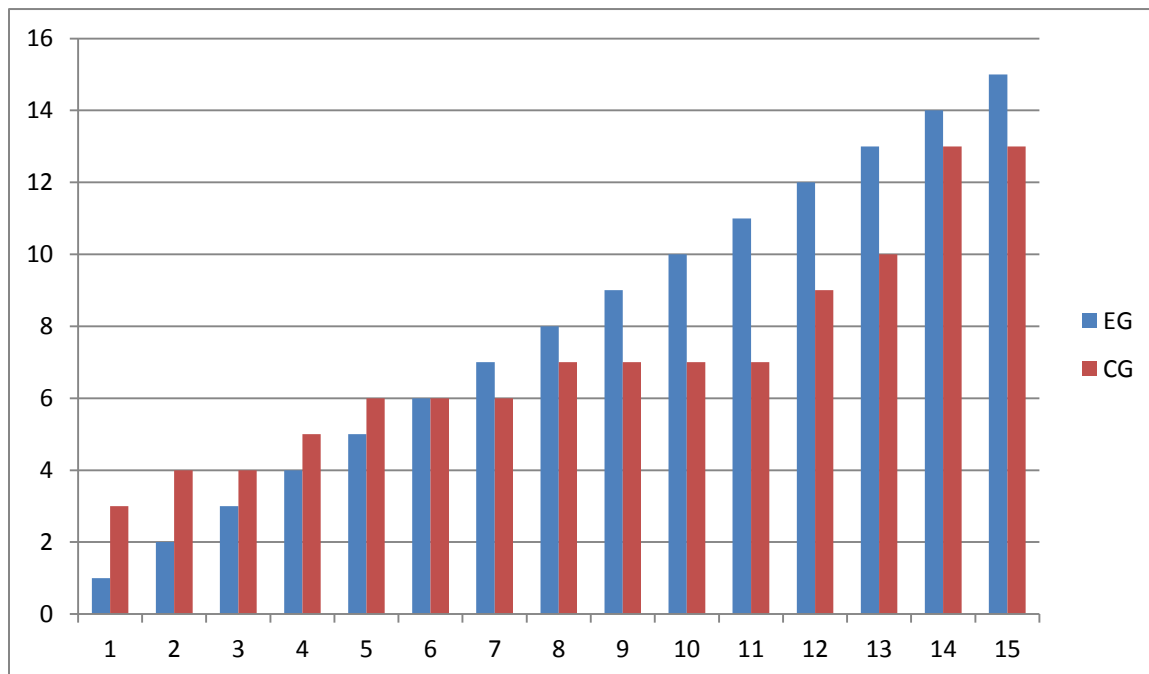
Control group	Post-test	Experimental group	Post-test
1	3	1	4
2	4	2	6
3	4	3	6
4	5	4	6
5	6	5	7
6	6	6	7
7	6	7	9
8	7	8	9
9	7	9	9
10	7	10	11
11	7	11	11
12	9	12	12
13	10	13	12
14	13	14	14
15	13	15	14
	$\bar{X} = 7.14$		$\bar{X} = 9.21$

**Table 12: Pupils' Scores in the Post-test**



The table above represents the post-test scores of the experimental and the control groups. It is designed in order to know the level of participants in both groups after the treatment period. The experimental group with a mean  $\bar{X}=9.21$  and the control group with a mean  $\bar{X}=7.14$ . We can notice that the two groups have different means. Further we can notice that the lowest score obtained by the control group is (03/14), and for the experimental group is (04/14). Whereas the highest score for the control group is (13/14), and for the experimental group is (14/14). In the post-test, the participants' scores have witnessed significant changes globally and individually.

**Experimental group:** 11  $\geq$  07 → 74%  $\geq$  07  
                           04 < 07 → 26% < 07  
**Control group:**     08  $\geq$  07 → 53%  $\geq$  07  
                           07 < 07 → 47% < 07



**Figure 05: Post-test Scores Distribution**

### 2.2.3 Control Group Pre-test versus Control Group Post-test

Control group	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
1	2	3	+1
2	4	4	0
3	4	4	0
4	4	5	+1
5	4	6	+2
6	5	6	+1
7	5	6	+1
8	5	7	+2
9	5	7	+2
10	6	7	+1
11	6	7	+1
12	7	9	+2
13	7	10	+3
14	9	13	+4
15	10	13	+3
	$\bar{X} = 5.53$	$\bar{X} = 7.14$	$\bar{d} = 1.6$

