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Carrera de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa

Games for Developing the Communicative Competence in an English Foreign Language

(EFL) Classroom with B1 level students

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## Resumen

Debido a que el inglés es una asignatura obligatoria en las instituciones educativas del Ecuador, los estudiantes muestran limitado interés en aprender esta asignatura. Los estudiantes aprueban la materia mas no incorporan el inglés como una herramienta que pueden utilizar fuera de las aulas. Esta percepción del inglés es potenciada por aquellos profesores que utilizan metodologías tradicionales para enseñar sus clases. Por lo tanto, el propósito de este estudio es explorar si el uso de juegos contribuye al aprendizaje de inglés, así como determinar qué tipo de juegos son los más adecuados y como deben ser utilizados para mejorar el desempeño de los estudiantes en el aula. Los juegos fueron seleccionados en función de su idoneidad para estudiantes de nivel B1, y su facultad para ayudar a los estudiantes a lograr un mejor desempeño en sus habilidades comunicativas, gramaticales y en la adquisición de vocabulario en base al formato y contenidos del juego.

**Palabras claves:** Inglés como lengua extranjera. Motivación. Juegos. Estudiantes. Educadores. Competencia comunicativa.



## **Abstract**

Given that English is a compulsory subject in Ecuadorian institutions, students show little interest in learning the language. Even though they feel committed to pass the subject, they do not incorporate English as a tool they can use outside the classroom. This understanding of English as a passive subject is further fueled by teachers who rely on traditional methods to teach their classes. Therefore, the purpose of this research synthesis is to explore whether the use of games facilitate the learning of English, and determine what types of games can be implemented and how they should be used to enhance students' performance in the EFL classroom. The games were selected based on the suitability for B1 level students, as well as how likely the game format and the content may help students achieve better communication skills, grammar skills, and vocabulary acquisition.

**Keywords:** English as a foreign language. Motivation. Games. Students. Educators. Communicative competence.



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## INTRODUCTION

“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever” – Gandhi.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language is a skill set subject of constant change as new generations of students come with new challenges and backgrounds. Therefore, educators must innovate their teaching strategies in order to overcome any difficulties that may arise. For this reason, this research synthesis aims to find games that motivate B1 level students to keep learning English as a foreign language, and help them develop their communicative competence.

According to Korkmaz (2013), ‘edutainment’ is the answer to the challenges which students might present when learning a foreign language. He mentioned that the use of games facilitates significant learning by contributing to the execution of the class, resulting in better learning outcomes. Similarly, Champa (2015) explains that learning should take place in a fun environment to obtain optimum results. Thus, technological and non-technological games not only call students’ attention but also complement English learning with benefits such as: enhanced performance, increased motivation, openness to speak, grammar reinforcement and vocabulary retention

Additionally, this research synthesis notes important definitions and relevant studies that have analyzed the use of different technological and non-technological games in different EFL settings. Finally, this synthesis will present information on how educators and researchers have applied games in the classroom, the time periods they used for this activity, and their roles during the application.



This work has been organized into six chapters, which are distributed as follows: description of the research, theoretical framework, literature review, methodology, analysis, and conclusions and recommendations.



## **CHAPTER I**

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH**

#### **1.1 Problem Statement**

Major (2014) explains that there are three factors involved in language learning: experiential, affective and cognitive. These factors explain the enormous individual variation in learning outcomes. According to Krashen, Long and Scarcella (1979), both language aptitude (cognitive factors) and attitude (affective variables) appear to be related to second language achievement, even though they are not related to each other. Similarly, another possible predictor of second language learning success is learners' degree of motivation, which is an affective factor that improves their attitudes towards the language.

Motivation shown by students has been broadly recognized by scholars, researchers, and teachers as one of the major variables that determine the level and success of foreign language learning. Dörnyei (2001) emphasizes that the teacher's skills in motivating learners is key for the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process. However, Gawi (2012) highlights that students not showing motivation towards learning the target language is a wide-spread problem. Therefore, teachers should look for adequate methods that will catch students' attention and encourage active participation in class. To achieve this, Champa (2015) has suggested that teachers are likely to get better results by making English teaching interesting and easy for learners to understand.



