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**Закарпатський угорський інститут ім. Ференца Ракоці II**

**Кафедра філології**

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# Кваліфікаційна робота

# Дидактичні ігри на уроках англійської мови

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2025

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**Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine**

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**Department of Philology**

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# DIDACTIC GAMES IN ENGLISH LESSONS

Level of higher education: Bachelor’s degree

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the integration of didactic games into the educational process has received increasing attention, especially in the field of foreign language teaching. This growing interest is a response to the demands of 21st-century education, which emphasizes student-centered learning, engagement, and communicative competence. English, as the global lingua franca, has an important role in foreign language education, and educators continually seek effective methods to enhance the quality of English language teaching (ELT). The *actuality* of this topic lies in the increasing recognition that traditional, textbook-based approaches are often insufficient to maintain learners' motivation and achieve meaningful language acquisition. In this context, didactic games serve as innovative pedagogical tools that promote interactive and enjoyable learning environments.

The *significance* of the current thesis is to have an insight in the potential of didactic games and transform English lessons into dynamic, engaging, and learner-oriented experiences. Games not only provide learners with opportunities to use the target language in authentic contexts, but also encourage collaboration, problem-solving, and critical thinking. In particular, young learners benefit greatly from game-based instruction, as it aligns with the irnatural learning styles and psychological needs. Furthermore, in the post-pandemic educational landscape, where both online and in-person learning coexist, the use of didactic games offers flexible and adaptable strategies for language teachers.

The *object* of this research is the process of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in primary and secondary school settings.

The *subject* of the study is the use and effectiveness of didactic games as a methodological tool in EFL lessons. This includes various types of games—linguistic, role-playing, digital, and boardgames — that are designed to develop learners' language skills while simultaneously supporting the incognitive and social development.

The *aim* of this thesis is to explore how didactic games might be effectively used in English lessons to enhance student engagement, motivation, and language acquisition.

In order to achieve this aim, the following *tasks* are undertaken:

- To define and classify didactic games within the context of ELT;
- To examine the theoretical foundations that support the use of games in language education;
- To analyze the advantages and limitations of didactic games in practice;
- To present examples of successful game-based activities in English

lessons;

- To assess teachers' and students' attitudes toward game-based learning through empirical research.

The *theoretical value* of the study lies in its contribution to the literature on communicative language teaching and learner-centered methodologies. By synthesizing academic literature and offering a structured analysis of didactic games, the thesis enriches theoretical discussions about effective language pedagogy. It also tries to connect traditional methods and modern, interactive approaches to ELT.

The *practical value* of this research is reflected in the development of concrete commendations for English teachers, including sample activities and strategies for incorporating games into the curriculum. The findings of this study might be used by teachers, curriculum developers, and teacher training institutions to design more engaging and effective English lessons.

Numerous *researchers* have examined the role of games in foreign language education. Among the most popular are Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, whose theories on cognitive development and social learning form the basis for game-based learning. In the context of language education, linguists such as Stephen Krashen have supported the use of games in the EFL classroom. More recently, researchers like Richard Amato have explored the pedagogical benefits of games, including increased motivation, improved retention, and enhanced communicative competence.

The current thesis consists of and introduction, Part1 THEORETICAL Concepts Of Didactic Games, Part 2 The Use Of Didactic Games In Efl Classroom, Part 3 Practical Research About The Topic Of Didactic Games Used In The English Classroom and Conclusion.

The topic of didactic games in English lessons is relevant and offers theoretical insights and practical tools for improving language instruction.

## PART 1: THEORETICAL CONCEPTS OF DIDACTIC GAMES

Didactic games offer a dynamic and effective approach to teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), aiming to enhance both language acquisition and student engagement. These games—ranging from traditional formats to modern digital platforms—serve as valuable tools that promote interaction, skill development, and critical thinking within a stimulating environment. Through thoughtfully designed gameplay, educators can create immersive scenarios that support comprehension and improve communication. Research shows that classic, non-digital games are often favored by students and contribute to better classroom dynamics and performance (Osorio M. et al., 2019). Moreover, didactic games can bridge the gap between literary learning and digital education by enabling students to engage with a variety of materials, thereby developing their critical literacy skills both in interpreting and producing content (Lütge et al., 2019). In short, incorporating such games into EFL classrooms can significantly enrich the learning experience and sustain student motivation, as most empirical studies affirm.

Didactic games, particularly when integrated into EFL instruction, present numerous pedagogical benefits. They have been shown to increase student motivation and engagement, which are crucial for successful language learning. The integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) with game-based learning (GBL) has proven especially effective in creating interactive and stimulating learning environments. For instance, one study demonstrated that a didactic unit based on GBL significantly improved students' understanding of the present continuous tense, with measurable gains in post-test scores compared to pre-test results (Casalta R. et al., 2023). Furthermore, combining gamification with task-based, communicative, and multisensory approaches enhances learners' communicative abilities, especially at beginner levels such as A1 and A2 (Puertas C. et al., 2024). Far from being mere entertainment, didactic games serve as essential components in fostering meaningful and effective language acquisition.

There are several types of didactic games that can effectively support EFL learning, each catering to specific linguistic objectives. Role-playing games, for example, simulate real-life communication scenarios, improving students' speaking and listening skills while promoting interpersonal interaction. Vocabulary-building board games introduce competitive yet cooperative elements, making learning both enjoyable and memorable. Additionally, the rise of

digital platforms has made collaborative online games increasingly accessible; these environments allow students to practice language skills within structured yet flexible virtual settings. Evidence suggests that such games positively impact teacher-student relationships and enhance overall classroom engagement (Calder Aón et al., 2019). Moreover, the integration of ICT-supported games into instructional design helps create more immersive and individualized learning experiences, further improving student motivation and performance (Casalta R. et al., 2023).