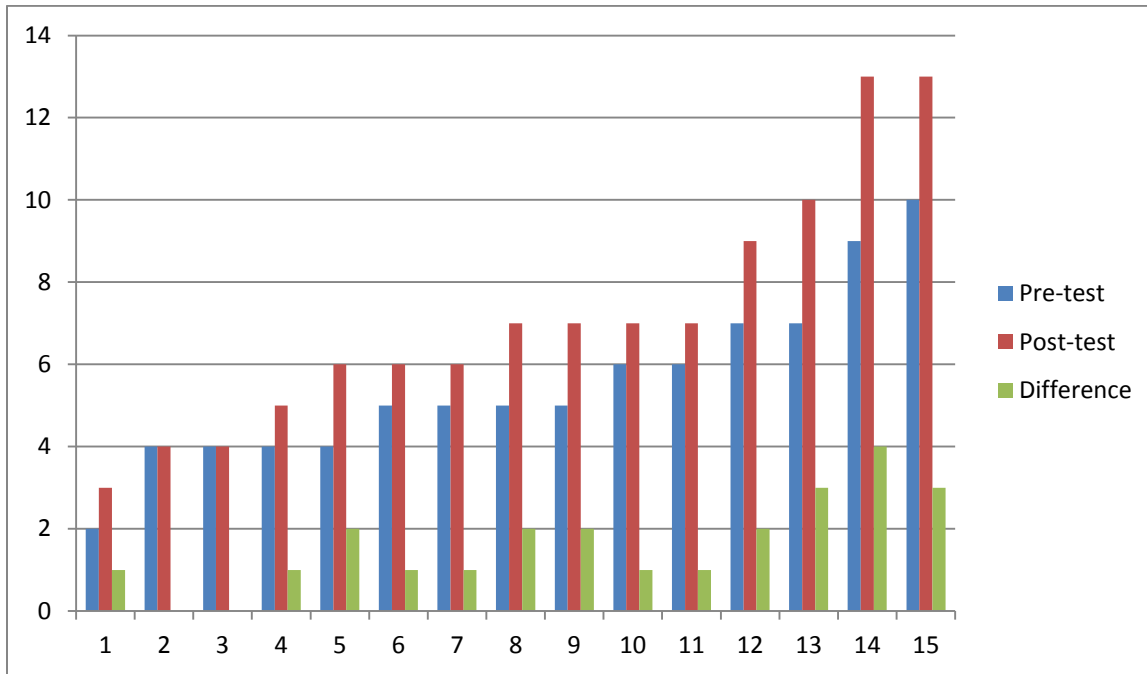
**Table 13: Control Groups' Difference in Scores Between the Pre-test and Post-test**

From table 13, we notice that the control group scored a higher post-test mean  $\bar{X} = 7.14$  than the pre-test mean  $\bar{X} = 5.53$ . In order to examine the amount of improvement from the pre-test to post-test in the control group, we have compared the difference in scores between the pre-test and post-test marks for each pupil and calculated the mean difference score which is  $\bar{d} = 1.6$ .

However, their improvement was not much significant and of that importance in solving the two grammar exercises in the post-test.

From the total number of 30 scores in the control group, we get the following:

**Pre-test:** 04  $\geq$  07  $\longrightarrow$  26%  $\geq$  07      **Post-test:** 08  $\geq$  07  $\longrightarrow$  53%  $\geq$  07  
 11 < 07  $\longrightarrow$  74% < 07                      07 < 07  $\longrightarrow$  47% < 07



**Figure 06: Scores differences in the Pre and Post-test for each Participant in the Control Group**

### 2.2.4 Experimental Group Pre-test versus Experimental Group Post-test

Experimental group	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference
1	1	4	+3
2	3	6	+3
3	4	6	+2
4	5	6	+1
5	5	7	+2
6	5	7	+2
7	5	9	+4
8	5	9	+4
9	6	9	+3
10	6	11	+5
11	7	11	+4
12	7	12	+5
13	7	12	+5
14	8	14	+6
15	12	14	+2
	$\bar{X} = 5.73$	$\bar{X} = 9.21$	$\bar{d} = 3.48$