## 1.2 Justification

The status English has achieved as a Lingua Franca makes it a highly valued language around the world; people learn English as a mean for communication and for achieving their personal and professional goals. Kitao (1996) has stated that English is spoken in greater percentage by foreigners than by native speakers. Because of its international importance, EFL teachers should emphasize teaching methodologies that make English learning easier on students.

According to Marin (2018), fear of speaking is the main communicational barrier among students who are learning a second language, regardless of their proficiency level. She explains that many external factors such as the type, size, social status, and gender of the audience, as well as the student's previous knowledge of the participants and difficulty of the topic influence this fear. Consequently, Schwartz (2013) has stated that teachers should procure different learning strategies that enable students to participate and use the target language. For this reason, it is relevant to analyze the use of games with B1 level students within the EFL classroom; as introducing games to the class might change students' perspective regarding English. Fear of talking diminishes once students view English as a fun subject; which promotes significant learning as well. On top of that, games help students relax and are a great way to encourage student participation.

According to The Room 241 Team (2013), making students compete in a safe and educational space is beneficial since it allows students to be active while learning the target language. Ideally, students would learn about the subject beforehand, and would apply what they have learned during the game. This motivates all participants and creates a collaborative environment for learning.



Furthermore, Edwards and Hoare (2012) state that games are effective tools for expanding students' vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. Consequently, teachers should make use of games within the EFL classroom while allowing their pupils to use their imagination, skills, and abilities to practice and participate.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The aim of this study is to understand the relevance of technological and non-technological games in EFL environments to develop the communicative competence in B1 level students. Based on research, this paper will seek to answer the following questions:

- What type of games can be implemented in language learning to enhance students' performance?
- How do games benefit the learning of English achievement?
- How should games be implemented in an EFL classroom?



## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Since this work focuses on developing communicative competence in B1 level students through the use of games in the EFL classroom, it is essential to examine the terms and definitions that are necessary for a better understanding of this study. Subsequently, concepts such as communicative competence, English as a Foreign Language and B1 level will be described.

#### **2.1 Definition of games**

Allsop and Jessel (2015) describe *game* as an activity that follows an environment of imperatives, conditions and rules. It provides interaction among students through problem-solving tasks and collaboration in order to achieve an objective. Even though there are games made solely for entertainment purposes, there are those that complement education by helping learners take advantage of their previous knowledge and, thus, facilitating learning. Additionally, Hadfield (1998) declares that games are actions that include guidelines, goals and enjoyment. Zhu (2012) adds that games are activities that offer entertainment and/or pleasure by making students compete with one another to accomplish an objective based on rules. Lastly, Rixon (1981) establishes that games are actions that learners perform in order to be winners in a competitive context.

##### **2.1.1 Non-technological games and technological games**

The games to be described in this study are non-technological and technological. On this matter, Graham (1997) defines non-technological games as activities in which interaction among participants is important. Students observe and learn not only content but attitudes and reactions



from their peers. On the other hand, Rouse (2019) describes technological games as any software that can be played on consoles like Nintendo DS, X-Box, PlayStation, or personal computers. Moreover, Edwards and Hoare (2012) state that technological games are effective in helping students extend their vocabulary and correct mistakes that they may have in pronunciation and grammar.

## **2.2 Definition of Edutainment**

Buckingham and Scanlon describe this term as the joining of “education and entertainment.” It refers to an enjoyable environment that favors learning (as cited in Champa, 2015, p. 228). It is imperative to note that games are not only fun for students to play, they also help students improve their abilities, develop social skills, and strengthen relationships with their classmates. Moreover, Anikina and Yakimenko (2015) explains that “edutainment” is a modern feature that provides pleasure to the lectures, lessons and classes.

## **2.3 Communicative Competence**

Dubin (1989) explains that communicative competence implies oral approaches in communication, fluency, performance, and interaction. The term *competence* deals with skills and acquaintance of the target language, while *communicative competence* implies the ability in oral modes and in features such as vocabulary, grammar, and cultural transmission. Likewise, Chomsky (1964) clarifies that *communicative competence* carries an extensive range of principles, attitudes, and values. He mentions that this term is related to the *linguistic competence* which focuses on how the language works using grammar correctly to understand the language.