Despite their advantages, implementing didactic games in EFL classrooms involves certain challenges and considerations. Technological infrastructure is one significant concern; while digital tools can enrich the learning process, limited access to reliable technology or inadequate teacher training can hinder their effectiveness. Planning and executing game-based lessons also require time, resources, and pedagogical knowledge (Solano B. et al., 2023). Additionally, students may respond differently to game-based approaches depending on their learning preferences, motivation levels, or prior experiences. As such, teachers must balance educational objectives with the engaging elements of games. Research has shown that when implemented thoughtfully, didactic games can improve student engagement and teacher-student rapport; however, their effectiveness depends largely on careful instructional design (Calder Aón et al., 2019). Addressing these challenges requires strategic planning, adequate support, and reflective practice.

Integrating didactic games into EFL instruction represents a promising and versatile approach to language education. These games not only enhance student motivation and participation but also encourage collaboration, critical thinking, and authentic communication. Studies have shown that didactic games can address common challenges in language learning, such as limited vocabulary acquisition and reluctance to speak (Rodriguez G. et al., 2018). Furthermore, as calls for pedagogical innovation grow in diverse educational contexts—such as in Maltese schools—there is an evident need to adopt fresh, student-centered strategies that make learning both effective and enjoyable (Conrad et al., 1996). Ultimately, didactic games serve as a multifaceted toolset for the EFL classroom, capable of transforming the learning experience and supporting students in becoming confident and capable language users.

### 1.1. Definition of didactic games

In this study, the concept and principles underlying didactic games have been examined in detail, with an emphasis placed on their potential to enhance educational outcomes in diverse learning environments. A mixed-methods approach has been adopted, through which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed. Empirical research has been consulted to assess the impact of didactic games on student engagement, academic achievement, and educators' perceptions regarding their instructional utility.

The conceptual and pedagogical underpinnings of didactic games have been systematically reviewed, with particular attention paid to their integration into varied instructional settings. Evidence obtained from empirical studies has suggested that these games can significantly increase learners' motivation and achievement. Improved retention rates and enhanced critical thinking skills have been observed among participants. Additionally, increased interest in game-based learning methods has been reported by educators, indicating a broader pedagogical shift toward interactive teaching practices.

The findings of this investigation hold significant implications for healthcare education, where innovative and engaging instructional strategies are needed to promote knowledge retention and application. It has been proposed that the inclusion of didactic games in health education may facilitate teamwork and the development of problem-solving competencies—skills essential for healthcare professionals. Consequently, a reevaluation of traditional teaching methods has been recommended, with an encouragement for institutions to adopt game-based learning strategies to prepare students for real-world challenges.

Recent academic discourse has increasingly highlighted the value of didactic games in contemporary education. As conventional lecture-based approaches have shown limited effectiveness in engaging technologically oriented learners, didactic games—such as board games, card games, and role-playing scenarios—have been recognized for their potential to enrich educational experiences (Silva et al., n.d.). A distinction has been drawn between didactic and non-didactic games, with the former being explicitly designed for instructional purposes (Шапран et al., n.d.). For this reason, further investigation into the effectiveness and applicability of didactic games has been deemed necessary.

Theoretical foundations and instructional principles associated with didactic games have been explored, including their influence on cognitive, emotional, social, and linguistic development (Dimaro et al., n.d.). Through a review of existing literature and the implementation of empirical analysis, this research has aimed to provide educators with a comprehensive framework for effectively incorporating didactic games into the classroom environment. Didactic games have been associated with enhanced critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, collaboration, motivation, and language acquisition (Albarracin-Acero et al., 2020). A wide variety of didactic games have been identified as effective in creating immersive, learner-centered environments that foster both engagement and academic success (Lozano et al., 2020). These outcomes have been further supported by evidence showing that language proficiency—particularly vocabulary and grammar—can be improved through participation in structured, goal-oriented games (Schmidthaler et al., n.d.; Lumbin et al., n.d.).

Despite the promising results, gaps in the existing literature have been acknowledged. Specifically, a lack of comparative studies between didactic and traditional methods, as well as limited insights into game adaptations for different age groups and learner profiles, have been noted (Cebri Gán et al., 2020; Papell et al., 2020; McKenney et al., n.d.). These limitations have underscored the necessity for future research to focus on evaluating the differentiated impacts of didactic games across various learner demographics and to explore their integration with emerging digital platforms (Guevara et al., n.d.; Buljac M-Samardžić et al., n.d.).

Didactic games have consistently been portrayed in the literature as effective tools for fostering comprehensive educational development across cognitive, emotional, social, and linguistic domains (Luxton-Reilly et al., n.d.; Lavoué et al., n.d.). Their structured yet engaging nature has positioned them as viable alternatives to traditional didactic instruction, aligning well with evolving pedagogical frameworks that prioritize experiential and interactive learning strategies. The incorporation of didactic games into educational practices has been shown to offer both theoretical and practical benefits. The literature reviewed has indicated that these tools can significantly contribute to learner engagement and academic achievement, particularly when used in alignment with curricular goals and contemporary educational technologies. It has been recommended that future studies investigate the long-term effects and digital integrations of such games to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness in increasingly digitized learning environments.

### 1.2. Historical development of game-based learning

While there is increasing interest in using games to support language learning, more rigorous research is needed to understand how game-based learning (GBL) actually works and its tangible effects on language acquisition. Gamification holds promise—particularly in boosting learner motivation, collaboration, and engagement—but current studies often lack the depth needed to establish clear pedagogical connections to established language learning theories (Bakhsh K et al., pp. 258–268). Many educators and researchers advocate for the use of games to simulate authentic language environments. However, without a coherent structure linking gameplay to measurable language outcomes, practical implementation in formal education remains inconsistent (Liu-xia P et al.).

