

# Games-Based Language Learning with Creative Teaching Aids among Technical College Students

Lin-Fang Wu

**Abstract-** With the dawning of globalization, the importance of English is becoming more and more important. Researchers spend a lot of time investigating how to teach English effectively. Vocabulary is the foundation is English learning and teaching. The recent research indicated that most of technical college students' vocabulary size is under 2000. The major hindrance of English learning and teaching is vocabulary limitation. Expanding vocabulary size is the way to help learners have an effective learning. Video games, DVD, and online language learning are popular with most the English learners and teachers. Motivation is the key factor for affect learners' second language acquisition. In this study, the researcher used her invention "dices with teaching function" as teaching aids in the classes for one year. A total of fifty-two nursing department students participated in this study at junior college division of Fooyin University. Instruments are included five dices and a motivation questionnaire. The results of the study indicated that learners' motivation was enhanced significantly after one year training with creative learning aids.

**Index Terms-** teaching aids, vocabulary learning strategies, motivation

## I. INTRODUCTION

With the dawning of globalization, English is becoming an international language. Learning English more effectively is more important than before. Several researchers focus on teaching methodology, including online language learning and teaching, website program, face book, self-made video programs. However, the main factor affecting second language acquisition is motivation. Motivation can be recognized as one of the most essential factors affecting second language learning. Learning English through games with creative teaching aids can be a good way to increase the interactions between learners and teachers. The more advanced technology we have, the less interaction we have. Many adolescents get indulged in online games and chatting with friends through face book. The real face-to-face interaction between friends, parents, and teachers are much more valuable than before. Vocabulary is the major hindrance for technical college students' language learning. In this study, the researcher integrated games with classroom teaching activities through creative dices with vocabulary learning function to enhance learning motivation. Dices with vocabulary learning can be an innovative way to increase learners' motivation and also increase their vocabulary size.

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This product is made up of five dices. The twenty six letters are on the twenty six faces of five dices. Among four of these five dices, there is one face without the letter for each dice. The players need to throw the dices while they are playing. Then, players need to spell vocabulary which contains the alphabet showing on the dices. The more words they spell, the easier they will become the winners. In addition, the applications of learning dices can be with cell phones, computers, and electronic translators. Dices games are implemented in classroom teaching activities for one year. The motivation and interactions between learners and teachers are increased. In addition, familiarity with vocabulary makes them memorize vocabulary easily. Participants like vocabulary spelling better than before. Game-based language learning with teaching aids definitely can motivate learners' second language acquisition.

### A. Statement of the study

Online language learning, and several electronic gadgets gradually replace teachers and reduce the interaction between learners. Therefore, creative teaching aids can increase the interaction among learners. In addition, learner center is also one of the well-known teaching methodologies. Learning English games with creative teaching aid is both effective both for children and young adolescent.

### B. Purpose of the study

With the dawning of electronic age, the number of language learning websites and blogs were unaccountable. The interaction between learners and teachers is less than before. Creative teaching aids can overcome this obstacle. Motivation is one of the main factors affecting language proficiency [1]. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of language learning with creative teaching aids on learners' motivation.

### C. Research Questions

1. How do the young adolescents feel about creative teaching aids?
2. What's the effect of creative teaching aids on learners' language learning motivation?
3. Do the learners prefer to learn English with creative teaching aids than online learning games?

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### A. Games in a Language Learning Context

Learning a foreign a language well takes a lot of effort. Motivation is the main factor to affect second language acquisition. The integration of language courses with games

can motivate learners a lot. Games are beneficial to learners from beginners to intermediate level. Some of the language games can be adapted for use with advanced learners [2]. In the past decades, the variety of games about language learning games were numerous, including picture games, card and board games, sound games, story games, and word games. Games also help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. The learners want to take part in these learning activities. In order to follow the game regulations and procedures, they must understand what others are saying or have written. In addition, learners also need to express their own opinions of view [3]. As a result, games play an important role for education and training. Gredler [4] mentioned essential design criteria guidelines for education games as the followings: Winning should be based on knowledge or skill. The game should address important content, not trivia. The dynamics of the games should be easy to understand and interesting for the players. Students shouldn't lose points for wrong answers. Games should not be zero-sum exercises.

