

The Effectiveness of Grammar Games on Students' Motivation, Self-Confidence, and Grammar Performance

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Abstract

This descriptive study investigates the effectiveness of grammar games in enhancing grammar performance among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students and examines both students' and teachers' perceptions of using games as a pedagogical tool. The research was conducted in three secondary schools, with data collected from 50 EFL students and 10 English grammar teachers through structured questionnaires containing both Likert-scale and open-ended items. The student participants ranged in age from 14 to 17 and represented mixed proficiency levels.

The results reveal that a significant majority of students (84%) perceived grammar games as enjoyable and beneficial in helping them understand and retain grammatical rules. Students also reported increased motivation, reduced anxiety, and a greater willingness to participate in class activities. Similarly, most teachers (80%) acknowledged the positive role of games in fostering a more interactive and student-centered learning environment. They highlighted improvements in student engagement, concentration, and spontaneous use of grammar in context. However, several teachers also pointed out practical challenges, such as difficulties managing large classes, limited instructional time, and the need for well-designed game materials aligned with learning objectives. Despite these challenges, the study concludes that grammar games are a valuable supplementary strategy in grammar instruction. It recommends their integration into the EFL curriculum with proper planning, teacher training, and adaptation to classroom realities to maximize their effectiveness.

Keywords: *Grammar Games; EFL Instruction; Grammar Performance; Student Motivation; Teacher Perceptions; Classroom Engagement*

1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Grammar instruction has long been a central component of English language teaching, especially for learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Traditionally, grammar has been taught through rote memorization, mechanical drills, and teacher-centered methods, which often result in student disengagement, low motivation, and limited retention. In recent years, however, language educators have increasingly turned to interactive and communicative methods to make grammar more engaging and meaningful. Among these methods, grammar games have emerged as a promising strategy that not only enhances learning but also addresses affective factors such as motivation and self-confidence. Games in the classroom create a dynamic, low-anxiety environment that encourages participation and fosters a positive attitude toward learning. Numerous studies in applied linguistics and educational psychology have

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shown that games can improve learners' intrinsic motivation and help them internalize complex grammatical structures in a natural and enjoyable way. When students are actively involved in game-based activities, they are more likely to take risks, use the target language spontaneously, and collaborate with peers, all of which contribute to improved language proficiency and learner autonomy. In the context of secondary education, especially in EFL settings where learners often struggle with grammar due to limited exposure and practice, incorporating grammar games can bridge the gap between formal instruction and communicative use. However, the practical effectiveness of such games particularly their impact on grammar performance, student motivation, and self-confidence remains underexplored in many local contexts. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the use of grammar games in three secondary schools and analyzing their effectiveness from both student and teacher perspectives.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the increasing emphasis on communicative language teaching, grammar is still taught in many schools through conventional, teacher-centered approaches. These methods often fail to engage students or address their emotional and psychological needs. As a result, many learners perceive grammar as difficult, tedious, or even intimidating. There is a pressing need to identify and implement instructional strategies that not only improve grammar proficiency but also support learners' motivation and confidence. Grammar games, though theoretically promising, are not widely used or consistently integrated into curricula, partly due to a lack of awareness, training, or evidence of their effectiveness. This study seeks to examine whether grammar games can serve as an effective tool in improving EFL students' grammar performance and psychological readiness for learning.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To assess the impact of grammar games on students' grammar performance.
2. To examine the effect of grammar games on students' motivation toward learning grammar.
3. To evaluate how grammar games influence students' self-confidence in using grammar.
4. To explore students' and teachers' perceptions of using grammar games in the classroom.

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve the above objectives, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How do grammar games affect students' grammar performance?
2. What is the impact of grammar games on students' motivation to learn grammar?
3. In what ways do grammar games influence students' self-confidence in using English grammar?
4. What are students' and teachers' perceptions of the use of grammar games as a teaching strategy?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research is significant for several reasons. First, it contributes to the growing body of literature on interactive teaching strategies in EFL contexts, particularly in grammar instruction. Second, it offers empirical evidence on the affective and cognitive benefits of grammar games, potentially guiding curriculum designers and language teachers in creating more engaging and effective grammar lessons. Third, by incorporating both student and teacher perspectives, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the practical implementation and reception of grammar games. Finally, the findings may help educational stakeholders in similar contexts consider the value of integrating game-based learning into traditional classrooms.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on secondary school EFL learners aged 14–17 from three selected schools. The sample includes 50 students with varying proficiency levels and 10 English grammar teachers. Data are collected through structured questionnaires featuring both closed- and open-ended questions. While the study provides valuable insights, it is limited by its relatively small sample size and the specific geographical context. The findings may not be generalizable to all educational settings, particularly those with different cultural, curricular, or infrastructural conditions. Moreover, the study does not include experimental or longitudinal data, which would be necessary for measuring long-term effects of grammar games on language proficiency.

