

*The Effect of Learning Vocabulary Through Games for Undergraduate...*

## The Effect of Learning Vocabulary Through Games for Undergraduate and ESL Learners

Maryam Raees Ahmed

M.Phil. Scholar, Department of Education, Iqra University, Karachi, Pakistan

Email: [maryam.raees@gmail.com](mailto:maryam.raees@gmail.com)

Nuzhat Mushtaq

M.Phil. Scholar, Department of Education, Iqra University, Karachi, Pakistan

Email: [mushtaqnuzhat14@gmail.com](mailto:mushtaqnuzhat14@gmail.com)

Dr. Khadim Hussain Dahri

Assistant Professor, Department of Education Benazir Bhutto shaheed

University Lyari Karachi.

Email: [khadim.hussain@bbsul.edu.pk](mailto:khadim.hussain@bbsul.edu.pk)

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### Abstract

Vocabulary learning through games is an exciting approach that can imprint long-lasting learning experience. The second learners can benefit from the hands-on activities practiced in class which can enhance retention of new words. Language can be learned faster and easier by having fun in class that can also reduce the 'anxiety' factor in ESL students. This paper aims to examine the impact of vocabulary learning through games to get the educational benefits and how to incorporate games in a language classroom to enhance student learning. Moreover, this research paper analyzes the Vocabulary learning through games and activities for undergraduates and ESL students through. The games were developed Language skills, Vocabulary development. A quantitative survey questionnaire was adopted for this research. This research was conducted by 35 undergraduate students through convenient sampling techniques to analyze the effect of learning vocabulary through games. The study finding shows that English language is easy to learn by different by creative activities, physical games there is a quotation of Benjamin Franklin "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember". "Involve me and I learn." It draw attention of ELT learner's motivation through game type activities that could be easy to enhance their ability and for learning English language because language cannot be learned it needs to do practice and efforts from teachers, learners and as well as exposure to the target language.

**Keywords:** Vocabulary; games-based activities, language skills.

### *The Effect of Learning Vocabulary Through Games for Undergraduate...*

#### **1-Introduction**

"If language structure makes up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and flesh," (Hammer, 1991). Thus, the magnitude of vocabulary teaching and learning is never too far to be highlighted. For young learners, perhaps it is less difficult to learn vocabulary items for the first time than to consolidate and remember them. We often hear young learners complain that they keep learning and forgetting. When English language young learners are acquiring new vocabulary, they need concrete methods to collect, store, and retrieve words for retention and future use. Therefore, it is necessary to find out effective methods to help young learners retain new words in long-term memory. For the students, is a motive based "game" in which students get revived spirits for communicating in the target language. Games are one of the most effective strategies to motivate, encourage and involve students in class activities. Playing games creates a relaxing atmosphere, sense of togetherness and challenges.

Students can improve their skills, and it is using almost any activity that engages learners. The language teaching and learning principles as Brown (2007) summarize: Automaticity: It is difficult to success with children learning second language, especially if they are living in the different culture and linguistic environment but through an inductively process show to the language input with given opportunities to experiment with output. Meaningful learning: Meaningful learning "subsume" new words or grammar into the existing structure and memory system through that we will get result which associative great stronger retention. The anticipation of reward: The strength of rewards was demonstrated clearly by skinner and others. According to skinner, the anticipation of reward is the most powerful factor in directing the person's behavior. Intrinsic motivation: The technique of the classroom has chance to success if they are self-rewarding in the perception of the learner. Games provide fun, interesting, useful or challenge and not only because they expect rewards from the teacher. Autonomy: It is almost universal in that manifested in the classroom in order to allow learners to do things such as initiate oral production, solve problems in groups and practice language with peers. And it encourages students to use the language outside the classroom.

Language ego: The learner of the second language needs to be treated affectively, loving care. The teacher needs to have a supportive attitude of the learners, even if they don't feel good in the target language. He encourages students "warm and fuzzy", and empathy

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needs to be openly and clearly communicated. The native language: The native language has a great effect on learning the target language, the majority errors of the learner's assumption that the target language operates are like the native language. And that the survivor game tries to solve though preventing the students for using their native language while they are playing otherwise, the player will be considered loser.

