

## The Use of Board Games for EFL Learning: Teacher's Perspective

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### Introduction

Nowadays, technology has entered into all aspects of life. Digitalization is transforming various aspects of society, including education. It involves the integration of technology into teaching and learning environments. Technological advances have driven the digitalization of education, allowing easier and broader access to learning resources. According to Suryadi et al. (2022), the process of digitalization in education occurs along with the rapid development of technology. Switching from conventional to digital learning is one of the most noticeable roles of technology in education today. In the 21st century, teachers need to be able to respond to new models, strategies, and ways of teaching (Varas et al., 2023). Teachers are no longer expected to teach in a conventional way. They must be creative and develop new learning methods while using technology, especially e-learning, to improve their knowledge and skills (Puspitarini, 2022).

By requiring teachers to align rigorous subject matter with the most recent technological advancements, the traditional educational framework exhibits reduced adaptability in accommodating the development of material competence (Aksa, 2017). Moreover, teachers are not ready for digitalization and lack the technology to support learning (McKenney & Visscher, 2019). (Madayani & Muhassin, 2020) stated that some teachers still prefer to use media that less error hardware media can support, whether it is about the electricity or internet connection. Moreover, teachers face some difficulties when using and exploring advanced platforms due to limited knowledge of the technology (Savitri & Suwarso, 2023). These obstacles impede teacher's ability to utilize and investigate digital platforms as educational tools. Furthermore, mobile phones are frequently utilized to implement digital learning resources in the classroom. Meanwhile, according to (Hasyim & Hayati, 2023), using smartphones in the classroom may result in

misuse, as students might engage with other applications during lessons, causing a lack of focus on the teacher's instruction. Moreover, (Selvaraj et al., 2021) states that some teachers lack training or understanding of the advanced features of digital platforms, which can reduce the effectiveness of classroom learning for both students and teachers.

Teaching media are employed to convey messages to students and motivate them to engage in learning. Media refers to the many elements present in the learners' surroundings that facilitate their learning process (Gagne, 2013). Teaching media, such as gamification, have also shifted from traditional to digitalized models. By requiring teachers to align rigorous subject matter with the most recent technological advancements, the traditional educational framework exhibits reduced adaptability in accommodating the development of material competence (Aksa, 2017). Moreover, teachers are not ready for digitalization and lack the technology to support the learning process (McKenney & Visscher, 2019). Technology offers the possibility of implementing gamification as an alternative learning media in the learning process, which has a significant impact on providing effective learning experiences for language learners (Castillo-Cuesta, 2020). Abidin et al., (2021) discovered that teaching media that incorporates games or gamification can captivate learners and boost their motivation.

Madayani & Muhassin (2020) stated that some teachers still prefer to use media that can be supported by less error hardware media, whether it is about the electricity or internet connection. Moreover, teachers face some difficulties when using and exploring advanced platforms due to limited knowledge of the technology (Savitri & Suwarso, 2023). Further, teachers still need conventional media, as ICT can be lacking in some parts (Aminatun, 2019). Board games, as a conventional teaching media, still have an important place in education. Board games need to be maintained as one of the conventional media because they have various benefits that cannot always be replaced by digital technology. The social character of board games encourages interaction and collaboration among students, resulting in a positive learning environment (O'neill & Holmes, 2022). By maintaining board games in learning, teachers can provide a variety of learning methods that are balanced between digital and conventional, thus supporting students' overall development. Board game activities can improve students' learning performance, motivation, classroom engagement, and contribute to increasing their ability to discuss. It is expected that board games can lead to better EFL teaching practices (Li et al., 2022). (Suri et al., 2020) stated that board games can help students improve their scores. Moreover, according to Fuad et al., (2023) showed on their research that the use of board games (scrabble game) is suitable for learning English. Their research showed that scrabble games can imprives students enthusiasm.

There is various research regarding the advantages of board games in learning English (O'neill & Holmes, 2022; Li et al., 2022; Suri et al., 2020; Fuad et al., 2023). However, research that specifically focused on the teacher's perspective regarding the use of conventional board games for EFL learning context is still limited. Therefore, to complete the gap between the previous studies, this research aims to find out the teacher's perspective on the use of board games for EFL learning.

## **Research Method**

This study was conducted using qualitative research to explore teacher's perspective on board games for EFL learning. The research design allows an in-depth understanding of participant experiences and preferences. Qualitative research design allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences, perspepective, and preference of the participant (Creswell, 2012). The data of this research is the answer

provided by one of the English teacher in a private Junior High School in Malang Regency. She was chosen as the participant due to her extensive experience in using board games as learning media in teaching English. The data source be teacher's interviews in junior high school, where the researcher interacts directly with them and records their responses. This data will serve as the source for understanding the participant's views, experiences, and perspective on the research topic. The interview will provide rich and detailed data, allowing for a broad range of responses.

The procedures of this research include planning, defining the participants, constructing the instrument, conducting the interview, and processing the data. The instrument was conducted 15 open-ended questions with 4 dimensions related to the teacher's perspective on the use of board games for EFL learning. The dimensions cover the applicability of board games, students' motivation on using board games, students' motoric activeness on using board games, the benefits and effectiveness of board games. The expert has validated the instrument. The data collection was made from the time agreement between both of the participant and the researcher, and it consisted of audio recording and note-taking to collected the data. After the interview session, the answers from the participant were processed into a data transcript. After that, it was analyzed descriptively based on the dimensions. The teacher answered the questions freely during the interview session.