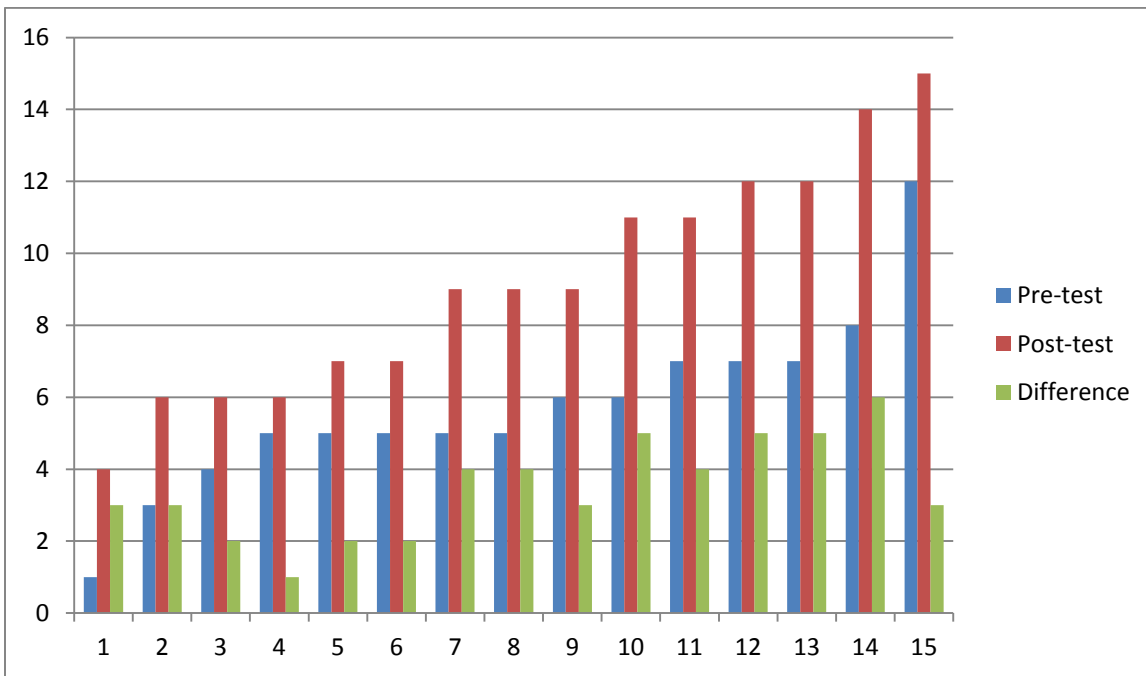
**Table 14: Experimental group's difference scores between the pre-test and post-test.**

From both the table above and figure below we notice that the experimental group scored a higher post-test mean  $\bar{X} = 9.21$  than the pretest mean  $\bar{X} = 5.73$  with a difference of ( $\bar{d} = 3.48$ ). We can say that the result has significantly changed from the pre-test to the post-test. As a result,

we can say that the treatment had an effect on the majority of learners' scores. This indicates that the subjects in the experimental group did benefit from the treatment (board games).

From the total number of 30 scores in the experimental group, we get the following:

Pre-test: 05  $\geq$  07  $\longrightarrow$  33%  $\geq$  07      Post-test: 11  $\geq$  07  $\longrightarrow$  74%  $\geq$  07  
 10  $<$  07  $\longrightarrow$  67%  $<$  07                      04  $<$  07  $\longrightarrow$  26%  $<$  07



**Figure 07: Scores Differences in the Pre and Post-test for each Participant in the Experimental Group.**

In order to check that the remarkable improvement of the post-test scores in the experimental group is due to the manipulation of the independent variable (board games) and not caused by chance, a paired-samples t-test was carried out.

### 2.2.5 The Paired-Samples t-test

According to Chen (2005), the paired-samples t- test is used in situations where each participant contributes to two test scores, the participants are said to belong to the same group. A common belief in SLA research is that the t-test is used with participants having a pre-test, post-

test and the treatment. In addition, the paired-samples t-test is a parametric that is used to compare the experimental and the control groups' pupils before and after having engaged in the treatment period. It helps the researcher to indicate whether the differences obtained are due to the effect of the independent variable (board games) or merely chance.