Serious games, one kind of online language learning through games, is digital games. With the dawning of the electronic age, game-based language learning will be a trend for language acquisition. Escudeiro and Carlos [5] presented a proposal that an extensive, online, multi-language, multi-player, collaborative and sociable game platform. It was mentioned in their study that the effect in using of serious games is to increase motivation and engagement. Serious games were currently implemented in three fields, such as education, military, and medicine. However, designing serious games is a big challenge for educators because serious game is a new field in the language teaching area [6]. Interactivity and individual actions are the main elements for serious games in language learning. It is considered as communication patterns in conversations, consultation, transmission, and registration [7]. These concepts coincide with communicative and socio-cognitive approaches to language learning, such as prioritization of negotiation and communicative ability [8].

#### B. Motivation on Second Language Acquisition

As Oxford [9] indicated, factors affecting language learning are very complicated, including motivation, attitudes, language anxiety, self-confidence, language aptitude, family size, and personality variables. Motivation is one of the most important factors which affect students' language learning achievement. Small changes in identity, motivation and autonomy may trigger important developments in second language acquisition [10]. Motivation can be traditionally understood as either an integrative or instrumental orientation [11]. They define integrative motivation as a willingness to become a member of target language group. Instrumental orientation is characterized by a desire to gain social recognition or economic advantages through knowledge of a foreign language [11]. Several researchers [12-13] indicated that integratively motivated students capitalize all opportunities and volunteer to answer the questions during the classes. They are more precise in responses, more satisfied and rewarded for participation.

Gardner [1] proposed a socio-education model identifying four factors which are interrelated with second language acquisition. In his opinions, a structured classroom teaching is more important than natural environment. The four factors are the social and cultural milieu, individual differences, learning context and linguistic outcome.

#### C. Vocabulary Learning Strategies & Teaching Aids

Vocabulary learning is the central core both for general English courses and ESP courses. Vocabulary limitation is the major hindrance for technical college students' second language acquisition. Effective language learning strategies are useful for learners to memorize vocabulary. Brown [14] mentioned that vocabulary and learning strategies are the two main fields for second language acquisition. Courses instruction with vocabulary learning strategies can expand vocabulary size significantly. Rubin, Chamot, Harris, and Anderson [15] identify four stages for strategies-based instruction: (1) raising awareness of learners' existing strategy use (2) presenting and modeling new strategies (3) providing repeat opportunities for practice (4) self-evaluation of strategies' effectiveness and possibilities for transfer to other tasks. In addition, Nation [16] recommend four important strategies, such as guessing from context, learning from word cards, word formation, and dictionary use. The evaluation about VLS includes learners' vocabulary size and strategies development. Well-designed syllabus, vocabulary strategies learning sheets, and vocabulary level tests are the essential components for an innovating vocabulary learning strategies program [17].

Teaching aids are useful to be applied with vocabulary learning and teaching. Subathra [18] proposed that the technology applied to teaching English language shows that students involved in this learning will find motivation. Subathra mentioned that whiteboards, overhead projectors, language laboratory, audio aids, visual aids, films, computers, and PowerPoint presentations are all the modern aids for second language learning aids in India. Asokhia [19] mentioned that the teaching aids are very important to effective language teaching. Nowadays, the poor performance in English language learning is because textbook dominated the classroom language learning and teaching activities. Teaching vocabulary with visual aids can enhance learners' language proficiency and motivation.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### A. Subjects

The subjects involved in this study were fifty-two students enrolled at Nursing Department, Junior College Division of Fooyin University. The respondents consisted of mostly females with an average age of 16-18. It was stressed that the results would not affect their school grades.