## Result and Discussion

After collecting and analyze the data, it is noted several finding according to teacher's perspective on board game for EFL learning. Below finding displayed the data descriptively.

### *The Use of Board Game in the Digital Age*

The study intended to know the perspective and preference of the teacher in the use of board games as a teaching media in the digital age. The transition from conventional media to digital media gives teacher the option to choose learning media. As the teacher said, "...sometimes I use conventional games such as board games, and sometimes I use digital games..." However, of the two options, it was found that teacher's prefer conventional media, namely board games. As the teacher said, "...I prefer using board games since it has so many benefits..."

The finding mentioning that board games have many benefits is in line with Syakur, (2020), who states that board games provide fun learning, attract student attention, and help students enjoy communicating verbally. In line with this statement, (Fuad et al., 2023) found that board games (scrabble games) are suitable for learning English. Students show a positive impact regarding the use of board games in learning English. It was also found that the board game media is easy for students to use. Jadi (2019) discovered that using board games (smart toys) proved to be a better companion for children suffering from communication disorders. According to Venker & Johnson, (2022), traditional electronically integrated board games frequently cause side effects during therapy in children with communication disorders, such as reduced lexical diversity of children's spoken language.

### *Board Game Make Students Feel Motivated To Learn English*

As the teacher said about, the board game has many benefits. Using board games has been proven to increase students' motivation to learn English and make it easier for them to understand the material. Although the impact of comprehension may only

sometimes be apparent, students gradually show improvement in their mastery of the material. It aligns with the teacher's statement, "... *students always ask to learn to use board games in every English subject. It means that they are more motivated to learn English.*" This finding aligns with Chotimah & Astiyandha (2022), who found that using board games as a teaching media can help students gain knowledge and motivate them to do the activities. Li et al., (2022) emphasize that board game activity significantly improves students' reading comprehension, motivation, and anxiety while maintaining high learning motivation throughout the activity.

### **Board Game Improving Students' Motor Activity**

Based on the interview, the teacher said that instead of using online media as a gamification, the teacher prefers to use board games as a teaching media. The teacher stated that board games make students move their bodies, which is suitable for students during class. The teacher stated, "... *this game can make students move their bodies, learn to think critically, and learn how to solve problems in a group.*" These findings align with Dewi & Verawati (2022) in their research that some board games, known as manipulative games, can stimulate students to be active in carrying out fundamental motor skills. These games are fun and engaging for students, leading to an improvement in their motor skills. Moreover, (Kong, 2021) agrees that learning activities should involve contact with meaningful situations and social participation. O'neill & Holmes, (2022) agree that board games encourage students to interact and collaborate among students, which creates a positive learning environment for students.

### **Board Game Make the Learning Material Understandable for Students**

The teacher noted that allowing students to play board games might help them better comprehend the content. The utilization of board games has likely boosted students engagement and satisfaction throughout the learning process. Students have a greater likelihood of being motivated and attentive, which in turn leads to improved learning outcomes when they are more involved in the learning process and having fun. Through the use of the board game, students discover that it is simpler for them to learn English. It is brought to the teacher's attention that playing board games might assist students in better comprehending the topic and expanding their vocabulary. "...*they find it easier when learning English using the board game*". The teacher highlights that board games help students to make the material understandable and boost their vocabulary. This indicates that board games can effectively reinforce language concepts and expand word knowledge in an interactive and memorable way. The teacher also added, "...*it is easy to make them understand material and easy to increase their vocabulary*". "...*this method makes students easier to learn English considering that English is not their mother tongue*".

These findings align with Annisa & Nst, (2020), who mentioned that using board games can make students more active and improve their English scores. Board games helped the students to understand the material easily. Students were more focused and paid attention while the teacher explained the lesson. Furthermore, these findings align with the study conducted by (Kasanah et al., 2022) Their findings showed that students' test scores improved after the teacher used board games (snake and ladder). Moreover, board games have the potential to serve as valuable instruments for enhancing word knowledge and enhancing linguistic concepts in a manner that is both participatory and memorable. It is simple to make the information understandable to them, and it is simple to assist them in expanding their vocabulary.

## Conclusion

Students can benefit from a wide variety of educational opportunities when they use board games as instructional instruments in the process of learning English. Teacher opt to use conventional board games for the English language learning in today's digital age despite digital media being everywhere. This is owing to the multiple benefits that conventional board games offer. In learning English, students who utilize board games as a kind of instructional media report higher levels of motivation, enjoyment, and comprehension of the content being taught to them. Overall, teacher's tendency to use board game learning material has a positive impact on students. Teacher are still ready to use conventional media methods as a method of education despite digital media becoming increasingly prevalent. Board games have a significant impact on the level of participation, motivation, and enjoyment that students experience, which ultimately results in more efficient and fun learning. Through participation in the activities, students are able to achieve a better understanding of the subject matter, expand their vocabulary, and gradually improve their language comprehension and competency. Research support these findings, highlighting the positive impact that board games have on educational comprehension, cognitive function, and emotional well-being simultaneously. Researchers anticipate that educational institutions, teacher, and those are interested in becoming teacher will consider the findings and investigate the possibility of adding board games to English language learning in the classroom. Because they offer an approach that is both varied and dynamic, board games continue to be an essential and popular teaching tool.

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