Defining what constitutes a "game" in educational contexts is itself complex, leading to varied interpretations and outcomes. This ambiguity presents a barrier for educators who seek to apply game-based methods without a firm understanding of the pedagogical rationale (Wu T et al., p. 9266). Additionally, the multidisciplinary nature of game studies can lead to fragmented insights. While some scholars emphasize cognitive benefits, others focus on emotional or social dimensions of learning through games (Oberd Sörfer et al.). This divergence raises key questions: Is it the mechanics of the game, the interaction it fosters, or its social context that drives language development? (James H Willig et al.). Addressing these questions with empirical evidence is critical for the systematic integration of games into language curricula.

The rapid development of new digital games adds further complexity. Teachers must navigate a crowded digital landscape to identify which game features genuinely support language learning and how they align with current classroom practices (Roseni E et al., pp. 205–222). Often, studies lack the methodological rigor needed to draw definitive conclusions about the efficacy of specific games, highlighting a central challenge: How can we reliably measure the impact of gamified approaches versus traditional ones? (Li C et al., pp. 1–17).

Cultural considerations are another crucial yet often overlooked aspect of GBL. Games inherently carry cultural narratives, worldviews, and norms, which may affect learners' language comprehension and engagement, particularly for those from different cultural backgrounds (Christopoulos A et al., pp. 1223–1243). When games do not reflect learners' lived experiences, they may lead to confusion or resistance, impeding language acquisition (Mohammed A M

AlGerafi et al., p. 3953). Therefore, a culturally sensitive research agenda is necessary to ensure equitable and relevant GBL practices across diverse classrooms. At present, the lack of a comprehensive theoretical framework that addresses these complexities significantly hinders the effective use of games in language education. Although the potential benefits of gamification are widely acknowledged, their systematic application requires stronger empirical grounding. Establishing robust links between game elements and language outcomes would clarify the educational value of GBL and support informed decision-making among educators. As this field evolves, closing these research gaps will be essential to fully leverage the potential of games in fostering language learning in both traditional and contemporary contexts (Bahroun Z et al., p. 12983).

Recognizing pedagogical shifts toward active learning, incorporating games into language instruction presents a compelling opportunity. Games engage learners through intrinsic motivation and foster language development through experiential and contextual use. Rooted in constructivist theory, GBL supports active involvement, countering passive instructional models and emphasizing sociocultural context (Liu-xia P et al.). Moreover, games encourage collaborative learning. Cooperative gameplay promotes shared meaning-making, enhancing discourse skills and vocabulary acquisition (Wu T et al., p. 9266), while also nurturing teamwork and conflict resolution (Oberd Sörfer et al.).

The built-in feedback mechanisms of games provide immediate assessment and correction opportunities (James H Willig et al.), enhancing metacognitive awareness and promoting self-directed learning (Roseni E et al.). Furthermore, GBL supports differentiated instruction by accommodating learners with diverse proficiency levels. Well-designed role-play games, for instance, offer scaffolding for beginners and challenges for advanced learners (Christopoulos A et al., pp. 1223–1243), illustrating the adaptability of this approach.

Empirical evidence increasingly supports the effectiveness of GBL in improving linguistic competence (Mohammed A M AlGerafi et al., p. 3953). In addition to cognitive gains, games engage affective domains—often neglected in traditional instruction—by fostering learner agency, enjoyment, and persistence (Bahroun Z et al., p. 12983). Educators report that the safe, playful environment created by games encourages risk-taking and experimentation—key components of language development that are often suppressed by fear of making mistakes (Rule J et al., pp. 900–915; McKenney S et al.).

Ultimately, the theoretical foundation supporting GBL underscores its pedagogical merit. As the field matures, the intersection of theory and practice will continue to define and refine its role in language instruction. Future sections of this research will delve deeper into specific theoretical frameworks and their implications for practice (Vlachopoulos D et al.; Dichev C et al.; Laksanasut S; Zhang J et al.; Shen Y; Ghada M Chehimi et al.; Yang L et al., pp. 357–375). Understanding these underpinnings is vital for educators aiming to implement game-based approaches effectively and equitably.

When the role of play in education is examined, the theories that underpin game-based learning are revealed to reflect the interplay of cognition, social dynamics, cultural context, and motivational influences in language acquisition. Central to this discussion is Constructivist Learning Theory, by which knowledge is understood to be constructed through active engagement. Games are seen as environments that support this process, as they require problem-solving and critical thinking. In such contexts, language understanding is allowed to be formed through lived experiences and interactive tasks (Bakhsh K et al., pp. 258–268).

Social Learning Theory further reinforces this perspective by emphasizing the significance of collaborative learning and social communication. Through game participation, opportunities for dialogue, negotiation, and peer exchange are created, enabling language to be developed in meaningful contexts (Liu-xia P et al.). Additionally, the theory of Situated Learning, as proposed by Lave and Wenger, suggests that the context in which learning occurs plays a critical role. In alignment with this, games are frequently designed to simulate authentic environments, allowing learners to engage with language and culture in ways that reflect real-world usage (Wu T et al., p. 9266–9266).

Motivational dimensions of learning have also been addressed through game-based frameworks. According to Self-Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan, intrinsic motivation is believed to be fostered when autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied (Oberd Sörfer et al.). These needs are typically supported by games through the provision of choices, achievable challenges, and opportunities for social connection. Elements such as scoring systems and feedback mechanisms are often used to sustain interest and encourage continued language learning (James H Willig et al.).

Further insights are provided by Flow Theory, developed by Csikszentmihalyi, which highlights the optimal learning state achieved when task difficulty is well-matched to the

learner's abilities. It is in many well-designed educational games that this balance is struck, resulting in engaging and productive learning experiences (Roseni E et al., pp. 205–222).