## **2. Literature Review**

**2.1-VOCABULARY:** Vocabulary plays a major role in learning the second language. It is the important element that links the four main skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing all together. *Hatch and Brown (1995)* make a distinction in this claim with respect to the receptive and productive vocabulary. (*Read,2000*) defines vocabulary as words which form the foundation of language and it represents the units of meaning out of which paragraphs, sentences and entire text are formulated. While *Graves (2000 and Shabina ,2016)* give another definition to vocabulary as a set of words that is relevant to a specific individual or to a branch of knowledge.

**2.2 GAMES:** Games are one of the important techniques that are used in teaching the second language. This technique is considered highly motivating because games are amusing and interesting to the students. (*Ersoz,2000*) define games as a form of play concerning rules, competition and an element of fun. They are simple structured activities which may involve little language but are meaningful to the students. According to *Ersoz*, games can be used to give practice in all language skills and can be used to practice many types of communication. Also, (*El Shamy ,2001*) defines a game as a "competitive activity played according to rules within a given context, where players meet a challenge to achieve an objective and win".

## **2.3 ADVANTAGES OF USING GAMES IN ENGLISH CLASSES**

Many writers have argued that games are not activities for filling the free time or for fun, there are great educational values for games.

(*Silvers,1982*) mentions that many teachers sometimes are eager to use the games as "a teaching device and those teachers often see the games as a time-filler, a break from the

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monotony of drilling". (**Schutz,1988, & Mubaslat, M., 2012**) indicates that apart from having fun, the students will not worry about the errors and punishment; moreover, they will learn grammatical rules, vocabulary and have chances to practice it directly.

(**Lee,1996**) believes that most games of the language enable the students to use the language directly. He pointed out also that games must not be treated as peripheral but as central to teaching the second language. *Richard-Amato* gives a similar opinion; he believes that the game would be fun, but he warns from ignoring its pedagogical values in teaching or learning foreign languages. Choosing more suitable games is considered a very important matter. According to (*Tyson ,2000*) the game must be more than just fun and contain "friendly" competition. The game should keep all the students involved, interested and also should give the students chances to learn and practice, or review specific language material.

(**Gaudart, H.,2009**) points general benefits of using games such as

**AFFECTIVE:** a game encourages the students to be creative; it makes the students use the language spontaneously and establish communicative competence among learners.

**COGNITIVE:** here the reviews could be reinforcing through the game which focuses on the grammar in communicative.

**CLASS DYNAMICS:** through the game the teacher acts only as a facilitator of the game where the student will be centered. The game encourages the participation of the whole class and builds class cohesion.

## **2.4 PREVIOUS STUDIES IN USING GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY**

Vocabulary learning and teaching has changed a lot over the past years. Lecturers and the researchers around the world are always in search for the active ways, techniques in teaching English language and vocabulary. (**Newton ,2001**) refers to games as the way that can enable second language learners to manage their vocabulary meaning and develop their skills at the same time. (**Sripramong ,2004**) who investigates the effect of using vocabulary games on the retention in learning vocabulary of Prathomsuksa five learners. The findings of the study revealed that the learners' retention in learning English vocabulary games was in high level and the learners were satisfied with the vocabulary activities in high level as well.

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**(A'lipour & Ketabi ,2010)** describe an original game they used to teach vocabulary to second language students in their classes. The game consists of students on two teams guessing the words written on a card after receiving clues from a teammate. They found many benefits to the game, including competitiveness between the teams, leading to student motivation to actively participate in the activity by all of the students describing or guessing the word.

**Huang (1996 & Sharifi, 2013)** asserts that learning through games could encourage the operation of certain psychological and intellectual factors which could facilitate communication and learning second languages. **(Al-Shawi, 2014)** examines the implementing of games as an effective learning strategy to acquire new vocabulary and memorize it. She found that using games to practice vocabulary improves learners' ability to memorize the new words effectively.

### **2.5 Purpose of the Study**

The present study aims at examining the difficulties related to effective teaching and learning of vocabulary in ESL learners. To this end, this research will help to study the steps of the vocabulary teaching and learning process in ESL learners and undergraduate students to explore ways and means improve it through games.

