THE ROLE OF GAME-BASED TECHNOLOGIES IN ENHANCING ENGLISH VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

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Abstract

In the modern era of digital education, game-based learning (GBL) has emerged as one of the most engaging and effective approaches to teaching foreign languages. The present study explores the significance of game-based technologies in enhancing English vocabulary acquisition among learners of different age groups. The integration of digital games such as Kahoot, Quizlet, Wordwall, and Duolingo into the English language classroom provides learners with interactive and motivating learning environments that increase both retention and active usage of new vocabulary.

Game-based learning fosters intrinsic motivation by transforming traditional rote memorization into meaningful and enjoyable activities. It allows learners to collaborate, compete, and receive instant feedback, which enhances cognitive engagement and promotes deeper learning. Moreover, digital games enable teachers to adapt tasks according to learners' proficiency levels, thus supporting differentiated instruction and learner autonomy.

Game-based technologies have been shown to develop not only linguistic competence but also higher-order thinking skills. Through interactive challenges, role-playing, and problem-solving tasks, learners practice authentic communication while being immersed in meaningful contexts. For instance, games like Quizlet Live and Wordwall enable learners to recall and apply vocabulary collaboratively, while Duolingo offers personalized learning paths that build motivation through gamified progress systems. These elements enhance self-efficacy and persistence in learning new words.

Pedagogical research emphasizes that GBL supports multiple learning styles by combining visual, auditory, and kinesthetic inputs. In vocabulary acquisition, such multimodal exposure reinforces memory retention and retrieval. Furthermore, game-based tools facilitate formative assessment, allowing teachers to monitor learner progress in real time. This supports data-driven instruction and helps teachers design adaptive tasks that cater to individual learning needs. As a result, students become more engaged, confident, and autonomous language users.

The findings of this study indicate that learners exposed to vocabulary through game-based platforms show higher retention rates, increased motivation, and greater willingness to communicate compared to those taught through conventional methods. Consequently, the integration of game-based technologies is not only an innovative pedagogical tool but also an effective strategy to meet the communicative and technological needs of 21st-century English language education.

Keywords: game-based learning, English vocabulary, digital technologies, motivation, language acquisition.

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