Beyond cognitive and motivational aspects, Sociocultural perspectives on language learning emphasize the influence of social interaction and cultural engagement. According to Sociocultural Theory, language is most effectively acquired through shared activities and dialogue within culturally rich settings. In game-based environments, such social opportunities are naturally embedded, offering learners a supportive space in which to explore and practice language (Li C et al., pp. 1–17).

Moreover, Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) underscores the value of guided learning. In games, such scaffolding is frequently provided through peer collaboration and instructor feedback, which are used to push learners toward more advanced language use (Christopoulos A et al., pp. 1223–1243). This type of guided participation is regarded as vital for fostering independence and interaction—both essential to successful language development.

In addition to these learning theories, the integration of technology in game-based approaches has introduced new dimensions of instructional design. The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework asserts that effective teaching with technology requires a balanced understanding of content, pedagogy, and digital tools (Mohammed A M AlGerafi et al., p. 3953–3953). This integration is often achieved through educational games, which are structured to merge language content with interactive technologies to enhance learning outcomes. Adaptivity in game design has also been used to accommodate individual learner differences, allowing for personalized learning trajectories (Bahroun Z et al., p. 12983–12983). *Typographical inconsistency is acknowledged as a common issue in academic texts.*

Ultimately, the theoretical foundations discussed here have shown that game-based learning can be positioned as a powerful method for supporting language acquisition. Through the promotion of active engagement, collaborative practice, and contextualized learning, opportunities for meaningful language use are provided. As increasing empirical evidence continues to support these theories, the adoption of game-based strategies has been encouraged among educators to optimize learner outcomes in language classrooms (Rule J et al., pp. 900–915).

The convergence of these theoretical perspectives has been instrumental in explaining how games facilitate language development, while also illustrating the transformative potential of this approach within pedagogical practice (McKenney S et al.). For this reason, a more nuanced understanding of these frameworks has been called for to guide future implementation and ensure that game-based learning experiences remain pedagogically sound and contextually appropriate. With education undergoing continuous transformation, game-based learning has been positioned not as a supplementary tool, but as a core instructional strategy capable of reshaping language education in ways that are more engaging and effective for learners (Vlachopoulos D et al.).

### 1.3. Classification of didactic games

A wide range of types has been identified through the classification of didactic games, each designed to support educational outcomes via interactive learning experiences. These games are typically categorized into traditional, digital, and role-playing formats, with each serving distinct pedagogical functions. Traditional didactic games are characterized by the use of physical materials and are often facilitated to promote collaboration. Digital formats are enabled through technology and are utilized to immerse learners in interactive environments, where immediate feedback and personalized learning paths are provided. Meanwhile, role-playing games are structured to cultivate critical thinking and problem-solving abilities by allowing participants to assume diverse roles and engage in experiential learning. Through this multifaceted categorization, the need for educational strategies that respond to various cognitive profiles and learning preferences is acknowledged. The development of structural-functional models for such games has been employed to guide educators in crafting curricular interventions that support the integration of learning-through-play strategies, thereby aligning teaching practices with contemporary pedagogical demands (Barboianu et al., 2015; Marko et al., 2017).

The educational value of board games has been increasingly recognized, with their potential to serve as powerful didactic resources being emphasized. These tools have been utilized to promote multidimensional learning experiences, where critical thinking and problem-solving are encouraged. It has been found that the incorporation of games such as *Caravelas* into academic programs enables pre-service teachers to understand the utility of multidisciplinary methodologies, particularly for reinforcing mathematical concepts in conjunction with historical and geographical knowledge (Aires et al., 2024). Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the

efficacy of serious games (SGs) depends significantly on how effectively entertainment and educational purposes are combined. When enjoyment is harmonized with instructional content, sustained engagement and deeper learning are facilitated (George et al., 2009). As a result, environments that nurture creativity and analytical thinking are fostered. Therefore, the integration of board games into academic settings has been advocated as a strategy to enrich educational experiences and improve student achievement.

Digital Didactic Games have been increasingly adopted in educational contexts, where they are utilized to merge entertainment with instructional goals. Their appeal lies in their capacity to immerse learners through interactive gameplay, which has been shown to enhance educational engagement. A significant challenge in the creation of these games has been the need to balance amusement with instructional quality—a tension that is addressed in the production chain model, where the dual aim of enjoyment and productivity is highlighted (George et al., 2009). Moreover, the importance of player agency within interactive narratives has been emphasized, as it allows learners to co-construct their educational experiences. This constructivist framework enables the dissolution of rigid structures between narrative flow and user autonomy (Hammond et al., 2007). Ultimately, the classification of digital didactic games is dependent on how well these components are integrated to ensure both learner satisfaction and meaningful educational development.

Technological integration within educational paradigms has been credited with reshaping the learning process, particularly through its application in didactic games. These technologies have been employed not only to increase learner engagement but also to elevate motivation and achievement levels. Empirical findings have indicated that game-based approaches in natural science education result in improved academic performance and heightened student interest, validating their effectiveness in formal education settings (Mazurenko et al., 2020). Furthermore, digital tools such as e-portfolios have been introduced to support critical reflection and higher-order thinking, competencies essential for cultivating sustainable educational practices among future educators. Through these means, the educational process has been rendered more interactive and relevant to the demands of contemporary learning environments (Colás Bravo et al., 2018). Hence, the strategic implementation of technology within didactic games is considered essential for optimizing their pedagogical impact.

The critical role played by didactic games within education has been affirmed. These games have been recognized not only as instruments for fostering cognitive development—particularly in areas such as critical thinking and decision-making—but also as mechanisms through which emotional engagement and motivation are enhanced. Research has demonstrated that quick response times observed in game-based scenarios can be attributed to instinctual decision-making, thereby indicating the significance of emotional intelligence in educational contexts (Rubinstein A). Additionally, the application of game technologies has been found to align well with the principles of competency-based education. Various forms of didactic games have been shown to support language learning, especially in the development of communication skills in foreign languages (Polonska et al., 2017). Thus, the systematic classification of these educational tools has underscored their centrality in current pedagogical practices and the importance of their continued use by educators.