### **3. Research Methodology**

In order to collect data, an adopted survey questionnaire will be used as a research tool for this research paper. The questionnaire will be based on a 5-Likert scale and have contextual variation. The data collection, through convenient sampling researchers will collect data from undergraduate students to analyze the vocabulary learning through games and activities. Students learning English as a second language. Questionnaire was distributed among learners. This research was conducted from 35 samples by using convenient sampling techniques. The data was collected through convenient sampling the data was collected from undergraduate students to analyze the effect of learning vocabulary through games. The data was examined by using tables, graphs, and visual representations of descriptive statistical data in the form of percentages, frequencies, and averages. Because SPSS is not currently available, MS Excel will be utilized to

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demonstrate the data analysis for each question in a quantitative study.

#### **3.1 Research Questions**

**RQ1.** Do the games facilitate learning language?

**RQ2.** Does the use of educational games enhance creativity and the ability to present information using the second language?

#### **3.2 Research Hypothesis**

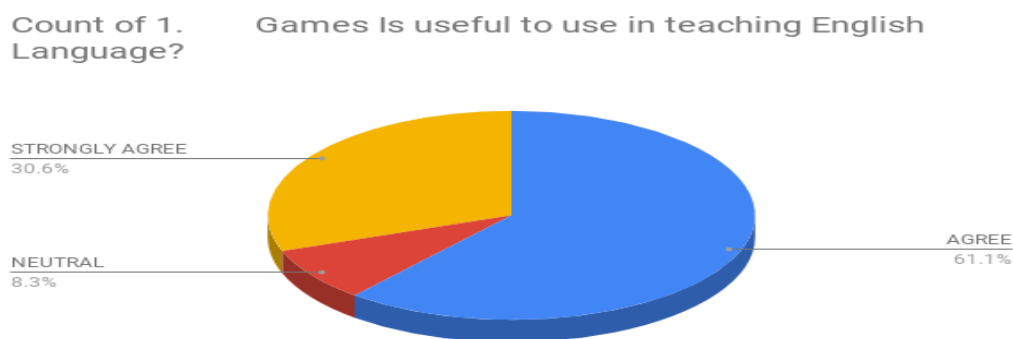
**RH1:** The games aid in language acquisition.

**RH2:** The use of educational games improves creativity and proficiency in communicating in a second language.

#### **4- Data Analysis.**

The collection will be analyzed through descriptive statistical data in percentages, frequency, and average and through visual graphs, pie charts, and tables. SPSS is the software that is used for quantitative research but due to the unavailability of the software, MS Excel will be used to show data analysis for each question.

#### **4.1 Research Findings**

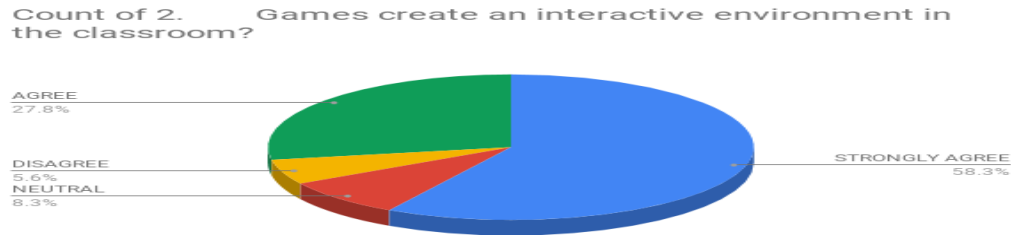


**Figure 1.1**

In figure 1.1 this pie chart shows that 30.6% students are strongly agree with this statement , 61.1% students are agree with this statement, 8.3% students answered

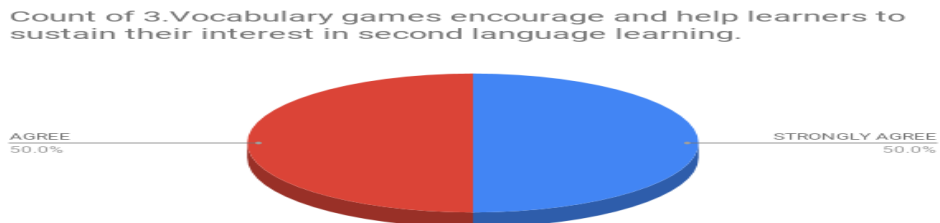
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neutral or somehow they agree with this statement,. The statement is the games are useful to use in teaching English language class.