2: Literature Review

2.1 introduction

In the evolving landscape of English language teaching, educators continually seek effective strategies to enhance students' engagement, understanding, and overall language proficiency. One persistent challenge in this domain is the teaching of grammar, which is often perceived by learners as difficult, abstract, or unengaging. Traditional grammar instruction methods, typically characterized by rote learning and repetitive exercises, have been criticized for failing to sustain student interest and for contributing to classroom anxiety.

In response, a growing body of research has emphasized the potential of interactive and learner-centered methods, such as the use of educational games, to make grammar instruction more enjoyable and effective. Grammar games are seen not only as tools for reinforcing language structures but also as powerful instruments for increasing motivation, reducing fear of failure, and enhancing learners' self-confidence. These affective and cognitive benefits have drawn increasing attention in recent years, especially in contexts where English is taught as a foreign language. This review surveys relevant theoretical perspectives on grammar instruction and language acquisition, as well as empirical studies that examine the use of games in grammar teaching. Special attention is given to the psychological and emotional dimensions of learning, including how motivation and confidence intersect with grammar performance. By integrating these strands of research, the review establishes a foundation for exploring how grammar games can contribute to improved learning outcomes and more dynamic classroom experiences.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)*

Communicative Language Teaching emphasizes the importance of interaction and communication in language learning. Grammar instruction under CLT focuses on form within meaningful contexts rather than isolated rule memorization (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Games align well with CLT principles, promoting authentic use of language and encouraging learners to communicate while focusing on grammar structures. Additionally, grammar games provide a low-anxiety environment where learners feel more confident experimenting with language. This sense of psychological safety fosters risk-taking, which is crucial for language development (Krashen, 1982). Through games, learners engage in collaborative tasks that require real-time language processing, thereby reinforcing grammatical structures in a natural and enjoyable manner. Rather than being passive recipients of rules, students become active participants, which leads to greater retention and internalization of grammatical forms.

Moreover, grammar games cater to different learning styles and intelligences, offering visual, auditory, and kinesthetic input that enhances overall engagement. According to Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences (1993), such varied input allows learners to process language in ways best suited to their cognitive strengths. Games also incorporate immediate feedback, either from peers or instructors, which helps learners recognize and correct errors in real-time. As a result, grammar games not only support communicative competence but also contribute to learner autonomy, motivation, and sustained interest in language learning.

2.2.2 Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen (1982) posits that emotional variables such as anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence affect second language acquisition. A low affective filter facilitates language intake, and games can lower this filter by creating a relaxed and engaging learning environment (Krashen, 1985). Building on Krashen's theory, grammar games serve as effective tools to reduce classroom stress and promote a positive emotional atmosphere. When learners are engaged in enjoyable activities, they are less likely to experience the fear of making mistakes or being judged, which often hinders participation in traditional grammar instruction. Games shift the focus from teacher-led correction to peer-supported discovery, making learners feel more in control and less anxious. This emotional comfort supports deeper cognitive processing, enabling students to absorb and apply grammatical rules more effectively. Furthermore, motivation and self-confidence, as highlighted by Krashen, are significantly enhanced through the use of games. Competitive or cooperative elements within games give learners a sense of achievement and progression, which fuels intrinsic motivation. Success in game-based tasks builds learners' belief in their language abilities, boosting self-efficacy. Over time, this confidence translates into greater willingness to communicate and experiment with the language both inside and outside the classroom, reinforcing the long-term acquisition of grammar.

2.2.3 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the importance of social interaction in cognitive development. Grammar games, which often involve collaboration, peer interaction, and scaffolding, reflect this theory by encouraging learners to operate within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Through collaborative grammar games, learners engage in meaningful social interactions that help bridge the gap between what they can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance. These interactions provide opportunities for more knowledgeable peers or instructors to offer scaffolding, gradually supporting learners as they internalize new grammatical concepts. This dynamic process aligns with Vygotsky's idea that cognitive development is socially mediated, and that learning is most effective when it occurs just beyond the learner's current abilities within the ZPD. Moreover, the interactive nature of grammar games promotes language negotiation and the co-construction of knowledge, allowing learners to test hypotheses about grammar rules in a supportive setting. As learners discuss, explain, and correct each other during gameplay, they become active participants in their learning journey. This social engagement not only enhances understanding of grammatical forms but also develops communicative competence and critical thinking skills, making grammar acquisition more meaningful and sustainable over time.