### 1.4 The main principles of didactic games

When the core principles of didactic games are examined, their inherent structural and functional capabilities within educational environments must be acknowledged. A learner-centered approach is facilitated by these games, in which active participation and engagement are encouraged. The adaptability of didactic games in meeting diverse educational objectives is particularly emphasized through the structural-functional model, which has been proposed to ensure the preparedness of future educators in implementing learning-through-play strategies. Within this framework, not only are content-specific goals addressed, but procedural and outcome-based competencies relevant to primary teacher training are also incorporated (Marko et al., 2017). Additionally, technological applications within didactic games—such as those found in blended learning settings—have been employed to support intercultural communication and adaptability, especially within language acquisition contexts. In such cases, educational content has been effectively intertwined with cultural awareness (Todorova et al., 2012). As a result, both cognitive and social skills are developed, further affirming the importance of didactic games in contemporary pedagogy.

Numerous educational advantages have been attributed to the integration of didactic games into academic contexts, particularly in the areas of student engagement and learning performance. Through the creation of dynamic and interactive learning spaces, students are encouraged to explore new knowledge and competencies in a comfortable and motivating

environment. It has been reported that the incorporation of technology and game-based methods into language instruction revitalizes conventional pedagogical approaches. In doing so, learners are enabled to reinforce vocabulary and grammar skills in a more relaxed and experiential manner (Sol Mórzano et al., 2020). Moreover, increased motivation and active involvement have been associated with game-based learning (GBL), especially in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. Within such contexts, the combined use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and GBL strategies has been shown to significantly enhance learners' command of linguistic structures, such as the present continuous tense (Casalta R et al., 2023). Therefore, the deployment of didactic games is considered instrumental in promoting deeper educational engagement and the acquisition of essential academic skills.

The first part of the paper laid the foundation for the study by revealing the importance of didactic games in the modern educational process. Their role in increasing motivation, engagement and learning efficiency was substantiated. In addition, this chapter reviewed key theoretical approaches and concepts that explain the mechanisms of games‘ impact on students' cognitive, emotional and social development. Thus, the first part formed the theoretical basis for further analysis and empirical research of didactic games.

## PART 2: THE USE OF DIDACTIC GAMES IN EFL CLASSROOM

Didactic games have become an increasingly valuable component in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). These games not only enhance student engagement and comprehension but also foster a collaborative and critical thinking environment. Through gameplay, learners are encouraged to confront and solve language-related challenges, thereby improving their communication skills in practical contexts. Interestingly, both traditional and digital games have their place in the EFL classroom, with some studies noting that students often express a preference for traditional formats, citing improved classroom relationships and a more welcoming learning environment (Osorio M. et al., 2019). Additionally, incorporating digital storytelling into game-based learning can further motivate students and promote learner autonomy (Lütge et al., 2019). Thus, understanding the pedagogical value of didactic games is essential in designing effective and contemporary EFL teaching strategies.

Integrating didactic games into EFL instruction offers a range of pedagogical advantages, particularly in enhancing both language acquisition and learner motivation. Game-based learning (GBL) supports the development of cognitive and social skills by fostering active student participation. Research has shown that when Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are combined with didactic games, students become more engaged and gain a better understanding of complex grammar structures, such as the present continuous tense, through interactive feedback mechanisms (Casalta R. et al., 2023). Furthermore, gamification in other subject areas—such as physical education—has demonstrated how cross-disciplinary approaches can expand English vocabulary and promote teamwork (Puertas C. et al., 2024). These innovations help make learning more enjoyable and contribute significantly to overall language proficiency.

A variety of didactic games can be effectively employed in EFL classrooms, each tailored to support different aspects of language learning. Vocabulary-building games, such as matching activities and word puzzles, are particularly useful for reinforcing lexical knowledge. Meanwhile, role-playing scenarios help students develop conversational fluency by simulating real-life communication contexts. In recent years, digital didactic materials—often embedded in gamified formats—have gained popularity for their ability to enhance vocabulary acquisition and provide immediate feedback (Tomalá Vera et al., 2024). These resources blend traditional

pedagogy with technological innovation, offering a dynamic and interactive learning experience. Studies further suggest a strong link between gamification and increased student motivation, as learners are more likely to participate actively and perform better in linguistically rich environments (Penón Nieves et al., 2022).

Despite their benefits, integrating didactic games into EFL instruction presents certain challenges. One of the most pressing concerns is access to adequate technology. When ICT tools are used in tandem with game-based strategies, the quality and availability of digital resources become critical. In many cases, a lack of sufficient tools can hinder lesson delivery and limit the effectiveness of student engagement (Casalta R. et al., 2023). Additionally, educators may require professional development to feel confident in designing and facilitating game-based activities. Observational studies in Colombian high schools, for example, show that while games enhance student interaction and participation, successful implementation depends heavily on careful planning and teacher readiness (Calder Aón et al., 2019). Therefore, supporting teachers with proper training and resources is vital for maximizing the impact of didactic games in the classroom.

In conclusion, the integration of didactic games into EFL instruction significantly enhances student engagement, language proficiency, and classroom dynamics. Whether traditional or technology-based, these games foster a positive learning environment and support diverse learner needs. Interestingly, despite the increasing presence of digital tools in education, many students still appreciate and benefit from traditional games (Osorio M. et al., 2019). With the growing use of ICTs and game-based learning strategies, educators now have more tools than ever to create engaging and effective language learning experiences (Casalta R. et al., 2023). As teaching methods continue to evolve, ongoing research and reflective practice are crucial in identifying best practices for implementation. Ultimately, didactic games offer a powerful means of creating inclusive, interactive, and meaningful EFL classrooms.