#### B. Instruments

##### 1. Dices games

The researcher invented dices with vocabulary learning game with Taiwan patent: M449020. It got a gold medal in 2013 Macau International invention contest. The game was described as the followings (Appendix A). This product is made up of five dices. The twenty six letters are on the faces

of five dices. Four red dots are on the four faces of dices. The players need to throw the dices while they are playing. Then, players need to spell vocabulary which contains the alphabet showing on the dices. The more words they spell, the easier they will become the winners. This product can be integrated with classroom teaching activities. In addition, it's easy to make and convenient to take with. It was used in the English classes by the inventor at Fooyin University. The responses from the learners were positive and the classroom atmosphere was actively compared with the teacher-centered teaching method. The more interaction between teachers and learners, the learners were more satisfied with the learning procedure. Learning instruments with language teaching could help learners have a successful learning experience.

2. The questionnaire

A questionnaire was designed by the researcher was used to investigate how the dices games affecting participants' learning motivation. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: (1) personal information (2) five-scale Likert questionnaire (Appendix B).

C. Data analysis

The researcher integrated English learning games with creative learning aids in the classroom. The researcher used dices as teaching aids to enhance participants' language learning motivation. Dices language learning games were implemented in English courses for one year. The participants had to play dices games for twenty minutes every two weeks in English classes. There were three hours English classes per week. A questionnaire was used to investigate how the dices games affect participants' learning motivation.

IV. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

A. Intrinsic motivation through games based language learning activities

Language learning through game-based learning activities is really effective in promoting learners' intrinsic motivation. Table 1 indicated that participants' intrinsic motivation was increased while learning English with teaching aids "dices" in this study. After the game-learning activities, learners gradually enjoyed learning English and felt more confident than before. English learning became a hobby and daily activities. Table 1 showed that the result of the five-scale Likert intrinsic motivation that participants didn't have a high intrinsic motivation. After one year of games-based language learning activities, the pre-test and post of intrinsic motivation has a significant difference.

B. Extrinsic motivation and games-based language learning

Compared with intrinsic motivation, participants had a higher extrinsic motivation to learn English. Table 2 indicated that participants acknowledged that English language proficiency was useful for job finding, travelling, school studies, and also playing video games. However, there was no significant difference between pre-test and post-test. Games-based language learning activities enhanced learners' extrinsic motivation, but the difference wasn't so obvious.

Table 1

Intrinsic motivation	pre-test	post-test	t-value	sig.(2-tailed)
1. Learning English can make me feel happy.	3.47	3.83	-2.40	.020
2. Learning English can make me feel more confident.	3.56	3.94	-2.08	.043
3. Learning English is my hobby.	3.26	3.78	-3.13	.003
4. Learning English is a challenge for me.	3.77	4.18	-2.52	.015
5. I know English is important, but I don't like it.	3.90	3.45	10	0.34

Table 2

Extrinsic motivation	pre-test	post-test	t-value	sig(2-tailed)
6. Learning English can expand my vision.	4.20	4.25	-.340	.736
7. Learning English is helpful for school studies.	4.08	4.14	-.454	.652
8. Learning English is useful to find a better job in the future.	4.31	4.35	-.375	.710
9. Learning English is useful for travelling.	4.40	4.51	-1.15	0.25
10. Learning English can help me read English text books, newspaper, and comic books.	4.27	4.33	-.489	.627
11. Learning English is useful to play English video games.	4.08	4.10	-1.33	0.89
12. In my opinion, you can't catch up with the modern world.	3.72	3.60	.602	.550
13. Learning English can make me become more educated.	3.73	3.70	-.425	.673
14. Learning English can help me get a higher social position.	3.83	4.00	-.890	.383

C. Conclusion:

With the advent of video games, more and more students can't be concentrated with their learning. They spend a lot of

time surfing the net, playing video games. Internet addiction made young generation academic achievement in mathematics, and also literacy fall behind than those in the

past decades. The face-to-face interaction between teachers and learners are much more valuable. Teaching aids with traditional teaching methods are valuable and effective for teenagers. It can increase the interaction between teachers and learners. According to Saunders [20], learners found it easy and joyful learning while they were learning language in a play way method through imitation, chanting, singing, dancing, modeling, dramatizing. The teaching aids “dices with learning functions”, flash cards, pictures and magazine photographers, are all authentic teaching aids.