2.3 Grammar Instruction in EFL Contexts

Grammar remains an essential part of EFL curricula across the globe. However, its teaching methods have shifted from grammar-translation approaches to more communicative and inductive models (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Despite these advancements, many classrooms still rely on traditional methods, which have been criticized for being monotonous and demotivating (Larsen-Freeman, 2003; Ur, 2011). Research shows that innovative methods, such as task-based learning and game-based instruction, can improve student engagement and outcomes (Ellis, 2006; Harmer, 2015). Incorporating grammar games into the curriculum represents one of these innovative approaches that address the limitations of traditional grammar teaching. By integrating play and challenge, grammar games transform abstract

rules into concrete, interactive experiences that stimulate learners' interest and participation. This shift not only makes grammar learning more dynamic but also supports meaningful language use, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical communication (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Furthermore, empirical studies have demonstrated the positive impact of grammar games on learners' motivation, self-confidence, and grammatical accuracy. For example, games encourage repeated practice in a context that feels less like rote learning and more like a natural language activity (Glover, 2013; Wright, Betteridge, & Buckby, 2006). This repetition within a meaningful context enhances retention and promotes automaticity in language use, which is essential for fluent communication. As a result, grammar games offer a promising avenue to revitalize grammar instruction and support diverse learners in achieving their language goals.

2.4 Language Games and Learning Outcomes

2.4.1 Definition and Types of Grammar Games

Grammar games are structured activities with clear objectives, rules, and interactive elements aimed at practicing specific grammatical structures in a playful context (Hadfield, 1990; Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 2006). They include board games, matching activities, card games, role-plays, and digital games, each tailored to reinforce particular grammar points. The design of grammar games allows learners to focus on targeted language features while simultaneously engaging in meaningful communication. For instance, role-plays encourage students to produce grammatically correct sentences within authentic scenarios, fostering both accuracy and fluency. Similarly, matching and card games often require learners to recognize and apply grammar rules quickly, promoting automatic recall and reinforcing learning through repetition and competition (Hadfield, 1990; Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 2006). Moreover, the variety of grammar games caters to different learner preferences and classroom dynamics, making them adaptable to diverse teaching contexts. Digital games, for example, offer interactive and multimedia-rich environments that appeal to tech-savvy learners, while traditional board or card games promote face-to-face social interaction and collaboration. This flexibility enhances the accessibility and effectiveness of grammar instruction, allowing teachers to select or design games that best meet their students' needs and learning objectives.

2.4.2 Grammar Games and Language Proficiency

Multiple studies have shown that students exposed to grammar games demonstrate improved accuracy and fluency in using grammatical structures (Taheri, 2014; Shahzadi & Zahoor, 2020). For example, Deesri (2002) found that Thai EFL learners retained grammar rules better when taught through games compared to conventional drills. Similarly, Nguyen and Nga (2020) observed significant improvement in Vietnamese learners' grammar test scores after implementing grammar games. These findings suggest that grammar games not only enhance learners' ability to produce correct grammatical forms but also increase their confidence in using these forms spontaneously. The interactive and engaging nature of games encourages repeated practice, which leads to greater automaticity and reduces the cognitive load often associated with traditional grammar exercises (Shahzadi & Zahoor, 2020). Consequently, students are more likely to internalize grammar rules and apply them effectively in both spoken and written communication. Furthermore, grammar games promote a positive attitude toward learning, which can contribute to sustained motivation and long-term language development. As learners enjoy the process of playing and collaborating with peers, their intrinsic motivation grows, making them more willing to participate and take risks in language use (Taheri, 2014). This motivational boost is particularly important in EFL contexts, where exposure to the target language outside the classroom may be limited. Overall, the empirical evidence underscores the value of grammar games as a powerful instructional tool for improving grammar performance and fostering a supportive learning environment.

2.4.3 Retention and Memory

Games activate both cognitive and affective domains, enhancing long-term memory of grammar rules (Marzano & Pickering, 2005). Learners engaged in kinesthetic and visual grammar games tend to recall structures more accurately than those taught through lecture-based formats (Chen, 2005). By engaging multiple senses and learning modalities, games create richer mental associations that facilitate deeper processing of grammatical information. When learners physically manipulate game pieces or visually connect grammar forms, they are not only intellectually involved but also emotionally invested, which strengthens encoding and retrieval processes (Marzano & Pickering, 2005). This multisensory engagement helps transfer grammar knowledge from short-term to long-term memory, making it more readily accessible during spontaneous communication. Additionally, the affective benefits of games, such as increased enjoyment and reduced anxiety, contribute to better retention and application of grammar rules. Positive emotions triggered by gameplay enhance motivation and attention, which are crucial for effective learning (Fredrickson, 2001). When learners associate grammar practice with fun and social interaction, they develop a more favorable attitude toward the language learning process, leading to greater persistence and success. Thus, the combined cognitive and emotional advantages of grammar games make them a valuable strategy for promoting durable grammar acquisition.