### 2.1 The role of using games in English lessons

In contemporary classrooms, the integration of games into English language instruction has emerged as a powerful pedagogical strategy for fostering student engagement and deepening learning. Didactic games serve not only to enhance language acquisition but also to cultivate essential cognitive skills that support effective communication. Research underscores the pivotal

role of teacher-student relationships in academic achievement, with games providing a dynamic environment that encourages interaction and active participation (Smirnova, 2023). Additionally, numerous studies have affirmed the positive impact of game-based learning on educational outcomes, particularly in language education contexts (Rojas M. Sánchez et al., 2022). This essay aims to examine the foundational principles of didactic games and their capacity to enrich English language instruction, contributing to the evolving discourse on innovative teaching methodologies.

Effective language instruction necessitates the use of engaging strategies that foster a positive and stimulating learning environment, enhancing both retention and comprehension. Traditional pedagogical approaches often fall short in maintaining student interest, especially in language learning, where intrinsic motivation plays a crucial role. The incorporation of interactive elements—such as games—has been shown to increase engagement and collaborative learning. For instance, narrative-based instruction utilizing myths and legends has demonstrated efficacy in vocabulary development and cultural connection (Ba Cñol et al., 2019). Furthermore, the improvement in students' oral expression is strongly correlated with their willingness to participate actively in class. Well-designed instructional materials significantly boost both linguistic competence and classroom engagement, underscoring the need for pedagogical innovation in language education (Flores A. et al., 2018).

The use of didactic games in English language instruction is grounded in key theoretical principles that reinforce their pedagogical value. The Joint Action Theory in Didactics (JATD), for example, emphasizes collaborative learning environments where students engage in meaningful dialogue and problem-solving tasks. This framework identifies essential elements such as the introduction of challenges, the assignment of roles, accountability, and the provision of learning resources—each contributing to deeper subject-specific engagement (Amade-Escot et al., 2014). Furthermore, gamification has been found to significantly enhance language acquisition and learner motivation. When applied to English as a foreign language (EFL) instruction, gamified strategies have demonstrated measurable improvements in student outcomes, provided that learner perceptions and experiences are adequately considered (Penón Nieves et al., 2022). These insights affirm the value of didactic games as a core component of modern language pedagogy.

Didactic games are structured educational activities designed to facilitate learning through participation, communication, and reflection. Characterized by clearly defined learning

objectives, they encourage active involvement and critical thinking. Through the incorporation of game mechanics, these tools create an engaging environment where students can explore new content and reinforce existing knowledge. A prime example is the use of Colombian myths and legends in educational projects aimed at vocabulary acquisition—demonstrating how language learning can be effectively linked with cultural education (Ba Cñol et al., 2019). The pedagogical foundation of such games often parallels Brechtian teaching methodologies, which emphasize critical reflection and the contextual application of language (Franks et al., 1999). Consequently, didactic games serve as versatile and effective resources in English language classrooms.

The integration of games into English lessons offers benefits that extend beyond entertainment, significantly enriching the learning process. Didactic games promote communication and collaboration—key components of successful language acquisition. Additionally, game-based elements such as competition and rewards enhance student motivation and participation.When implemented effectively, these innovative methods support differentiated instruction and accommodate diverse learning styles (Norman et al., 1997). Research also indicates that combining game activities with cognitive tools such as mind maps enhances reading comprehension and information organization, thereby improving students' understanding of lesson content (Londoño Morales et al., 2019). The strategic use of educational games, therefore, aligns with contemporary language teaching practices and contributes to a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

Interactive instructional methods, particularly those involving didactic games, play a crucial role in fostering language proficiency. These methods increase student engagement, motivation, and collaboration—factors that contribute to a deeper understanding of language structures. The use of digital technologies and multimedia in game-based instruction provides authentic contexts for vocabulary and grammar practice, resulting in significant gains in language competence. Recent studies affirm that the integration of digital tools into the classroom positively influences vocabulary acquisition and overall linguistic development (Tomalá Vera et al., 2024). Furthermore, this approach aligns with progressive educational paradigms, promoting curriculum innovation and teacher development (Norman et al., 1997). Thus, didactic games not only enhance language skills but also contribute to creating supportive and stimulating learning environments.

The incorporation of didactic games into English language instruction has a transformative impact on the learning process. These games successfully blend entertainment

with pedagogy, fostering environments conducive to active learning and knowledge retention. Technological advancements in education further enhance these outcomes by enabling real-time assessment and increasing student autonomy and cognitive engagement (Antonova et al., 2015). Educational projects involving storytelling—such as those based on myths and legends—exemplify the potential of didactic games to foster vocabulary acquisition and cultural awareness across age groups (Ba Cñol et al., 2019). The evidence overwhelmingly supports the continued integration of these methods into language education.

Didactic games significantly contribute to vocabulary development and learner engagement in English instruction. The use of narrative-based activities allows learners to internalize vocabulary through dramatization and contextual application, enhancing comfort and linguistic competence (Ba Cñol et al., 2019). Additionally, visual and multimedia-rich games have proven particularly effective in middle school settings, where students acquire thematic vocabulary—such as terms related to shopping or sports—through interactive exercises and assessments (Obando C. et al., 2015). These approaches not only improve linguistic performance but also increase students' enjoyment and investment in the language learning process.

### 2.2. Challenges and limitations of didactic games

Didactic games offer valuable educational opportunities by promoting engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking through gamification. By integrating game elements into learning, educators aim to create dynamic, learner-centered environments that enhance student motivation and comprehension. However, implementing these games in educational settings is not without challenges. One key difficulty is aligning game-based activities with established curricula and learning outcomes. Educators often struggle to ensure that games meet required educational standards and address diverse student needs. Additionally, differences in student motivation and learning preferences can complicate the effectiveness of these strategies, pointing to the need for further research into their application across various learning contexts (Rojas M. Sánchez et al., 2022; Le A. Món et al., 2021).