### 2.2.5.1 Procedure for Carrying out a Paired-Samples t-test

According to Chen (2005), the following procedures are needed in order to carry out a paired-samples t-test:

1. Compute the difference between pre-test and post-test for each subject.
2. Calculate the mean difference ( $\bar{d}$ ).
3. Calculate the standard deviation of the differences and the standard error of the mean difference,  $SE(\bar{d}) = \frac{S_d}{\sqrt{N}}$
4. Calculate the t-statistic, which is given by  $t = \bar{d} / (SE)$ . Under the null hypothesis, this statistic follows a t distribution with N-1 degrees of freedom.
5. Use tables of the t-distribution to compare your value for T to the N-1 distribution. Choose the level of significance required (normally  $p= 0.01$ ) and read the critical value.
6. If the t-value is higher than the critical t-value, it can be said that the differences between the scores of the pre and post-test are significant at the level of probability. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

- **The mean difference  $\bar{d}$**

$$\bar{d} = \frac{\sum d}{N}$$

Where  $\bar{d}$  = mean, d = difference in scores, N = number of subjects, and  $\sum$  = sum

$$\bar{d} = \frac{52}{15} \leftrightarrow \bar{d} = 3.46$$

- The standard deviation of the differences

$$S_d = \sqrt{S^2} = \sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2}{N} - \bar{d}^2}$$

Where S= variance, and  $\sum d^2$  the square difference scores

$$S_d = \sqrt{\frac{208}{15} - 3.46^2} = \sqrt{13.86 - 11.97} = 1.9$$

$$S_d = 1.9$$

Experimental group	Difference score $\bar{d}$	Difference score $d^2$
01	+3	+9
02	+3	+9
03	+2	+4
04	+1	+1
05	+2	+4
06	+2	+4
07	+4	+16
08	+4	+16
09	+3	+9
10	+5	+25
11	+4	+16
12	+5	+25
13	+5	+25
14	+6	+36
15	+3	+9
N	$\sum d = 52$	$\sum d^2 = 208$

**Table 15: The Experimental Group's Square Difference Scores for the Grammar Exercises**

- **The standard error of the mean difference**

$$SE(\bar{d}) = \frac{S_d}{\sqrt{N}}$$

$$SE(\bar{d}) = \frac{1.9}{\sqrt{15}} = 0.49$$

- **The t-statistic**

$$t_{N-1} = \frac{\bar{d}}{SE(\bar{d})}$$

$$t_{15-1} = \frac{3.46}{0.49} = 7.06$$

$$t_{14} = 7.06$$

The total number of the targeted group for the treatment is 15 subjects. Therefore, the degree of freedom (df = N-1) is 14, and the level of probability is p= 0.01, Therefore the t value would be 2.86. Now if we compare the critical t-value to the observed t-value we get:

$$t_{obs} > t_{crit} (7.06 > 2.86)$$

The numbers show that the main hypothesis is accepted, thus the null hypothesis is rejected; in other words, the treatment (board games) had a great significant effect on learners' mastery of grammar rules. Hence, it is without doubt that board games can facilitate the teaching of English grammar.

## 2.2.6 The Independent-Samples T-test

The Independent-Samples t-test is used to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means of two different groups; control group and experimental group. In other words, the independent-samples t-test shows the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Its formula is denoted as follows:

$$t_{N_1+N_2-2} = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2 \sqrt{(N_1 + N_2 - 2)N_1N_2}}{\sqrt{(N_1S_1^2 + N_2S_2^2)(N_1 + N_2)}}$$



In order to confirm the independent variable (using board games) on the dependent variable (grammar teaching) and reject the null hypothesis, the calculated t- should go beyond the tabulated t at a particular level of probability (p=0.01).

$X_x$ = individual score
$\bar{X}_n$ = group mean $X_x^2$ = square score
$N_x$ = number of participants
$\sum X_x$ = sum of individual scores
$\sum X_x^2$ = sum of square scores
$S_x$ = Sample variance