## **2.4 B1 Level Student**

TFLEnglish (2017) declares that B1 level students are those who are independent language users. They are able to catch the main ideas of texts and lectures in academic contexts,



communicate when traveling, and describe situations of their lives with attention to detail. Furthermore, the British Council website (n.d.) states that B1 level students are fluent enough to engage in conversations with native speakers and write simple, comprehensible texts about topics related to their personal interests. However, Marin (2018) explains that having a good level of English does not ensure efficient communicative competence due to fear of speaking in public, which is where the importance and significance of this study lies on.

In conclusion, the analyzed terms are valuable for the study because they allow a better understanding of how they complement each other, and why it is important to foster communicative competence for the appropriate use and understanding of the target language.





## CHAPTER III

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 3.1 Games in the Classroom

This section will explore previous studies that relied on games for fostering communicative competence in EFL environments. The benefits of applying games in the EFL classroom will also be analyzed in order to understand the impact games may have in the process of learning English as a foreign language.

##### 3.1.1 Benefits of Using Non-Technological Games in Education

In a study conducted by Champa (2015), the author described a variety of games used to promote communicative competence in 30 students who did not use to participate in class activities. Champa applied the following games: *Drawing Class*, *Tell a Story*, and *Let's Talk*. *Drawing Class* was performed in the following way: first, a student looked at a picture carefully. Then, the student had to describe what he saw to a classmate so that he could draw a representation of the original picture. Once the drawing was finished, students were asked to say five sentences about it. Similarly, in *Tell a story*, the teacher presented a situation to students, then, the students had to use their creativity and imagination to create short stories related to the situation presented by the teacher in order to share with the class. Likewise, in *Let's talk*, a mute video was shown to students; later, students were asked to perform dialogues according to what they saw. As a result, the researcher observed how games helped students enhance their listening and speaking skills, remember vocabulary words, and follow instructions. A relevant outcome showed by this study



was an increased participation rate from students. It appeared that they no longer felt uncomfortable communicating in the target language. As a conclusion, Champa (2015) found that games offer affective and cognitive advantages, help students develop compensation strategies, and improve the class dynamic. In other words, games provide motivation because they are enjoyable, and they foster grammar and communicative competence since speaking is necessary to carry out the games. Furthermore, when students cannot find the appropriate words to convey their ideas, they look for compensating strategies such as mime, drawing, and using synonyms to continue being part of the game.

In a different study, Chou (2014) wanted to determine to what degree games could motivate 72 Taiwanese high school students to learn vocabulary. The games selected for this study were *Twister* and *Monopoly*. Field notes were used to document students' reactions. With *Twister*, the teacher replaced the colors on the mat with letters of the alphabet. The game started with the teacher announcing a word that the students needed to spell by placing their hands and feet over the correct letters on the mat. The game was carried out by dividing the class into groups; as a treat, the winning group was awarded a bonus mark. Similarly, in *Monopoly* the buildings were replaced with previously learned vocabulary words. As the game progressed, students had to spell words or give their definitions. As a result, Chou observed that participants' motivation increased, fueled by a desire to win the game. Moreover, it was advantageous for students that the vocabulary they needed for the game was taught beforehand.

Likewise, a study carried out by Liu and Chen (2013) asked 18 Taiwanese students to remember science concepts by playing a card game called *Conveyance Go*. For this research, students had to choose a card out of a deck that showed pictures of different means of transportation, so they could talk about the picture in their card. Some of the features students had



to explain were: naming the means of transport, stating what kind of fuel they use, calculating the pollution rate of the vehicle based on the source of energy they use for fuel, and comparing the pros and cons of their assigned means of transportation to those of their classmates. It was noted by the researchers that this game aligned together with Bloom's Taxonomy levels, as students had to remember, understand, apply, analyze, and evaluate different concepts.

