

TEACHING ENGLISH WITH ONLINE GAMES: A PRACTICAL APPROACH

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DOI

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14270624>

Abstract: *Using online games to teach English is a modern and exciting way to improve learning. Platforms like Duolingo and Minecraft can motivate students, help them build language skills, and encourage teamwork. This paper looks at how online games can improve vocabulary, grammar, and communication skills while balancing fun and education. It highlights how these games can be a helpful addition to traditional language teaching methods.*

Keywords: *Online games, language learning, gamification, motivation, communication, technology in education.*

Introduction. Learning languages is changing with new technology, and online games are becoming a popular way to teach English. Games like Quizlet Live and Among Us create fun and interactive spaces where students can practice their language skills naturally.

Gee (2007) says that games are great because they let students learn by doing, making the experience practical and memorable. I agree with this because I've seen how games can make lessons more interesting and help students connect what they learn in class to real-life situations. But for games to be effective, teachers need to use them in a well-planned way that fits into their lessons.

Linguistic Benefits of Online Games. Online games can improve many aspects of learning English. For example, Duolingo helps students remember vocabulary and grammar through repetition. Kapp (2012) explains that repeating things is important for learning, which is why tools like Duolingo are so effective.

On the other hand, Minecraft helps students practice storytelling and teamwork. Reinders and Wattana (2015) believe that games like this make it easier for students to talk and communicate because they feel less stressed. I've noticed that students who play these games are often more confident in speaking English because the games provide a relaxed way to practice.

Mishra (2020) also says that games are designed to make learning feel easy and enjoyable. From what I've seen, students who use games not only learn language skills but also become better at problem-solving and staying focused.

Challenges in Game-Based Language Learning. Even though online games are helpful, they can cause some problems. Teachers might find it hard to match games with their lessons, and students can get distracted by the fun parts of gaming. Mishra (2020) points out that some schools may also lack the training or tools needed to use games effectively.

I think the biggest challenge is making sure students focus on learning, not just playing. Reinders and Wattana (2015) suggest setting clear goals for each activity, and I've found that this really helps students stay on track.

Kapp (2012) also advises using games as a part of lessons instead of replacing traditional teaching methods. I agree with this because combining games with regular lessons makes learning more balanced and effective.

Practical Recommendations. The following strategies can help educators integrate online games effectively into their teaching practices :

1. Pick the right games. For example, using Duolingo for vocabulary or Minecraft for teamwork and storytelling can be beneficial.

2. Plan activities carefully. It is essential to make sure each game has a clear purpose and instructions.

3. Maintain balance. Games should be used to complement lessons rather than dominate the entire learning process.

4. Encourage collaboration. Multiplayer games provide opportunities for students to develop teamwork and communication skills.

When teachers use these strategies, games can make learning English fun and effective without losing focus on education.

Conclusion

Online games can change the way English is taught by creating fun, interactive ways for students to practice language. Gee (2007) says games let students learn by applying their knowledge in real situations, which I think makes learning more meaningful.

Although challenges like distractions and lesson planning exist, teachers can solve these problems with careful preparation. Based on my experience and research, it's clear that online games, when used wisely, can motivate students and improve their language skills in exciting new ways.

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