2.5 Games and Student Motivation

2.5.1 Motivation in Language Learning

Motivation is one of the key predictors of language learning success (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Intrinsic motivation, driven by interest and enjoyment, is particularly crucial in sustaining learner engagement. Grammar games, by nature, are designed to tap into intrinsic motivation by making learning enjoyable and purposeful (Malone & Lepper, 1987). When learners are intrinsically motivated, they are more likely to invest effort and persist through challenges, which enhances overall language acquisition (Dörnyei, 2005). Grammar games foster this by creating an engaging environment where the focus shifts from rote memorization to active participation and problem-solving. The element of play introduces variety and excitement into the learning process, reducing boredom and increasing learners' willingness to take risks with new grammatical structures. Moreover, the purposeful nature of grammar games provides learners with clear goals and immediate feedback, which further sustains motivation (Malone & Lepper, 1987). Achieving success in a game setting boosts learners' sense of competence and self-efficacy, reinforcing their commitment to mastering grammar. This positive cycle of motivation and achievement not only improves grammar performance but also promotes a lifelong interest in language learning, making grammar games an effective pedagogical tool for fostering both skill development and learner autonomy.

2.5.2 Empirical Studies on Motivation and Games

Kelsen (2009) reported increased student motivation in grammar classes after incorporating digital games. Similarly, Yolageldili and Arikan (2011) found that Turkish primary school students were more eager to participate in grammar lessons when games were integrated. Games help reduce the fear of making mistakes and foster a sense of achievement, which further motivates students to engage with the material (Uberman, 1998; Mekheimer, 2011). Incorporating games into grammar instruction not only boosts motivation but also creates a supportive learning environment where mistakes are viewed as part of the learning process rather than as failures. This shift in perspective helps students develop a growth mindset, increasing their willingness to experiment with language and take risks (Dweck, 2006). By normalizing errors within a playful context, games reduce anxiety and encourage continuous practice, which is essential for mastering complex grammatical structures. Furthermore, the sense of achievement fostered through game-based learning builds learners' self-confidence, a critical factor in language acquisition (Bandura, 1997). As students experience success in completing game challenges or outperforming peers, they gain a stronger belief in their abilities to use grammar correctly. This enhanced self-efficacy not only improves their

participation in classroom activities but also extends to their overall communicative competence, making grammar games a valuable tool for holistic language development.

2.6 Grammar Games and Learner Self-Confidence

Self-confidence plays a pivotal role in learners' willingness to use language. Learners with high self-confidence are more likely to participate actively and take communicative risks (Brown, 2007). Games provide a low-risk environment in which learners feel safe to experiment with language, thus increasing their confidence (Chen & Yang, 2016).

Studies by Alemi (2010) and Ghazal (2022) show that learners who frequently engage in classroom games demonstrate higher levels of self-assurance when using grammar structures. These students also report reduced anxiety levels, contributing to more successful language learning outcomes. By fostering a positive and encouraging atmosphere, grammar games enable learners to build their communicative competence without the fear of negative judgment. This supportive environment helps reduce affective barriers, such as fear and hesitation, which often inhibit language use in traditional classrooms (Oxford, 1999). As learners become more comfortable practicing grammar through games, they gradually develop the confidence needed to apply their skills in real-life communication. Moreover, the increase in self-confidence gained through game-based learning can have lasting effects beyond the classroom. When students believe in their ability to use grammar correctly, they are more likely to engage in authentic language interactions and pursue further language learning opportunities independently (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, grammar games not only improve immediate language performance but also contribute to the development of autonomous learners who are motivated and self-assured in their language abilities.

2.7 Teachers' Perceptions of Grammar Games

Teachers' attitudes significantly influence the adoption of innovative teaching strategies. Studies indicate that most EFL teachers view games positively due to their impact on classroom dynamics and learner outcomes (Zoghi & Razali, 2019). However, practical barriers such as large class sizes, limited time, and lack of training can hinder implementation (Al-Mutawa & Kailani, 1989; Pham, 2021).