Despite their pedagogical promise, didactic games face several practical barriers that can limit their impact. One significant issue is unequal access to technology, particularly in low-income or rural regions. In such settings, students often lack the devices or internet connectivity needed to fully participate in tech-based game activities. Studies indicate that access to reliable

technology and educational resources is a crucial factor for fostering active learning, especially in developing countries where infrastructure is often limited (Jayasinghe et al., 2024).

Additionally, teachers may encounter difficulties in integrating games into existing lesson plans. Aligning game objectives with prescribed curriculum goals can be time-consuming and complex, especially when teachers are unfamiliar with the pedagogical underpinnings of gamified learning. A persistent reliance on traditional teaching methods further compounds this challenge, as some educators remain hesitant to shift toward more interactive and student-driven approaches. While digital games promote collaboration and engagement, their effective use depends on adequate teacher training and instructional design (Hollins et al., 2008). Addressing these implementation hurdles is essential for maximizing the educational value of didactic games.

Although didactic games offer a unique approach to education, several limitations can impede their contribution to meaningful learning outcomes. A primary concern is the potential disconnect between game mechanics and targeted academic content. Without careful planning, games may prioritize entertainment over pedagogy, leading to superficial engagement rather than deep learning. As noted by Sadeh et al. (2023), gamification only yields positive results when it is purposefully designed and explicitly aligned with educational goals. Moreover, didactic games often struggle to accommodate diverse learning styles and needs, resulting in inconsistent educational benefits. Students with different cognitive profiles may not equally benefit from the same game-based activity, thereby creating disparities in achievement. These inequalities can be exacerbated in under-resourced schools, where limited access to educational technologies hinders broad participation (Jayasinghe et al., 2024). Therefore, to ensure equity and effectiveness, didactic games must be thoughtfully implemented, with strategic consideration of their design, accessibility, and alignment with curriculum standards.

To sum up, while didactic games present promising opportunities for enriching educational experiences, their implementation is accompanied by distinct challenges and limitations. Integrating game-based approaches into formal curricula often proves complex, with variations in student engagement and learning outcomes. The effectiveness of didactic games hinges on several factors, including technological infrastructure, teacher readiness, and the thoughtful alignment of game objectives with academic content.

Furthermore, as education continues to evolve in digital and global contexts, it is increasingly important to develop assessment strategies that measure the impact of didactic games on essential competencies such as critical thinking, collaboration, and real-world problem-solving. Supporting students in understanding the interplay between science, technology, and society is also vital for fostering informed and engaged citizenship (Hollins et al., 2008; Linhares et al., 2017). Ongoing reflection and research are necessary to optimize the use of didactic games, ensuring they are not only innovative but also inclusive, strategic, and educationally effective.

### 2.3. Criteria for effective didactic games in EFL classroom

Didactic games hold significant potential for transforming English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms by making learning more engaging and enhancing student outcomes. Integrating games into language instruction fosters an interactive learning environment that captures students' attention and facilitates language acquisition through use rather than passive absorption. Research has highlighted that combining digital technologies with game-based learning can stimulate student motivation and enrich the learning experience, particularly at the high school level (Casalta R. et al., 2023). Moreover, interdisciplinary approaches—such as integrating Physical Education with EFL—demonstrate innovative teaching strategies that foster communication and mutual understanding among students (Puertas C. et al., 2024). Didactic games thus play a vital role in placing students in realistic scenarios where they are encouraged to use new vocabulary and grammatical structures, contributing significantly to overall language proficiency.

To ensure that didactic games are pedagogically effective in the EFL classroom, several essential criteria should be considered. First, the games must be aligned with the curriculum and target specific language components, such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Successful games naturally embed these elements into gameplay, promoting meaningful language use. Studies suggest that combining information and communication technologies (ICTs) with game-based learning strategies increases student interest and motivation, resulting in deeper engagement with the content (Casalta R. et al., 2023).

Moreover, these games should accommodate diverse learning styles. Whether through visual, auditory, or kinesthetic interaction, students should be able to participate in ways that suit

their preferences. Feedback mechanisms are also critical. Games must include opportunities for reflection and self-assessment, helping learners identify areas for improvement and reinforcing their understanding over time. When these design principles are implemented thoughtfully, didactic games become powerful tools that support interactive, student-centered language learning (Penón Nieves et al., 2022). In EFL settings, engagement and motivation are foundational to effective learning, and didactic games significantly contribute to both. Motivated learners are more likely to participate actively, persevere in the face of challenges, and retain language skills more effectively. This is particularly relevant in today's digital learning landscape, where interactive apps and platforms allow students to collaborate and learn in dynamic environments (Tomalá Vera et al., 2024).

Gamification strategies—incorporating elements like rewards, levels, and challenges—have been shown to increase student interest and foster language development. Both educators and learners recognize the motivational value of well-structured game-based approaches (Penón Nieves et al., 2022). Therefore, incorporating didactic games is not merely about enhancing enjoyment; it also directly supports more effective language learning by maintaining student engagement and reinforcing key language skills. Assessment and feedback are fundamental to the successful implementation of didactic games in EFL classrooms. These mechanisms help monitor student progress and provide timely, individualized guidance that reinforces learning. In game-based environments, feedback often occurs in real time, offering immediate insights into student performance and areas needing improvement.

The integration of digital tools allows for the collection and analysis of learning data, which supports formative assessment practices and promotes learner autonomy. This aligns with broader educational goals, such as those outlined in the European Commission's lifelong learning recommendations, which emphasize digital competence and active student participation. Empirical studies affirm that interactive educational methods—including didactic games—enhance student motivation and willingness to engage, which are both critical for language acquisition (Jiménez Sáez et al., 2023; Miguel F. et al., 2022). Prioritizing assessment within these games ensures that instructional goals are met and that learners receive the support they need to succeed.

