

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ENGAGING QUIZ-BASED GAMES IN GRAMMAR ONLINE LEARNING

Jonathan Tanihardjo

English Department
Bunda Mulia University
Tangerang, Indonesia
jtanihardjo@bundamulia.ac.id

Abstract

Ever since the pandemic of Covid-19 hit the world, everything has changed, including the way of teaching and learning – from classroom to online. Many lecturers, or practitioners have been trying to figure out the best method that suits the teaching and learning process. Quiz-based games, such as Kahoot! and Quizizz are one of the alternatives lecturers can use to engage students in the online learning process. This study was conducted to find out if engaging quiz-based games may give a better result in learning grammar, specifically prepositions and adjective comparisons. The participants were students of the General English classes from non-English departments, who were then categorized into two different groups: control and experimental. The control group had a traditional way like having a practice book, while the experimental group had quiz-based games when having a drilling practice. The study shows that engaging games, which seem to be fun, interesting, competitive, and exciting did not give an expected result. On the other hand, a traditional way, despite its insignificant increase in scores, it surprisingly worked better when it came to learning grammar rules. Such surprising outcome signifies that games, which some people believe to be the right tool to learn a language due to their engaging and fun activities, may not always be effective in teaching every element in a language.

Keywords – *effectiveness, quiz-based games, practice book*

Introduction

One of the language elements that is complex for language learners is grammar. Due to its substantial role in a language, many language learners focus more on vocabulary and are reluctant to learn the rules of the language. Despite the fact that vocabulary plays more important role in a language, rules also play parts to keep away from misunderstanding towards the intended meaning.

It has been a common practice that when it comes to teaching grammar, most lecturers often use deductive teaching method, where the teaching starts from the presentation of the rules of the targeted grammar rule to doing lots of practices, from which students get as much experience as possible.

Many teachers in both formal and informal education may incorporate designed materials like student book in teaching and learning situation. Others may use authentic materials, like video, magazine, newspaper articles, etc with the purpose of gaining better understanding of the real applications of the language. Regardless of whatever the situations are, a teacher will always need to find a way to promote learning.

The fact that grammar is considered unimportant and often tedious to many learners, they often leave aside grammar rules when learning a language. For this reason, this study is conducted to look at a different way of teaching and learning that is fun, effective and interesting.

Games are often regarded effective when it comes to vocabulary learning, and thus they are used in language teaching and learning. Many studies show that such tools play roles in increasing learners' vocabulary knowledge. However, there have been very little evidence of games being effective in grammar learning.

In order to do so, the application of engaging web-based applications, such as kahoot!, Quizizz, Blooket, etc. are used to seek the answer to the question of whether such games may help give better understanding of specific grammar rules than the traditional teaching style using practice books.

Theoretical Framework

Hadfield (1996) declares that "a game is an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun". He also added that the focus of games is on effective communications, but not on language accuracy. In other words, it is the message that is salient in games.

Games in language learning is one of the teaching techniques when teaching a language. Steve Sugar in Sigurðardóttir (2010) stated that games are the most effective way to encourage students to be actively involved in the classroom. According to Sigurðardóttir (2010), there are four reasons why games should be used in the classroom: (1) games create fun classroom environment, (2) games create friendly classroom atmosphere, (3) games encourage students' emotional feeling, and (4) games encourage students' confidence in the classroom.

Hadfield (1996) asserts that games are divided into 2 different categories: competitive and co-operative games; competitive games require players to race to be the first to achieve the goal, and co-operative games demands players to work together to share the same goal. Rodgers as quoted in Danesi (1987) stated that there are five basic characteristics of good games. They should competitive, rule-governed, goal-defined, have closure, and engaging. To sum up, in order for learners to progress in language learning, the games should have the five characteristics.

Methods

This is quantitative descriptive research, where the researcher compared the results of the pre- and post-tests from both groups. The results were then analysed to find whether the use of engaging quiz-based game was of significance compared to the that of practice book.

The partakers involved in this study are the first semester students from two non-English Departments who are taking General English class at Bunda Mulia University. In General English class, the students learn all the four skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, grammar, which is part of the writing skill, has been the sole focus of this study.

In this particular research, two different groups were formed. The number of participants in this study were 70 students from 2 different non-English departments in Bunda Mulia University, which were then categorized into 2 groups: (1) control, and (2) experimental. In the control group, the lecturer used only slides to present and explain the grammar rules, and few question items taken from the book for the drilling practice. On the other hand, having the same method when explaining grammar rules as in the control group, the lecturer in the experimental group also made use of slides, but used Quizizz, a web-based game, to engage the students in the practice. In other words, the lecturer utilized power point when doing the presentation of the grammar rules in both groups, but had different ways of drilling practice of the targeted English rules, namely the prepositions, specifically *in*, *on*, and *at* and adjective comparisons.