Huyen and Nga (2003) conducted a study about the best ways to teach vocabulary to students who did not show interest in learning. The participants for the study were 20 Vietnamese high school students. Researchers explained that strategies such as listening and repeating, drilling, and writing definitions on students' notebooks did not engage students' interest in learning English. Instead, they wanted to explore and document students' reactions towards learning vocabulary through the use of games. The games selected for the study were: *Hangman*, *Animal squares*, *Selling and buying things*, *Snakes and ladders*, *Simon says*, and *Advertisement poster competition*. The results of the study showed that even quiet participants made a greater effort to speak and be actively involved in the gameplay. They also showed pleasant and positive attitudes towards learning. Enhancement of the reaction speed for responses was shown, too. To complement the results of the study, participants were interviewed at the end of each game. The data obtained from the study was the following: 17 out of 20 students were satisfied with the process and mentioned that they enjoyed the relaxed, creative atmosphere. They explained that "games are used not only for more fun, but more importantly, for the useful practice and review of language lessons, thus leading toward the goal of improving learners' communicative competence" (p. 104).

On the same line, Paris and Yussof (2013) applied a board game called *Time Trap* to make students practice grammar. They discussed that this type of game allowed learners to enjoy



classroom activities and focus on the activity at hand. For their study, they applied questionnaires in order to find out student's perspectives and feelings about the implementation of gameplay in the classroom. A pre-test and a post-test were also applied to determine if gameplay brought any noticeable improvement in students' grammar skills. As a result, it was noted that after having a treatment with *Time trap*, students demonstrated higher accuracy in the use of simple present, present continuous, simple past, past continuous, and question structures. They were also able to reply to questions using correct sentences. Moreover, students participated more often due to the excitement that board games brought to the classroom and the desire to keep playing. Students also stated that they were able to digest the grammatical elements better when they did not feel under pressure. Finally, it was concluded that "it is very important for educators to design fun yet meaningful games, so that it will benefit the students in learning grammar" (Paris and Yussof, 2013, p. 407).

Korkmaz (2013) aimed to determine through a study what were students' perspectives regarding gameplay as a tool in the EFL classroom. Therefore, he developed a questionnaire in which 121 learners were able to express their feelings and perspectives about the implementation and benefits of games. The questionnaire consisted of 23 questions. The general finding was that participants felt happy about learning English through games. Students agreed that games were efficient for learning, and that gameplay improved cooperation and collaboration among classmates.

Moreover, Wang, Shang and Briody (2011) analyzed the effects of using games for learning and practicing English with a group of 50 students. Questionnaires and interviews related to language performance and perceived motivation were administered to students. The results demonstrated that most of the interviewees agreed that games enhanced their motivation and



confidence, improved their vocabulary retention, and eased anxiety produced by speaking in front of their peers.

### **3.1.2 Benefits of Using Technological Games in Education**

In a study conducted by Ashraf, Motlagh, and Salami (2014), students were tested on their ability to remember new vocabulary items using videogames as means for learning. They divided a class of 24 students into two groups, a control group and an experimental group. Both groups had the same initial knowledge regarding army-related vocabulary. In the control group, students learned new vocabulary in a traditional way: through drills. Students got bored easily, showed little interest and did not pay attention. On the other hand, the experimental group was asked to play video games such as *Sims*, *Counter strike* and *Call of Duty* after class. The results showed that the experimental group understood instructions better than the control group. Besides, participants were able to follow commands such as: create an avatar, build a house, find a date, cover me, take the point, hold this position, fire, need assistance, etc. They also retained information for a longer period of time.

Chalak and Ahmadi (2016) tested the performance of 30 students of a female school in Isfahan after applying a web-based game for learning vocabulary. The students were divided into a control group and an experimental group, pre-tests and post-tests were applied to both groups, and parents' opinions regarding their son's performance were taken into account as well. The experimental group made use of a web-based game named *Mingoville* (a series of games oriented towards teaching English through audio-visual material) to learn vocabulary, while the control group followed a traditional learning process. Before the implementation of the web game, both groups demonstrated the same level of vocabulary knowledge in the pre-test. However, the post-test showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group. Regarding the survey



applied to parents, two-thirds of the participants strongly agreed with the use of online games to foster students' motivation to learn, vocabulary retention, and communication skills.