Since English has become the main communicative method, language proficiency has gradually received more attention than before. Much research has been on the process of enhancing learners’ foreign language proficiency. Games-based language learning with creative teaching aids is popular not only with young children, but also with young adolescents. The integration of games with teaching aids is interesting and motivated for second language learners. The well-designed games are the essential elements for educational games. Gredler [4] mentioned the five design

criteria as the followings: (1) Winning should be based on knowledge or skills. (2) The game should address important content. (3) The dynamics of the game should be easy to understand and interesting. (4) Students shouldn’t lose points for wrong answers. (5) Games should not be zero-sum exercises.

Extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation plays important roles in second langue learning and teaching. Several researchers [21] indicated that intrinsic motivation is the best predictor of extracurricular learning activities, cognitive and analytic learning strategies for foreign language learning.

In this study, most of the learners have a stronger extrinsic motivation for language learning. They know that learning English is important for traveling around the world, getting a job in the future, and playing online games with foreign friends. Learning English with creative teaching aids can gradually enhance learners’ motivation and also language proficiency.

#### APPENDIX A

##### Dices with Vocabulary Learning Function

###### A. Dices Structure

Twenty six letters are pasted on each face of the five dices. Four faces are left red dots

###### B. Dices playing regulations

###### 1. Individual competition

Individual player should throw the dices and spell out the words in regulated time. The more words they can spell correctly. The more points they will get.

###### 2. Team Competition

In regulated time , players can take turns to choose dices number as they like. The more dices they choose, the more points they will get. The time limitation is decided by players.

###### 3. Internet Competition

The applications of dicing games can be played on the Internet.

###### C. Scores for dicing games

- Choose one dice :
- Total scores= one point × correct spelling numbers
- Choose two dices :
- Total scores= Two points × correct spelling numbers
- Choose three dices
- Total scores= three points × correct spelling numbers

###### Example 1:

Throwing one dice and then you get alphabets. If you can spell the following words correctly, you can get four points. one point×4=4 points

1. Smile
2. Smoke
3. Stand
4. Stupid



###### Example 2:

Throwing 2 dices and then you get alphabet C , N. If you can spell the following vocabulary, you can get 10 points. 2×5=10 points

- 1.CNN
2. country
3. connect
4. connector
5. connection



Example 3:

Throwing four dices and then you get P, R, D • (none). If you can spell out the following words, you can get 12 points.

4×3=12points

1. production
2. produce
3. post doctor



Example 4:

- You can also make sentences. When you throw five dices and make one sentence containing the following letters. Then, you can get five points.
- 5 points ×1=5 points T, M, V, A, J
- Tommy loves apple juice very much.





APPENDIX B

English Learning Motivation Questionnaire

I: Personal Information

1. Birth year \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you have experiences about language learning through games? 1.  Yes 2.  No
3. Do you like integrate English games with English course? 1.  Yes 2.  No

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Moderate	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>Intrinsic motivation</b>					
1. Learning English can make me feel happy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Learning English can make me feel more confident.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Learning English is my hobby.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Learning English is a challenge for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I know English is important, but I don't like it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Extrinsic motivation</b>					
6. Learning English can expand my vision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Learning English is helpful for school studies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Learning English is useful to find a better job in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Learning English is useful for travelling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Learning English can help me read English text books, newspaper, and comic books.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Learning English is useful to play English video games.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. In my opinion, you can't catch up with the modern world.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Learning English can make me become more educated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Learning English can help me get a higher social position.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☆ Other Suggestions:

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