**Pre-test**

**Control group**

$$\sum X_2 = 83$$

$$\sum X_2^2 = 1181$$

$$\bar{X}_2 = \frac{\sum X_2}{N_2}$$

$$\bar{X}_2 = \frac{83}{15}$$

$$\bar{X}_2 = 5.53$$

**Experimental group**

$$\sum X_1 = 86$$

$$\sum X_1^2 = 1444$$

$$\bar{X}_1 = \frac{\sum X_1}{N_1}$$

$$\bar{X}_1 = \frac{86}{15}$$

$$\bar{X}_1 = 5.73$$

**Post-test**

**Control group**

$$\sum X_2 = 107$$

$$\sum X_2^2 = 889$$

$$\bar{X}_2 = \frac{\sum X_2}{N_2}$$

**Experimental group**

$$\sum X_1 = 138$$

$$\sum X_1^2 = 1416$$

$$\bar{X}_1 = \frac{\sum X_1}{N_1}$$

$$\bar{X}_2 = \frac{107}{15}$$

$$\bar{X}_2 = 7.1$$

$$\bar{X}_1 = \frac{138}{15}$$

$$\bar{X}_1 = 9.2$$

- **The sample variance**

### Experimental Group

$$S_2^2 = \frac{\sum X_2^2}{N_1} - \bar{X}_2^2$$

$$S_2^2 = \frac{1416}{15} - 9.2^2$$

$$S_2^2 = 9.76$$

### Control Group

$$S_1^2 = \frac{\sum X_1^2}{N_2} - \bar{X}_1^2$$

$$S_1^2 = \frac{889}{15} - 7.13^2$$

$$S_1^2 = 8.42$$

C.G	Score $X_1$	Square score $X_1^2$	E.G	Score $X_2$	Square score $X_2^2$
1	3	9	1	4	16
2	4	16	2	6	36
3	4	16	3	6	36
4	5	25	4	6	36
5	6	36	5	7	49
6	6	36	6	7	49
7	6	36	7	9	81
8	7	49	8	9	81
9	7	49	9	9	81
10	7	49	10	11	121
11	7	49	11	11	121
12	9	81	12	12	144
13	10	100	13	12	144
14	13	169	14	14	196
15	13	169	15	15	225
Total	$\sum X_1 = 107$	$\sum X_1^2 = 889$	Total	$\sum X_2 = 138$	$\sum X_2^2 = 1416$

**Table 16: Square post-test scores of both groups on the Vocabulary tasks**

- **The t-value**

$$t_{N_1+N_2-2} = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2 \sqrt{(N_1 + N_2 - 2)N_1N_2}}{\sqrt{(N_1S_1^2 + N_2S_2^2)(N_1 + N_2)}}$$

$$t_{15+15-2} = \frac{9.2-7.1\sqrt{28 \times 225}}{\sqrt{(15 \times 9.76) + (15 \times 8.42) \times (30)}}$$

$$t_{28} = \frac{266.68}{\sqrt{(146.4+126.3) \times 30}}$$

$$t_{28} = \frac{266.68}{90.44} = 2.94$$

The total number of both group participants is 30. So, when entering at t-table a degree of freedom at 28 and the level of probability at 0.01, we get the critical t-value of 2.76. Evidently the t observed is bigger than the critical value.  $t_{obs} > t_{crit}$  ( $2.94 > 2.76$ )

That is to say, the difference between the two groups' post-test means ( $\bar{X}_E$  &  $\bar{X}_C$ ) is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is strongly supported. So, this conclusion means that the likelihood of the experimental result to be a mere chance finding is less than 1%. Thus, we can have about 99% confidence that the observed results are statistically significant, and reflect the positive effect of the new condition to which the experimental group has been exposed. Finally, we conclude that using board games in EFL classrooms plays a significant role in improving the teaching of English grammar for young learners.

### 2.3 Discussing the Results of the Experiment

Throughout this study, the researcher sought to explore the effectiveness of using board games in facilitating the teaching of English grammar. The following research questions were raised:

- Does using board games play any significant role in facilitating the teaching of English grammar?

- What are teachers' attitudes towards the use of board games as a strategy for improving grammar teaching?

In the light of the above questions we hypothesized the following:

(H1): If English teachers use board games in teaching English grammar, it would bring a significant improvement on learner's mastery of grammar rules.

The null hypothesis is stated as follows:

(H0): The mastery of grammar rules will not be improved by the use of board games.

Accordingly, in order to confirm or disconfirm the suggested hypothesis, two means of data collection were carried out, namely, an experimental design in which we had an experimental and a control group. The former received a treatment lasted for two weeks where subjects have been playing board games as a form of grammar instruction. While the control group subjects kept with the traditional way of learning; therefore, they received no treatment in the whole period of the study.

Importantly, the results we have obtained from this present study indicate that in the post-test, the subjects' scores have witnessed great changes globally and individually. The experimental group has achieved higher scores than the control group on the post-test. This significant improvement is due to the treatment phase. That is to say, playing BG has helped learners to master grammar rules more effectively.

- **The Non-significance of the Control Group**

Because the control group subjects kept with the traditional way of learning, there were no significant improvement when comparing the means obtained by the control group in the pre-test and the post-test.