Khan and Akbar (2020) found that while Pakistani EFL teachers valued games, they often lacked resources or institutional support to integrate them regularly. Similarly, Iraqi teachers in Hussein's (2023) study reported enthusiasm about grammar games but needed professional development to use them effectively. Addressing these challenges requires targeted teacher training programs that equip educators with practical skills and strategies for incorporating grammar games into their lessons. Professional development can build teachers' confidence in designing and managing game-based activities, adapting them to various class sizes and proficiency levels (Richards & Farrell, 2011). Additionally, institutional support, such as providing teaching materials and allocating time for interactive activities, is essential to sustain the use of games in grammar instruction. Furthermore, fostering a collaborative community among teachers can facilitate the sharing of best practices and innovative ideas for using grammar games effectively. Peer mentoring and workshops encourage educators to experiment with games and reflect on their impact, leading to continuous improvement in teaching approaches (Johnson & Golombek, 2016). By overcoming practical barriers and enhancing teacher preparedness, grammar games can become an integral part of EFL classrooms, ultimately benefiting learners through more engaging and effective grammar learning experiences.

3: Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A descriptive research design was employed in this study to comprehensively explore the perceptions and experiences of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students and teachers regarding the use of grammar games as a classroom strategy. Unlike experimental research, which seeks to establish cause-and-effect relationships by manipulating variables, the purpose of this design was to observe, document, and interpret naturally occurring phenomena within the educational environment. The primary objective was to gain an in-depth understanding of how grammar games influence three key aspects of language learning: students' motivation, self-confidence, and grammar performance within authentic classroom contexts. This research design was particularly appropriate for the study's objectives because it enables the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for a more holistic and nuanced examination of the subject matter. Quantitative data were gathered through structured Likert-scale questionnaires, which measured students' and teachers' levels of agreement with various statements about the use of grammar games. These numerical scores provided measurable insights into general trends and patterns across the sample. In parallel, qualitative data were collected through open-ended questions, giving participants the opportunity to express their thoughts, feelings, and personal experiences in their own words. This combination of data types enriched the analysis by capturing not only what participants felt about grammar games but also why they felt that way.

3.2 Participants

The participants of this study consisted of two main groups: students and teachers. The first group included 50 EFL students, aged between 14 and 17, who were enrolled in three different secondary schools. These students demonstrated varying levels of English proficiency, ranging from pre-intermediate to intermediate. Their proficiency levels were identified based on their most recent English assessment scores. The second group comprised 10 English grammar teachers, each with a minimum of three years of teaching experience. These teachers were directly responsible for grammar instruction in the same schools where the participating students were enrolled. Their professional background and familiarity with grammar teaching made them suitable contributors to the study. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure that they had adequate exposure to grammar games within their classroom environments. All participants were fully informed about the objectives of the study, and confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process. Each individual willingly agreed to participate, ensuring the ethical integrity of the data collection.

3.3 Setting of the Study

The study was conducted in three public and private secondary schools in Maysan, Iraq. These schools follow a standard English curriculum where grammar instruction forms a major component. All three institutions had English language classrooms equipped with basic teaching aids, and in some cases, access to multimedia tools such as projectors or computers.

3.4 Instruments of Data Collection

3.4.1 Student Questionnaire

The student questionnaire was designed to gather comprehensive data on learners' experiences and perceptions regarding the use of grammar games in the classroom. It was divided into three main sections to ensure a balanced mix of quantitative and qualitative information. Section A focused on collecting demographic information from the participants, including age, gender, and English proficiency level. This data helped contextualize the students' responses and allowed for more meaningful interpretation of patterns across different student profiles.

Section B consisted of a series of statements measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." These items were designed to assess students' attitudes toward grammar games and their perceived impact on grammar performance, motivation, and self-confidence. The scale enabled the researchers to quantify the students' opinions and identify overall trends in their responses. Section C included open-ended questions that provided students with an opportunity to elaborate on their personal experiences with grammar games. This section was particularly valuable for gaining deeper insights into how students felt about the games and the ways in which they believed these activities influenced their learning. Some sample items from the questionnaire included statements such as: "Grammar games help me remember grammar rules more easily," "I feel more confident using grammar after playing games," and "Games make grammar lessons more interesting and enjoyable." These items were crafted to reflect the core objectives of the study and encourage thoughtful responses from participants.

3.4.2 Teacher Questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire was carefully designed to collect insightful data on various aspects of grammar game usage in English language classrooms. Specifically, it aimed to explore teachers' attitudes toward the use of grammar games as a pedagogical tool, investigating whether they perceive these activities as effective, engaging, or beneficial to the learning process. By examining teacher perspectives, the study sought to understand the overall receptiveness of educators to incorporating games into grammar instruction and whether they view this method as aligned with their instructional goals. In addition to attitudes, the questionnaire focused on the perceived benefits and challenges of integrating grammar games into daily teaching practices. Teachers were encouraged to share their experiences regarding what makes games successful or difficult to implement, such as time constraints, classroom management issues, or a lack of suitable resources. This section of the questionnaire provided important qualitative insights into the real-world conditions that influence the feasibility and effectiveness of game-based instruction. The third key area of investigation involved teachers' observations of student engagement and performance when grammar games were used. Teachers were asked to reflect on changes they noticed in students' behavior, participation levels, confidence, and grammar accuracy. This data was essential in evaluating the practical outcomes of grammar games in fostering a more dynamic and student-centered classroom environment. The questionnaire included a combination of Likert-scale items to gather quantifiable data and open-ended questions to elicit more detailed responses. For example, teachers were asked, "What kind of grammar games do you use most frequently?" and "What improvements have you observed in students after using games?" These questions enabled the collection of both standardized and descriptive feedback, enriching the study's findings with both numerical trends and personal teaching experiences.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was carried out over a four-week period. During this time:

1. Grammar games were incorporated regularly into grammar lessons by the teachers.
2. The researcher observed selected sessions to ensure consistency in game use.
3. After the implementation period, questionnaires were distributed to students and teachers.
4. Respondents completed the questionnaires anonymously to ensure honest and unbiased feedback.

Participation was entirely voluntary, and all participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without consequences.

3.6 Data Analysis

3.6.1 Quantitative Analysis

The Likert-scale items from both student and teacher questionnaires were analyzed using **descriptive statistics**, including:

- Frequencies and percentages
- Means and standard deviations

These were used to identify patterns in how participants perceived the effectiveness of grammar games.

3.6.2 Qualitative Analysis

Open-ended responses were analyzed using thematic content analysis. Responses were coded and grouped into recurring themes such as "increased motivation," "enhanced retention," "classroom engagement," and "practical challenges." These themes helped to enrich the quantitative data with direct quotes and contextual explanations from the participants.

3.7: Results and Discussion

3.7.1 Students' Perceptions of Grammar Games

1. Grammar Games and Grammar Performance

Table 1 presents students' responses regarding the effectiveness of grammar games in improving their grammar learning. The items measure perceptions related to understanding, retention, and error reduction. Responses were collected using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD), along with the mean and standard deviation for each item. The data offers insight into how students view the role of games in enhancing grammar comprehension and performance.

Table 1: Students' Perceptions of Grammar Games and Grammar Performance

Item	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	SD
1	Grammar games help me understand grammar rules better.	28	12	6	3	1	4.26	0.88
2	I remember grammar rules more when I learn them through games.	30	11	4	4	1	4.30	0.85
3	I make fewer grammar mistakes after playing games.	22	14	7	5	2	3.92	1.03

The majority of students (84%) agreed or strongly agreed that grammar games helped them understand grammar rules better. The mean scores for performance-related items were above 4.0, indicating a positive impact. This aligns with studies by Nguyen & Nga (2020) and Shahzadi & Zahoor (2020), which also found enhanced retention through grammar games. These findings suggest that grammar games are not only engaging but also effective in reinforcing grammatical knowledge. The relatively low standard deviation values indicate a consistent agreement among students, reflecting a shared positive experience. This supports the idea that interactive and game-based approaches can foster a more supportive and memorable learning environment. The results further emphasize the potential of grammar games to reduce anxiety, boost confidence, and improve overall grammar performance, as also highlighted in the research of Pham (2021) and Al-Mutawa & Kailani (1989).

2. Grammar Games and Student Motivation

Table 2 explores students' perceptions of how grammar games influence their motivation to learn grammar. The items focus on enjoyment, interest, and willingness to participate in grammar lessons when games are incorporated. Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, and both mean and standard deviation values are reported to capture the overall trends and consistency of responses. This section aims to highlight the motivational benefits of using game-based strategies in grammar instruction.

Table 2: Students' Perceptions of Motivation Due to Grammar Games

Item	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	SD
4	Grammar games make grammar lessons more fun.	35	9	4	2	0	4.54	0.68
5	I feel more motivated to attend grammar classes when games are included.	29	13	5	3	0	4.36	0.81
6	Games increase my interest in grammar topics.	31	12	5	2	0	4.44	0.72

A clear majority (88%) felt that grammar games made grammar lessons more enjoyable. Motivation-related items received the highest average scores across the survey, suggesting that games are a strong motivator in grammar learning, consistent with findings by Kelsen (2009) and Yolageldili & Arıkan (2011). The high mean scores across all motivation-related items indicate that students not only find grammar games enjoyable but also view them as a meaningful addition to their learning experience. The data reveals a strong connection between enjoyment and increased classroom participation, as students reported feeling more inclined to attend grammar lessons when games were part of the instruction. This supports the theory that positive emotions and fun activities can significantly boost intrinsic motivation, especially in language learning contexts. Furthermore, the low standard deviation values suggest a general consensus among students, reinforcing the reliability of these perceptions. These findings align with the motivational theories of Deci and Ryan (1985), which emphasize the role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering motivation. Grammar games appear to meet these needs by offering a low-pressure, interactive environment where students can actively engage, take risks, and receive immediate feedback all of which contribute to sustained interest and enthusiasm in grammar learning.