Similarly, Anderson, Reynolds, Yeh and Huang (2008) performed a study that showed that the video game *America's Army* was a good tool for learning vocabulary related to actions in war. The dialogues used within the game were varied, and students learned to follow instructions from their 'captain'. The authors of this study concluded that students benefited from gameplay, and observed how they made inquiries in English while playing.

Liu and Chu (2010) wanted to explore how games enhance motivation and learning in students. They divided 64 participants into two groups of 32 participants each: a control group and an experimental group. In the control group, students' instruction was not altered in any way. On the other hand, the experimental group used an online platform called *Hello* to practice and reinforce learning. *Hello* offers useful learning materials and prompts students to think about real-life situations. The games used for this study were: *Campus environment*, *Campus life*, and *Campus story*. When a post-test was applied, the experimental group outperformed the control group. Researchers concluded that students' motivation increased when gameplay was part of the lesson.

Turgut and Irgin (2009) analyzed the vocabulary extension and pronunciation of ten Turkish students who played videogames in a café after school on a regular basis. For this, the researchers used observation and semi-structured interviews to learn more about the participants' experiences. The games that participants play more often were: *Knight Online World Version*, *Counter Strike*, *Grand Theft Auto*, and *Warcraft III*. The results of the interviews showed that the participants actively engaged in self-motivated learning processes. For instance, they guessed the meaning of unknown words from context, asked their friends for the meaning of words, or looked for words



in online dictionaries. It was concluded that online games are good tools for language learning, and that schools should consider implementing them.

Rico, Agudo and Sánchez (2015) explored the perspectives of 50 students who learned English playing Nintendo DS. Through observation, researchers found out that the use of technological games motivated students' interest and enhanced language performance. Students, involved in the research, mentioned that they improved their vocabulary, pronunciation, and listening comprehension. They also scored better in their academic performance compared to those students who did not engage in gameplay.

Finally, Allsop and Jessel (2015) conducted a study to compile the perceptions of 89 teachers regarding the use of computer games inside the classroom. The instruments used for this study were online surveys, paper surveys, and interviews. The results showed that computer games were regularly used by teachers to practice some subjects, such as Mathematics, Literature and Science. Participants also expressed that they would like to continue using computer games in the future as they motivate learners, improve learning outcomes, foster problem-solving, and promote critical thinking. The researchers concluded that "teachers are interested in teaching with digital games and most of them see digital games as an effective educational tool" (p. 14).



## CHAPTER IV

### METHODOLOGY

The documents analyzed in this research synthesis consist of scientific articles published from 2008 to 2017. These articles were taken from the following journals: *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *International Journal of Innovation Sciences and Research*, *International Journal of Learning & Development*, *International Journal of Game-Based Learning*, *Education*, *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching & Research*, *Journal of Universal Computer Science*, *Asian EFL Journal*, *Computers and Education*, and *Digital Game and Intelligent Toy Enhanced Learning*. All these studies were related to the topic *games in education*, and focused on those games that have helped students improve their motivation and enhance their learning process.

This research synthesis was divided into two categories: Benefits of Using Non-Technological Games in Education and Benefits of Using Technological Games in Education. Both parts describe how games were applied in class, its advantages, and the results obtained in each study.

The selected articles have similarities in terms like (a) education, (b) games, (c) foreign language, (d) vocabulary, (e) benefits, (f) teaching, (g) game design, (h) motivation, and (i) technology. At the beginning, 25 studies were chosen to be analyzed, but only 15 were examined in-depth due to their shared features, perspectives, criteria, and objectives. Moreover, the selected games are adequate to be used with B1 level students. This paper focuses on the previously





mentioned 15 studies, since they revolve around fostering communicative competence, which is a key element of this research.



## CHAPTER V

### ANALYSIS

The studies analyzed in the Literature Review focused basically on learner's motivation and performance as well as the benefits teachers and students could obtain from implementing games in the classroom. In this chapter, the results obtained in the previously mentioned studies will be analyzed and sorted based on the type of game, their application during class, and the benefits of their implementation; with the purpose of answering the research questions that guide this document.