- **The Significance of the Experimental Group Improvement**

After the treatment phase, the experimental group showed significant improvement in the post-test. This was evident when comparing the mean of the pretest which was  $\bar{x} = 5.7$  with the post-test mean  $\bar{x} = 9.2$  in which we get a mean difference  $\bar{d} = 3.5$ . So, the improvement is highly noticeable and it is due to BG. We can conclude that the positive findings obtained from the experimental group scores show that using games as a teaching technique has helped the pupils to learn grammar rules more effectively.

### **3. Pedagogical Implications**

Teaching grammar is not an easy task regarding the different characteristics of learners and their individual skills. What is important is not only what to teach and how to present it in the classroom but also how to engage students and to make them excited to learn the English grammatical system without difficulties. In this study, we try to give teachers some insights into the difficulties of language learning in order to facilitate the teaching of English grammar for Algerian EFL teachers as well as improving grammar learning for learners and involve them strongly in the learning process.

Some pupils have considerable academic skills, but because they are isolated, shy or bored, they become uninterested, quiet and withdrawn in the classroom. Thus, these skills are often hidden. Such type of pupils cannot take part in classroom practices, and their participation is almost inhibited by lack of motivation. In these cases using games can help teachers to create a good classroom atmosphere and thereby to involve shy uninterested students more in classroom activities. Introducing games into FL classes sounds easy and effective. However, many teachers complain about administrative obstacles and time constraints; they say that they are usually corseted by the program and the time frame. According to them, it is quite difficult to finish the

whole program within the time available during the academic year or to apply new strategies and techniques in the teaching instruction.

Even though most of the teachers who participated in the study acknowledge the value of using games, they would consider them as a second option if they have to achieve the set of objectives designed to the program. In such a case, it is the role of the course designers to see how they can incorporate it into the course book without influencing the teaching situation. In fact, learners' motivation to learn grammar will increase more quickly if new grammar games are introduced in the curriculum design.

Specialists in language teaching often question the good methods adopted in EFL classes in order to find the appropriate techniques to be used in English teaching instruction. The aim of these techniques is to make sure that learners are well-motivated and they enjoy the learning of the target language. In the current research, we opted for the use of board games to motivate learners and to create an atmosphere of fun and enjoyment. This strategy has proved to be effective. For this reason, it also provides teachers with useful insights to help them try this technique in teaching other language aspects and in different teaching situations.

## **General Conclusion**

The findings of the research revealed that employing games in teaching grammar to young learners not only can play a positive role in the development of their grammar knowledge of the but also it can pave the way for language development of the learners as well as motivating the learners to improve their own abilities in various aspects of second language development.

The statistical analysis revealed that the null-hypothesis was rejected. That is to say, employing games surely had significant effects on the improvement of the grammatical knowledge of young learners. The null hypothesis was rejected on the ground that following an independent t-test to compare the mean scores of the experimental and the control group. Results indicated that there existed a significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups on the post test of grammar. That is to say, employing games surely has motivated the young pupils to learn the second language better.

Though the main focus of the present study was on the second year middle school pupils, it seems that the different levels of EFL learners, especially upper intermediate and advanced learners who have developed better language abilities and enjoy more advanced language skills could react better to using more complicated and instructional games in EFL classes.

The findings of the present study could be used to improve the grammar knowledge of Algerian young learners via using “Board games”. The outcomes of the study could be helpful in designing materials for the EFL learners in the Algerian context. The results also could be employed in teaching meaningful grammar to the Algerian EFL learners. The findings of the study might be intriguing enough to pave the way for researchers to investigate the application of games in other areas and components of the English language pedagogy.

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### **Internet Sites:**

[http:// www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

<http://bogglesworldesl.com>

<http://www.esl-lounge.com>

## Appendix A: Teachers Questionnaire

*Dear teachers,*

This questionnaire is designed as part of an investigation carried out for a Master degree in Linguistics. Its purpose is to inquire into the teachers' beliefs and viewpoints about teaching English grammar using games.