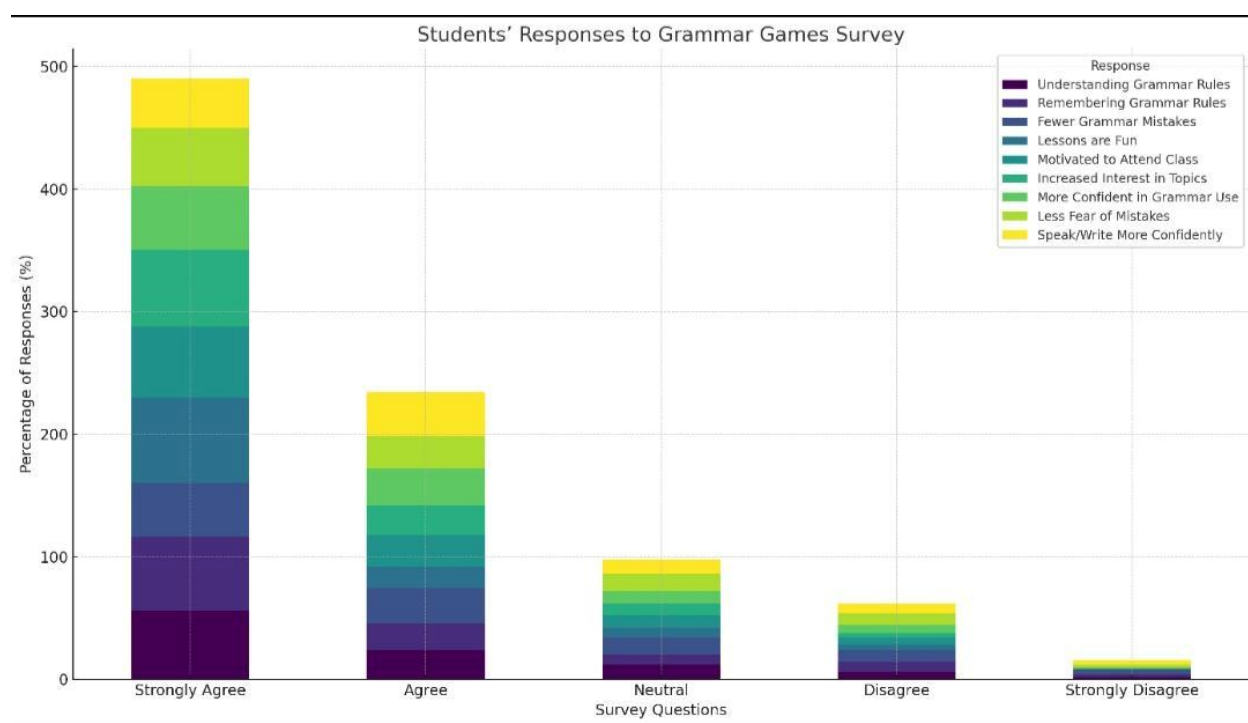
3. Grammar Games and Student Self-Confidence

Table 3 presents students' perceptions regarding the impact of grammar games on their self-confidence in using English grammar. The items address how games influence students' willingness to participate, their fear of making mistakes, and their overall confidence in speaking and writing. Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, accompanied by mean and standard deviation values. This section aims to explore whether interactive, low-stress activities like games can foster a greater sense of confidence among learners in grammar-related tasks.

Table 3: Students' Perceptions of Self-Confidence After Grammar Games

Item	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	SD
7	I feel more confident using grammar after games.	26	15	5	3	1	4.24	0.91
8	I'm less afraid of making mistakes during grammar games.	24	13	7	5	1	4.08	0.97
9	Grammar games help me speak/write English more confidently.	20	18	6	4	2	4.02	1.01

The responses indicate that grammar games positively affect students' self-confidence. Approximately 82% reported higher confidence levels, which supports the claims made by Alemi (2010) and Chen & Yang (2016). The high percentage of agreement suggests that grammar games create a more relaxed and supportive learning environment where students feel safer to experiment with language. When learners are not afraid of making mistakes, they are more likely to participate actively and take linguistic risks an essential component of language acquisition. This sense of psychological safety can be especially beneficial for shy or less proficient students who may otherwise avoid speaking or writing activities. In addition, the relatively high mean scores and low standard deviations across the items indicate a consistent perception among students that grammar games contribute to building their self-assurance. These findings align with communicative language teaching (CLT) principles, which emphasize confidence-building through interaction and engagement. The interactive nature of games allows learners to receive immediate feedback in a non-threatening context, helping them internalize grammar rules while simultaneously boosting their belief in their language abilities.