**Figure 2.1**

In figure 1.2 the chart shows, 58.3% pupils are strongly agreeing with this statement, 27.8% students are agree with this statement, 8.3% pupils are answered neutral means may b, somehow. 5.6% pupils are disagreeing with the statement. Meanwhile mostly pupils are agreeing that the games are created an interactive environment in the classroom.



**Figure 3.1**

In figure 1.3 the chart shows that 50.0% pupils are agree with this statement, 50.0% pupils are strongly agree with this statement, it shows that 0% pupils are disagree and strongly disagree with the statement, that means 50%, 50% pupils are agree and strongly agree with the vocabulary games encourage and help the learners to sustain their interest in second language learning.



**Figure 4.1**

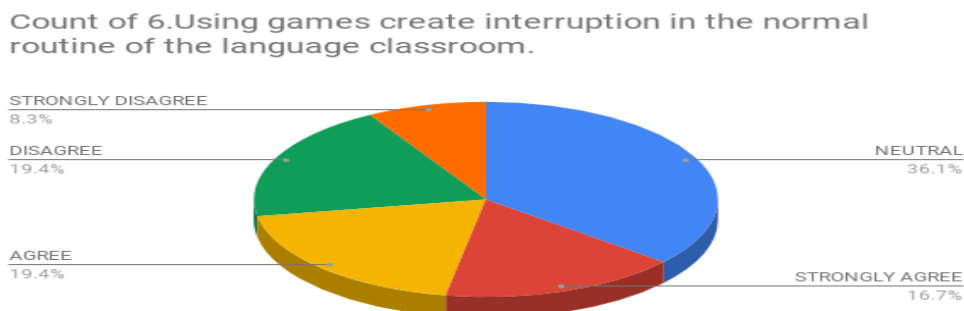
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In figure 1.4 the chart shows that 55.6% pupils are agree with this statement, 33.3% pupils are strongly agree with it, 5.6% pupils answered neutral , 5.6% pupils disagree with the statement. The games facilitate teachers to create meaningful and useful language contexts.



**Figure 5.1**

In figure 1.5 , in this chart 63.9% students are disagree with the statement, 13.9% students says may be or neutral, 11.1% students are agree with the statement, 8.3% students are strongly agree , 2.8% students are strongly disagree with the statement that vocabulary games do not motivate learners to a great extent for language learning.



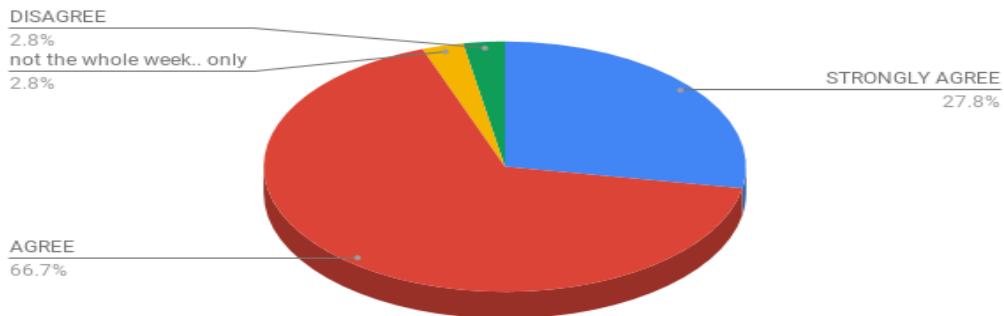
**Figure 6.1**

In figure 1.6, in this chart 36.1% students are answered neutral or maybe it is, 19.4% pupils are disagree with the statement, 19.4% pupils are agree with it, 8.3% students are strongly disagree with the statement , the using games create interruption in the normal routine of the language classroom.