You are kindly invited to take part in this investigation by completing this questionnaire as accurately as possible. Please, answer each statement by marking the appropriate box(es) or by filling in the gaps. Your responses will be treated as confidential and will be used for the purpose of this survey only. Your contribution is very much appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

**Mr. Othmen CHERIROU**

### Section One: Background Information

1. Sex:  Male     Female
2. Age..... Years
3. Middle School: .....
4. Experience in teaching English:    First year     2-5 years     More than 5 years

### Section Two: Teachers' Perceptions about Teaching Grammar

5. How much do you value the importance of grammar in teaching a foreign language?  
Very much             Much             Little             Not important
6. Which method do you use when teaching grammar?  
Implicitly             Explicitly
7. Do you face situations where students produce sentences that are incorrect grammatically, though they sometimes know the rules?    Yes             No

**Section Three: Pedagogical Value of Using Games in Language Teaching**

- 8. I believe that games are both fun and full of pedagogical value.  Agree  Disagree
- 9. I believe that games should be given a special role in a foreign language teaching program.  
 Agree  Disagree
- 10. I believe that games present many opportunities to learners to show their skills not only in grammar but also in many language areas.  Agree  Disagree
- 11. I think that teachers must use games for fun only for breaking down boredom.  
 Agree  Disagree

**Section Four: Board games as a teaching strategy**

- 12. Do you use language games? Yes  No
- 13. If yes, which ones?  
.....  
.....
- 14. Do you use board games in class? Yes  No
- 15. Do you think that the practice of board games will facilitate the teaching of English grammar? Yes  No  I don't know

**Section Five: The impact of Using Games in Teaching Grammar to Young Learners**

- 16. I believe that using games can lower pupils' anxiety towards grammar learning.  
 Agree  Disagree
- 17. I believe that games are not very effective in grammar teaching.  Agree  Disagree
- 18. I believe that grammar games encourage, entertain, teach and promote fluency.

Agree       Disagree

19. I believe that games are highly motivating and entertaining way of teaching grammar

especially for weak pupils.

Agree       Disagree

20. I believe that while playing a game, learners are not concerned about focusing on the

structures, but learn them unconsciously.

Agree       Disagree

21. I use games in my grammar class as much as possible.

Agree       Disagree

**Section Six: Further Suggestions**

22. Do you wish to add any comments or suggestions that can improve the teaching of English grammar?

.....

.....

.....

.....

## Appendix B: The Test

Name and Group: .....

### EX 01 (Present Perfect)

Put the verbs in brackets into the present perfect. All the verbs in this exercise are regular.

- 1 I ..... very hard for this exam. (work)
- 2 I ..... everything to Jhon and I think he understands. (explain)
- 3 She ..... university and ..... working in London now. (finish/start)
- 4 You ..... very hard. You can do better work than this. (not/try)
- 5 Thank you for everything. You ..... me a lot. (help)

### EX 02 (WH questions)

Who, Why, When Where, What, what time How, How much.
--

Choose the correct word from the table above to fit the space.

‘..... are you watching?’ ‘James Murphy and Elisa Matthews’.

‘..... are you watching them?’ ‘Because we think they are criminals’.

‘Oh? ..... did they do?’ ‘We think they robbed a bank’.

‘Really? .....?’ ‘yesterday’.

‘..... are they going now?’ ‘To London’.

‘..... are they traveling?’ ‘By train’.

‘..... does their train leave?’ ‘At half past three’.

‘..... did they take?’ ‘about half a million dollars’.

‘..... don’t you arrest them now?’ ‘Because we are not sure’.

Good Luck.

# Appendix C: 'WH' Board Game

## WH QUESTION BOARD GAME

Rules: Roll the dice and move your piece. Make a question with the word in the square and a word from below. Example, if my first roll is a two: *When are you going to ride your bike? Or for a one: What breed of dog is that?*

<b>Start</b>	dog	matches	car
bike	socks	<b>Go back 2</b>	jacket
book	cat	↑	towel
pencil	gloves	battery	
glasses			
umbrella	<b>Go Ahead 2</b>	Light bulb	scissors
stamp	↑	comb	
envelope	candle		









clock	pen	suitcase	mug	lamp	boots
spoon	When you roll the dice use the correct word below:				
knife	(1) <u>What</u>	(2) <u>When</u>	(3) <u>Why</u>	(4) <u>Who</u>	(5) <u>Where</u>
<b>Trade Places</b>	(6) <u>How</u>				
plates	key				

shirt	book	sheep	shoes
<b>Trade places</b>			
jeans	glass	money	gloves
<b>Go Back 1</b>			
Hair dryer			
school	mouse	↑	window
scarf	phone		<b>END</b>



## Appendix D: 'Present Perfect' Board Game



	To work	To explain	To finish	Move ahead 3 spaces.
				Go back 1 space.
To start	Move ahead 3 spaces.	To try	To help	To study
				