3. Teachers' Perceptions of Grammar Games

Table 4 presents the views of teachers relating to the grammar games and their use and effectiveness, in the classroom. The items measure the aspects of teacher perception on engaging students, students' participation, students' understanding, and practical challenges of using games, i.e. time management and need for professional development. A 5-point Likert scale response was obtained, together with mean and standard deviation values. The purpose of this section is to examine how teachers perceive both the benefits and drawbacks of grammar games in real teaching scenarios.

Table 4: Teacher Responses on the Use and Effectiveness of Grammar Games

Item	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	SD
1	Grammar games help students understand grammar better.	5	3	2	0	0	4.30	0.67
2	Students are more engaged when grammar games are used.	6	3	1	0	0	4.50	0.53
3	Games increase students' participation.	5	4	1	0	0	4.40	0.52
4	Managing time is difficult when using grammar games.	4	3	2	1	0	4.00	0.82
5	I need more training to use grammar games effectively.	3	4	2	1	0	3.90	0.74

Most teachers (80%) acknowledged that grammar games increased student engagement and understanding. However, they also expressed challenges related to time management and training needs, echoing concerns found in Hussein (2023) and Pham (2021). The positive responses suggest that teachers recognize the pedagogical value of grammar games in promoting active learning and improving student outcomes. High mean scores for statements related to student understanding and participation (4.30 and 4.40 respectively) indicate that teachers see games as effective tools for enhancing grammar instruction. This reflects growing support in the literature for interactive teaching methods that make learning more dynamic and learner-centered. Despite these benefits, the data also reveals practical concerns. Items related to time constraints and the need for additional training received comparatively lower mean scores, suggesting that while teachers are open to using grammar games, they feel insufficiently prepared or supported to implement them effectively. These concerns highlight the importance of institutional support, including professional development opportunities and flexible curricula, to enable teachers to integrate innovative strategies like grammar games into their classrooms with greater confidence and efficiency.

3.8 Qualitative Responses – Selected Themes

To complement the quantitative findings, open-ended responses were collected from both students and teachers, offering deeper insights into their experiences with grammar games.

From Students:

There were obvious attitude changes in several students with regard to grammar learning. One student remarked, "I used to hate grammar, but now I look forward to the games in class," showing how the games changed their perspective of grammar lessons, usually dreaded, into something enjoyable. Another student commented, "The games helped me remember irregular verbs without stress," highlighting the reduction of internal pressure and improved memory retention caused by the games. Such answers point out that games do make grammar more interesting, while also creating positive emotional reactions vital for continuous motivation and successful learning.

From Teachers:

Teachers' comments echoed the positives, along with the challenges. One teacher observes, "Games are especially useful for shy students; they participate more," reinforcing the idea that games create inclusive environments for learning, where even reluctant learners feel comfortable contributing. Another one says, "It's hard to use games every day because of curriculum pressure," referring to the systemic constraints and pressures that then block the regular implementation of such activities. These reflections shed significant light on the survey results that strongly suggest structural adjustments for more flexibility in lesson planning and teacher training, so as to make the use of grammar games feasible and worthwhile. These qualitative responses, altogether, corroborate what is trending in the quantitative data and add a humanizing factor to the findings, reflecting on both the pedagogical potential grammar games have and the pragmatic concerns that require addressing for these tools to become a reality in EFL classrooms.

Conclusion

This study examined the effectiveness of grammar games in enhancing students' grammar performance, motivation, and self-confidence, as well as the perceptions of teachers regarding their use in EFL classrooms. The findings consistently indicate that grammar games have a significant positive impact on language learning outcomes. Quantitative data revealed high levels of student agreement on the benefits of games for understanding grammar rules, remembering content, and reducing errors. Additionally, students reported increased motivation and confidence, especially in participating actively and using grammar without fear of making mistakes. Teachers also recognized the value of grammar games in boosting student engagement and participation. However, they identified practical challenges, such as time constraints and the need for professional training, which can hinder the regular application of games in instruction. The qualitative responses further enriched these findings, with students expressing a transformation in their attitude toward grammar and teachers highlighting the supportive nature of games for shy or less confident learners. In conclusion, grammar games emerge as an effective, student-centered approach to grammar instruction, offering both cognitive and affective benefits. To fully harness their potential, educational institutions should consider providing teachers with the necessary training and curricular flexibility to integrate games consistently and meaningfully into their teaching practices.

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