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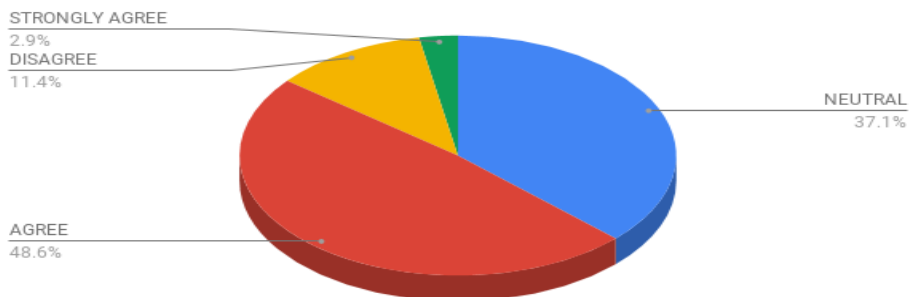
Count of 7. Use of games is a good classroom strategy to help students increase their vocabulary.



**Figure 7.1**

In figure 1.7, in this chart 66.7% students are agree with the statement, 27.8% students are strongly agree with it, 2.% students disagree with it, one person fill the other line , say's that not the whole week... the statement was that the use of games is a good classroom strategy to help students increase their vocabulary.

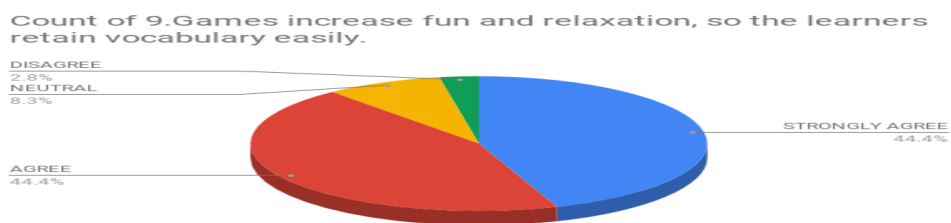
Count of 8. Is the classroom messy and noisy because of games?



**Figure 8.1**

In figure 1.8, this chart shows that 48.6% students are agree with the statement, 37.1% students are answered neutral, 11.4% students re disagree with the statement, 2.9 % students are strongly agree with the statement that it is , the classroom messy and noisy because of games.

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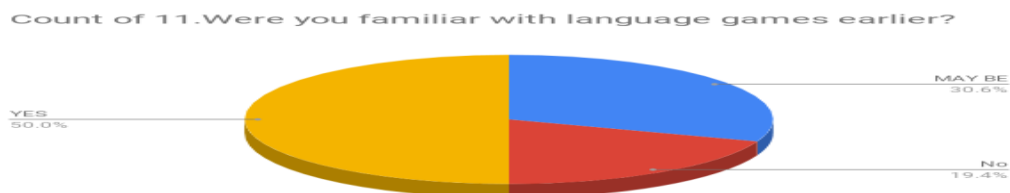
**Figure 9.1**

In figure 1.9, this chart shows that 44.4% students are strongly agree and also 44.4% students are agree with the statement, 8.3% students are answered neutral, 2.8% students are disagree with this statement, that the games increase fun and relaxation, so the learners retain vocabulary easily.



**Figure 10.1**

In figure 1.10, this chart shows that 36.1% students are disagree with the statement, 30.6% students are answered neutral, 25.0% students agree with the statement, 5.6% students are strongly agree with the statement, 2.8% strongly disagree with this statement the vocabulary games do not bring real world context to the classroom.