*First research question: What type of games can be implemented in language learning to enhance students' performance?*

Table 1

*Types of games Used in an EFL Classroom*

Types	Number of Studies	%
Non-technological Games	8	53.3%
Technological Games	7	46.7%
Total	15	100%

**Note.** Games Applied in the Studies. Source: Joseline Aucancela

Table 1 presents two types of games that were used by authors in their research studies. Non-technological games represent 53.3% of the study. These games were classified into



*arranging games, board games, guessing games, information gap games, and matching games.*

On the other hand, technological games represent 46.7% of the study. The categories for technological games consist of *video games* and *online games*.

Although the percentages come close between non-technological and technological games, it was discovered that non-technological games have better accessibility due to the simplicity of its implementation. On top of that, these games are cheap and can be elaborated by oneself at home or at school. Therefore, it is easier and more convenient to apply non-technological games in the classroom. On the other hand, technological games may be difficult to apply during class since not all institutions have the appropriate equipment at their disposal; take as an example low budget schools and public schools. As observed in the studies by Turgut and Irgin (2009); Rico, Agudo and Sánchez (2015); and Allsop and Jessel (2015), technological and non-technological games may be implemented in the English classroom; however, non-technological games would be the preferred option due to their accessibility.

*Second research question: How do games benefit the learning of English achievement?*

Table 2

*Benefits of using Games in An EFL Classroom.*

Benefits	Numbers of Studies	%
Increase in motivation	6	40.0%
Vocabulary Acquisition	3	20.0%
Vocabulary Retention	3	20.0%
Grammar Reinforcement	2	13.3%
Decrease in shyness	1	6.7%
Total	15	100%

**Note.** Benefits found in the studies. Source: Joseline Aucancela



In table 2, a list of perceived benefits obtained from implementing games in the classroom is provided. The most noticeable finding among non-technological and technological games is how they affect *motivation*. All 15 articles stated that games enhanced students' participation and performance, but only 6 of those studies focused on motivation. Liu and Chu (2010) concluded that learners' motivation increases when gameplay becomes a substantial part of learning, and, as a consequence, their performance increases.

Wang, Shang and Briody (2011) described how their interviewees agreed that games helped them improve their confidence, and that these activities were key in reinforcing their learning and expanding their vocabulary. In addition, Korkmaz (2013) found out that most participants supported learning English through games because of its efficiency. Moreover, Chou (2014) demonstrated that implementing games that require physical movement is a good way to ensure learners' participation, as most students enjoy physical activities. Furthermore, Rico, Agudo and Sanchez (2015) demonstrated through interviews that the use of games in the classroom is highly valued, not only by teachers but also by parents and students.

Regarding vocabulary, it is important to emphasize that non-technological games help students acquire new words. Researchers got their participants to learn vocabulary words quickly and to retain them better through games like *Conveyance go* and *Simon says*. Likewise, technological games like *Counter Strike* and *America's Army* are good for understanding instructions.

Paris and Yussof (2013) used board games in their studies to practice basic grammar structures, such as the simple and continuous tenses in present and past. The game was *Time trap*, and it was described that students showed pleasant and positive attitudes in the EFL classroom when this game was involved in the learning process. Finally, Champa (2015) concluded from his



study that games like *Drawing class*, *Tell a story*, and *Let's talk* helped students feel more confident to participate in class. Additionally, gameplay eases the 'fear' that usually holds students down from speaking in front of their peers. In contrast, technological games do not help students speak with confidence because their format is made to play individually.

*Third research question: How should games be implemented in an EFL classroom?*

Table 3

*Implementation of A Game*

Implementation of The Game	Number of Studies	%
Time Period	12	80.0%
Role of the Teacher	3	20.0%
Total	15	100%

**Note.** Features found in the studies. Source: Joseline Aucancela

Table 3 presents the implementation of games in the EFL classroom. The majority of the analyzed studies showed that the most convenient moment to apply games is during the introduction of the class or as a warm-up. The reason for this is that games serve as motivation to grab learners' attention. However, in a study carried out by Korkmaz (2013), students preferred to play games at the end of the class because they saw it as a reward, and motivated them to finish classwork quickly and correctly.