To swim	To play	Go back 2 space.	To run	To save
				
	To eat	To walk	Trade Places	To burn

## Résumé

Ce travail de recherche vise à étudier l'efficacité de l'utilisation des jeux de tableau comme une technique d'enseignement pour améliorer et faciliter l'enseignement de la grammaire anglaise pour la deuxième année collégiens. Dans un premier temps, nous mettons en avant une hypothèse principale, si les enseignants de la langue anglaise utilisent les jeux du tableau dans l'enseignement de la grammaire anglaise, il apporterait une amélioration significative sur la maîtrise de l'apprenant des règles de grammaire. Nous croyons que la grammaire est quelque chose qui peut être atteint par la pratique. Pour atteindre un tel objectif, nous nous sommes appuyés sur les deux moyens de recherche: un questionnaire pour les enseignants et une recherche pour les étudiants. Tout d'abord, le questionnaire des enseignants a été conçu pour recueillir des données sur les techniques que les enseignants utilisent pour enseigner les aspects de grammaire dans leurs leçons et leur attitude envers l'utilisation des jeux dans la classe, qu'ils sont contre ou avec l'utilisation du jeu de tableau comme une stratégie d'enseignement pour enseigner les aspects de la grammaire dans leurs classes. Deuxièmement, l'étude expérimentale. Dans cette recherche 30 étudiants ont pris part. Ils représentent un échantillon aléatoire divisé en deux groupes, un contrôle groupe et un expérimental group. Les étudiants du contrôle groupe ont été enseignés la grammaire par la méthode usuelle, tandis que les étudiants des groupes expérimentaux ont été assujettis à les jeux de tableau introduite par le chercheur. Après l'administration du post-test, les résultats ont montré que les notes obtenus par les étudiants du groupe expérimental sont meilleurs en comparaison avec ceux du groupe contrôle. En conséquence, il est recommandé que les jeux de tableau doivent être incorporés dans des matériaux d'enseignement.

## المخلص

يهدف هذا البحث لدراسة أثر تطبيق الالعب اللوحية في مجال تدريس قواعد اللغة الانجليزية لطلبة السنة الثانية بمتوسطة معنصر ميلاد بلدية عين كرشة. لاستكشاف ذلك, بنينا بحثنا على فرضيتين, الاولى أن الالعب اللوحية لها أثر ايجابي في التحصيل المعرفي في مجال قواعد اللغة الانجليزية أما الفرضية الثانية فهي مناقضة للفرضية الأولى أي ان الالعب اللوحية ليس لها أثر ايجابي على التحصيل المعرفي للطلبة. للتحقق من صحة الفرضيتين, اعتمدنا على طريقتين منهجيتين في البحث العلمي, الطريقة الأولى تمثلت في استبيان يتكون من 22 سؤالاً لأساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية في مختلف متوسطات بلدية عين كرشة حيث شملت الدراسة عشرة اساتذة لمعرفة آراءهم حول استعمال الالعب في القسم لتدريس قواعد اللغة الانجليزية حيث اظهرت النتائج ان الاساتذة المشاركين في الاستبيان يوافقون على ان الالعب اللوحية لها دور فعال في تحفيز و تطوير التحصيل المعرفي لدى الطلبة في مجال قواعد اللغة. اما الطريقة الثانية فتمثلت في دراسة تجريبية شارك فيها ثلاثون طالباً تم اختيارهم عشوائياً و قسموا الى مجموعتين, مجموعة ضابطة (control group) و مجموعة تجريبية (experimental group) حيث أن كل مجموعة تحتوي على 15 طالباً. درس طلبة المجموعة الضابطة وفق المنهاج المعتاد بينما درس طلبة المجموعة التجريبية وفقاً لاستراتيجية الالعب اللوحية مع العلم ان الطلبة خضعوا لاختبار قبلي لتحديد مستواهم المعرفي في قواعد اللغة و بعد انتهاء فترة التدريب اجتاز الطلبة اختباراً بعدياً لمقارنة نتائجه بنتائج الاختبار الأول (القبلي). حيث لوحظ ان طلبة المجموعة التجريبية تحسن مستواهم بشكل واضح عكس طلبة المجموعة الضابطة. مناقشة تحليل النتائج اثبتت صحة الفرضية الأولى. ما يعني ان الالعب اللوحية لها أثر ايجابي في التحصيل المعرفي في مجال قواعد اللغة الانجليزية للطلبة.