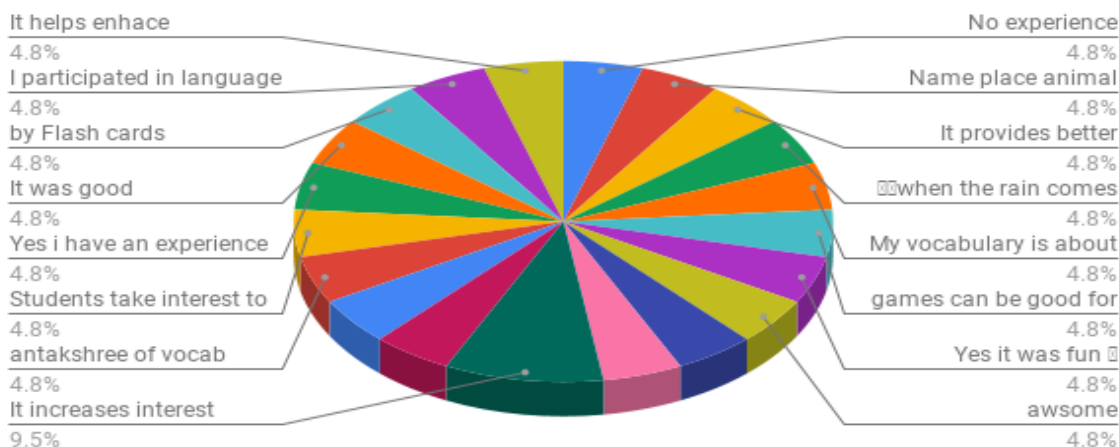
**Figure 11.1**

In figure 1.11, in this chart half percent means 50% pupils say's yes, they were familiar with language games earlier, 30.6% pupils answered may be, 19.4% pupils say's they

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don't know about that, they were not familiar with language games earlier.

Count of 12. Experience of learning English vocabulary through games. Share your experience, if yes.



**Figure 12.1**

In figure 4.1, researcher give open handed statement, where pupils answered by their experiences this chart shows different opinions. Some pupils left that question may be because they haven't any experience of learning English vocabulary through games. Others opinions are as follows. 1- Name place animal things game. 2- It provides better opportunities to learn. 3- My vocabulary is about to go just because of games I play. 4- Games can be good for you in vocabulary of English. You got new words by games in your mind too. 4- Yes it was fun. 5- Awesome. 6- Yes sometime I play my game and they use new vocabulary while speaking so I found new one. 7- It creates enjoyment and excitement, but it also facilitates noise and irritating behaviors. So not fully supported this strategy. 8- It increases interest. 9- It increases interest. 10- No experience. 11- A great experience to establish language learning focused areas. Appreciated and praiseworthy time. 12- antakshree of vocal items. etc..13- Students take interest to learn vocabulary through games but the class is getting noisy. 14- Yes I have an experience of vocabulary game in an English Language class where teacher asked us to share the list of nouns, they gave us situation that if you're going to market for groceries. 15- It was good. 16- by Flash cards. 17- I participated in language games a couple of years ago. It was a good experience. I also believe that video games too help in this regard. 18- It helps enhance vocabulary and helps students to remember it and provide chances to use it as well. 19- Word Chain. 20- Pictionary was a game that I

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played and it really help me increasing my vocabulary.

#### **5- Discussion and conclusion**

In the given questionnaire the students' item, no: (2, 4 &11) were directly related to that the games create an interactive environment in the classroom and the vocabulary games encourage and help learners to sustain their interest in second language learning. Familiar with language games earlier. In item no, (1&11) Games Is probably using in teaching Language the teachers will create meaningful and useful language contexts by using games. That the students show positive responses. Likewise, in item no. (3&9) Were directly related to their willingness to participate in the language learning through games. Games increase fun and relaxation, so the learners retain vocabulary easily. Students, in items no, (5 &7) they showed high willingness to learn the language. However in item no, (6&8) that the classroom will be messy and noisy because of games. Students 36.1% were answered maybe using games create interruption in the normal routine of the language classroom and it may be difficult for teachers as well. From item no, (10) average percentages of the calculation the Vocabulary games do not bring real world context to the classroom. Further in item no, (12) there participant's responses different type interesting activities or vocabulary learning games and activities according to the statement they shows their own learning experiences. With the help of collected data, we can conclude that ESL students and undergraduate students show positive responses, and the finding shows that English language is easy to learn by different by creative activities, physical games there is a quotation of Benjamin Franklin (Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.) For further suggestion, I would like to draw attention of ELT learner's motivation through game type activities that could be easy to enhance their ability and for learning English language because language cannot be learned it needs time to do practice and efforts from teachers, learners and as well as exposure to the target language.

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