The tests, comprising of the pre- and post-, were administered to the control group as well as the experimental group before and after the treatment was given. The researcher used Google forms, each of which consisted of two parts, namely prepositions and adjective comparisons with ten questions each.

Findings and Discussions

In order to discover the gap of the pre-test and the post-test results, or discover the effectiveness of the engaging quiz-based games in improving students’ score, the researcher used paired sample t-test and compared the results from both the control and experimental groups.

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Control_Group_PreTest	75.6944	36	16.08694	2.68116
	Control_Group_PostTest	79.4444	36	17.27003	2.87834
Pair 2	Experimental_Group_PreTest	82.3529	34	14.78304	2.53527
	Experimental_Group_PostTest	72.3529	34	19.15785	3.28554

The output of Paired Samples Statistics shows that the means of both pre- and post-tests from the control group with the traditional method are 75.694 and 79.444 respectively. Meanwhile, the means of the pre- and post-tests from the experimental group with engaging quiz-based games are 82.353 and 72.353. The number of students from each group was 36 in the control group and 34 in the experimental group, making 70 students in total. The table shows that the traditional method worked out for the control group (CG), since there is an increase of 3.75 points in the post test. However, the result of the post test from the experimental group (EG) seems to show a drop of 10 points.

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Control_Group_PreTest - Control_Group_PostTest	-3.75000	15.64677	2.60780	-9.04411	1.54411	-1.438	35	.159
Pair 2 Experimental_Group_PreTest - Experimental_Group_PostTest	10.00000	15.81139	2.71163	4.48315	15.51685	3.688	33	.001

In order to examine the effectiveness of the two media of drilling practice (books and quiz-based games), a t test is employed.

As shown in the Paired Sample Test of pair 1 (pre- and post-test of the control group), with $df = 35$, the t score of 5% significance from t table is 2.030 and that of 1% significance is 2.724. With $t = 1.438 < 2.030$ and $t = 1.483 < 2.724$, it signifies that the null hypothesis is accepted, and proves that the traditional way of drilling practice, which used practice books was not so effective in the teaching of grammar rules of prepositions (*in*, *on*, and *at*) and adjective comparisons. Simply put, the use of practice book in improving students’ grammar score was of little significance.

On the other hand, pair 2 (pre- and post-test results of the experimental group), with $df = 33$, it shows that the t score of 5% significance from t table is 2.034, and that of 1% significance is 2.733. With $t = 3.688 > 2.034$ and $t = 3.688 > 2.733$, it indicates that the null

hypothesis is rejected, implying that the use of quiz-based games, such as Quizizz, proves to have given a significant difference in score.

The table of Paired Samples Statistics shows that there was a little increase in the score of the post-test of the control group by 3.75 points, and a significant decrease in the post-test of the experimental group by 10 points. Despite its rise in score of the control group, it gave only insignificant difference. On the contrary, though it proves to have a significant difference in the score of pre- and post-tests, the result shows that the use of engaging quiz-based games was completely ineffective in improving the students' scores.

The results of this study are flabbergasting. When the control group was doing the drilling practice using English practice book, it appeared that only some students were active and engaged in the activities. However, when the experimental group was doing the practice using games, there were quite many students who were involved in the activities. They seemed to get motivated and challenged, since the games were quite fun and required the students to be the first to answer the questions and get the most correct answers.

As suggested by Steve Sugar in Sigurðardóttir (2010), games are the most effective way to encourage students to be actively involved in the classroom. Nonetheless, the results shown in the post-test turned out to be contradictory. The group seemed to enjoy the activities, and have a friendly classroom atmosphere, but not all benefitted from this engaging quiz-based game.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Games might seem fun to both lecturers and learners for language learning. For many years, lecturers have been trying to find and accommodate new and interesting ways of teaching to ensure that students get a better grasp of topics discussed. However, the results of this study show that engaging quiz-based games, like Quizizz and the likes, though seem interesting, competitive and challenging, might not be suitable for grammar rules learning. Such evidence went in accordance with what Hadfield (1996) had stated, that is the focus of games is on successful communications rather than on correctness of language.

Having a traditional way of teaching grammar may appear obsolete when other new and more interesting ways of teaching are devised. In this study, although it did not give significant result, there was still an increase in students' post-test scores. However, even though practice books may have worked better when teaching grammar, lecturers will always need to find a way to make the process of teaching and learning work more effectively.

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