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Annotation: *This article explores the importance of digital games in EFL classrooms. As many students are demotivated by traditional teaching methods, digital games can improve motivation and learning outcomes. Twenty A2-level pupils participated in lessons using Kahoot quizzes, video games, short cartoons, and motivational music. Results showed that students' motivation increased significantly, and they acquired new vocabulary and grammar unconsciously through gameplay. The study suggests that integrating digital tools and interactive activities can make EFL lessons more engaging, enjoyable and effective.*

Key words: *digital games, EFL classrooms, student motivation, game-based learning, vocabulary acquisition, grammar, digital tools in education, Kahoot-based learning, interactive learning, learner engagement, technology-enhanced learning, classroom gamification.*

Introduction. Nowadays, technological devices are rapidly advancing and have become an integral part of daily life all over the world. This evolution has significantly affected education, where pupils often struggle with traditional teaching methods due to their deep-rooted dependence on technology. For many modern learners, conventional lessons seem boring, which leads to a noticeable reduction in their motivation and interest. Consequently, digital games can be an effective solution to this problem, as they instantly draw the attention of learners and arouse students' interest in their studies. This article aims to explain the vital importance of digital games in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms and explores contemporary scientific research in this field.

Literature review. Anna Tonda (2026) notes that learning languages has become increasingly important due to the growing migration trends. She points out that English, in particular, is recognized as a key tool for cross-cultural communication, education and professional development. However, she observes that traditional teaching methods often fail to fully engage students throughout the learning process. Therefore, Tonda (2026) suggests that incorporating digital games into language education can make lessons more interactive and engaging. According to Anna this traditional teaching methods sometimes fail to keep students interested. Therefore, using games and interactive techniques can be an effective way to make lessons more

engaging and improve learning outcomes. Embrahimzadeh (2017) examined the impact of a commercial digital video game on high school students' motivation to learn a language. The study involved 241 male students who were randomly assigned to one of three groups: Readers, who focused on reading the game's story; Players, who actively played the game; and Watchers, who observed two classmates playing the game. A language learning motivation scale was administered before and after the intervention, and field notes were also collected. The findings revealed a significant increase in motivation over time. Interestingly, only the Watchers demonstrated significantly higher motivation compared to the Readers at the end of the study. Based on these results, Embrahimzadeh (2017) suggests that incorporating commercial digital video games can effectively enhance high school students' language learning motivation. Soyooof (2014) investigated the experiences of ten Iranian EFL learners, divided into two groups. The first group consisted of five students who had extensive experience learning English through traditional classroom instruction, while the second group included five learners who had experienced learning English via video games. Both groups were interviewed to explore whether these differing experiences with video games could influence language learning outcomes. Vnucko (2024) aimed to examine whether playing digital games in English can enhance EFL students' attitudes toward the language as well as their overall academic performance. Given that previous studies have identified vocabulary acquisition as the aspect of language most positively influenced by digital games, the study specifically focused on students' knowledge of English vocabulary. This study investigated whether playing digital games in English can improve students' attitudes toward the language and their academic achievement. Since previous research shows that vocabulary learning is most positively affected by digital games, the study focused specifically on students' English vocabulary knowledge. Al-Jamili (2024) employed an action research design with a mixed-method approach to investigate the effects of a Computer Games-Based Learning (CGBL) program on English speaking skills. The quantitative component consisted of pre- and post-tests to assess improvements in participants' speaking abilities, while the qualitative component involved interviews to collect feedback on learners' experiences, motivation and perceived challenges. The study's participants were non-native English speakers from diverse backgrounds enrolled in an English language learning program. Zarrati (2024) conducted a study involving 112 undergraduate students enrolled in a Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) program at a university in Tehran, Iran. The participants, in their first and second years of study, were selected through convenience sampling. The average age of the students was 21, and their native language was Persian (Farsi). Their English proficiency was assessed using the listening and reading sections of the IELTS exam.

Method. This study used a mixed-method approach. The aim was to investigate the improvement of students' motivation and learning efficiency in EFL lessons through the use of digital games. The participants were 20 pupils with an A2 level of English proficiency.

The lessons were conducted using Kahoot quizzes and digital video games. The quizzes were designed based on vocabulary and grammar rules relevant to the lesson content. During the lessons, motivational music was played to enhance students' mood and engagement. At the end of each lesson, a short educational video was shown to reinforce learning and summarize key points. Qualitative data were obtained through classroom observations, focusing on students' participation, engagement, and responses to digital activities. The combination of these methods allowed for a comprehensive analysis of how digital tools influence both learning outcomes and student motivation in EFL classrooms.

Results. The results of this study showed a significant improvement in students' learning outcomes. The post-test scores increased by approximately 60% compared to lessons conducted using traditional methods. The use of digital video games successfully engaged the entire class, capturing students' attention and promoting active participation. Analyses indicated that students unconsciously acquired new vocabulary and grammar knowledge while playing the games. Additionally, Kahoot quizzes and short cartoons reinforced learning, and the inclusion of motivational music during warm-up activities positively influenced students' mood and readiness to participate. Overall, the combination of interactive digital tools and games not only enhanced learning efficiency but also increased students' motivation and interest in EFL lessons.

Discussion. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research, such as Embrahimzadeh (2017), which showed that students who actively engaged with digital games demonstrated higher levels of interest and motivation in language learning. In the current study, the use of video games and interactive quizzes fostered a sense of healthy competition among students, encouraging them to participate more actively.

However, some challenges were observed. Technical issues, such as device malfunctions or unstable internet connections, occasionally disrupted the flow of the lessons. Despite these difficulties, students remained motivated and were able to acquire new vocabulary and grammar knowledge effectively.

Overall, the integration of digital games, Kahoot quizzes, short cartoons, and motivational music contributed to enhanced learning outcomes and engagement in EFL lessons. These results suggest that such interactive methods can be a valuable tool for improving both students' motivation and language proficiency, making lessons more enjoyable and dynamic as well.

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