Regarding the role of the teacher, Allsop and Jessel (2015) found out that the way the teacher monitors and manages the game is a decisive factor for students to perceive the game as either fun or boring. Similarly, Champa (2015) recommends that teachers consider how they are going to



participate in the game: either as a guide or as a silent observer; he believes that the best option is to act as a silent observer to allow students interact freely and provide feedback at the end.

As a final thought, it is important to remember that not all games benefit the learning process, and that teachers should analyze how games work in order to select them appropriately for the classroom. The aptitudes, personalities, interests, and levels of the students should also be taken into consideration before selecting any type of game.



## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Conclusion

The studies analyzed in this research synthesis have provided enough information to conclude that the use of games facilitates English learning as a foreign language. As previously stated in the analysis, games not only help in developing the communicative competence, but also offer essential benefits to language learning, such as: enhanced performance, increased motivation, openness to speak, grammar reinforcement and vocabulary retention. Likewise, the use of games allows students to reduce their fear of speaking in public and promotes participation in class.

It is worth noting that games have different roles in education. They might serve as introduction, practice or evaluation. It is important to emphasize that games must be selected according to student's level and necessities. The games analyzed in this paper are suitable for both, children and adults. The participants highlighted that games are considered to be a reward for them, which motivates them to be part of the learning process by engaging and practicing the language. In addition, it was shown that games cannot only be used in the foreign language area, but also in other subjects such as: physics, chemistry, mathematics, etc.

Finally, it can be synthesized that the findings of this research suggest that the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language improves with the use of games, as they help with the enhancement of the communicative competence as well as with other features of the language. More importantly, the different studies advocate that games should be used in all



learning stages: warm-up, presentation, practice, and production, and in all educational subjects without forgetting to adapt them according to the level, interest and age of the students. Overall, the results of the studies showed that most participants experienced positive responses regarding the strengthening of their communicative competence when exposed to non-technological and technological games.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

While different researchers have concluded that games benefit students in their learning processes, it is important to highlight that the studies related to games in the EFL analyzed in this document were applied in Asia and Europe. No studies have been carried out in our continent. This limitation implies that the results collected were mostly the product of a context different from ours.

In short, it is advisable to carry out studies in Ecuador regarding the implementation of games in the EFL classroom in order to compare and contrast the findings of this research. It is difficult to raise awareness about the implementation of games within classes without the correct study and application of them within our country. For this reason, future research must adopt an experimental design and consider the local context.





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**Annexes***Table 4. List of Primary Studies*

Study	Author(s)	Year
Integration of Serious Games in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Iranian Children	Chalak and Ahmadi	2016
Games and Activities: Techniques for Teaching English in A Fun-Filled	Champa	2015
Language Learning through Handheld Gaming: a Case Study of an English Course with Engineering Students	Rico, Agudo, Sánchez	2015
Teachers' experience and reflections on game-based learning in the primary classroom: Views from England and Italy	Allsop and Jessel	2015
The impact of online games on learning English vocabulary by Iranian (low-intermediate) EFL learners	Ashraf, Motlagh and Salan	2014
Assessing English vocabulary and enhancing young English as a	Chou	2014



Foreign Language (EFL) learners' motivation through games, songs, and stories		
The effect of game-based learning on students' learning performance in science learning—A case of “conveyance go”.	Liu and Chen	2013
Use of ‘time trap board game’ to teach grammar	Paris and Yussof	2013
Language games as a part of edutainment	Korkmaz	2013
Enhancing Grammar Using Board Game	Paris and Yussof	2012
Investigating the Impact of Using Games in Teaching Children English	Wang, Shang and Briody	2011
Using ubiquitous games in an English listening and speaking course: Impact on learning outcomes and motivation	Liu and Chu	2010
Young learners' language learning via computer games	Turgut and Irgin	2009



Video games in the English as a foreign language classroom	Anderson, Reynolds, Yeh and Huang	2008
Learning vocabulary through games	Huyen and Nga	2013