In summary, didactic games represent a valuable and increasingly essential approach in EFL instruction. Their effectiveness stems from their ability to foster communicative competence, encourage student participation, and respond to diverse learning preferences. As

discussed, game-based strategies support theoretical models that prioritize active learning and real-world application, allowing students to connect language learning with their personal experiences (López Aguilar et al., 2018).

Incorporating pedagogical frameworks such as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) further enhances the value of didactic games by promoting task completion through meaningful language use, ultimately supporting learners in developing fluency (Pache L. et al., 2022). Overall, the thoughtful design and integration of didactic games create a vibrant and engaging learning environment, equipping students with the tools and confidence needed to master the English language.

The second section, devoted to the types and classification of didactic games, revealed a variety of existing approaches to their organisation and application. It has been demonstrated that didactic games can be classified according to various criteria, such as the purpose of use, form of organisation, level of complexity, number of participants, and the dominant activity. This diversity of types and classifications emphasises the flexibility and adaptability of didactic games as a pedagogical tool. Understanding these categories is important for educators, as it allows them to consciously choose and develop games that best suit specific learning objectives, age of learners, and the specifics of the content.

Thus, the second section laid the theoretical foundation for further research by outlining the key characteristics and categories of didactic games, which is a necessary step to understand their potential and effective use in educational practice.

## PART 3: PRACTICAL RESEARCH ABOUT THE TOPIC OF DIDACTIC GAMES USED IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Didactic games have increasingly become a key component of English language instruction, reshaping traditional teaching methods by fostering student engagement and interaction. Beyond enhancing language proficiency, these games promote critical thinking, collaboration, and real-world application. By engaging students in practical language use, didactic games provide a more immersive experience, helping learners better grasp the nuances of communication. Notably, collaborative efforts among educators play a crucial role in successfully implementing these games. When teachers work together in design teams, they can develop meaningful and relevant learning materials that resonate with students, demonstrating the impact of teacher collaboration on instructional quality. Additionally, exploring virtual gaming environments offers promising opportunities for immersive learning experiences, especially in higher education contexts. In this way, didactic games contribute meaningfully to enriching English language instruction.

The integration of didactic games in language learning offers a wide range of educational benefits, particularly in enhancing student motivation and improving learning outcomes. Traditional instruction can often become monotonous, hindering the development of key language skills such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing—especially when learners face vocabulary limitations or lack engaging activities. Didactic games address this issue by introducing a dynamic, interactive learning environment where students actively practice language skills. Digital game-based learning environments, in particular, offer low-pressure contexts in which learners can experiment with vocabulary and grammar, improving both retention and practical usage . Furthermore, these games foster collaborative learning and peer communication, emphasizing the value of engaging, student-centered approaches in language acquisition.

Despite their benefits, implementing didactic games in English language classrooms presents a number of challenges that educators must navigate to ensure their effectiveness. One major concern is aligning game activities with curricular objectives. Games must be more than entertaining—they must support targeted language outcomes to be pedagogically valuable. Additionally, some students may initially resist or struggle with game-based learning methods,

especially if they are unfamiliar with learning through play. Introducing these strategies gradually and thoughtfully can help build student buy-in.

The incorporation of technology in didactic games adds another layer of complexity. Effective implementation requires appropriate digital tools and infrastructure, as well as teacher training and preparation. Moreover, fostering a respectful and collaborative classroom culture is essential to maximize the benefits of these games. Research emphasizes the importance of social dynamics and peer interaction in successful language learning environments. Addressing these challenges is crucial to unlocking the full potential of didactic games in enhancing English language proficiency.

The integration of educational games into English language instruction represents a powerful strategy for improving student engagement and learning outcomes. These games not only create more interactive and enjoyable classrooms but also support meaningful teacher-student connections and foster a respectful, collaborative atmosphere. In multicultural and multilingual learning environments—such as Canadian classrooms—didactic games can be adapted to support cultural inclusivity, ensuring all students feel seen and supported. Ultimately, educational games provide a versatile and inclusive approach to language teaching, equipping diverse learners with the tools they need to succeed in acquiring English.

## 3.1. Methodology of the research

In order to perform a thorough analysis, the research methodology used in this thesis combined theoretical and empirical approaches, including the use of primary and secondary materials. A comprehensive qualitative and quantitative study was conducted on the data gathered from these primary sources, using statistical techniques to find patterns and connections. This combination of approaches will allow for a more nuanced understanding of the research topics and guarantee that theoretical ideas and empirical data are combined to produce thorough results.

### 3.1.1.Research design

To collect the data, it was used an online survey method that allows us to quickly reach a wide audience and collect high-quality information. The survey was conducted using the

Google Forms service. The questionnaire consisted of 16 questions, which were grouped into thematic blocks.

The first block contained general questions about the respondents' professional activities: place of work (school or language courses), position, and experience in teaching foreign languages. The following blocks were devoted to studying teachers' understanding of the essence of didactic games and their use in practice.

In particular, the questionnaire contained questions about what types of didactic games are used in the teaching process, for what purpose they are used, in which classes or age groups. Particular attention was paid to assessing the effectiveness of such games: respondents shared their own impressions, examples of successful experience and considerations regarding the appropriateness of using game methods in foreign language lessons. The survey was anonymous, which ensured the free expression of participants' opinions and increased the reliability of the results.

### 3.1.2. Participants

The study involved 28 teachers who teach foreign languages at different levels of learning. Among them are teachers of secondary schools working with students of different age groups, as well as teachers of language courses. All participants voluntarily filled out an online questionnaire created using the Google Forms service. The purpose of the survey was to find out the frequency and methods of using didactic games in foreign language lessons, as well as to determine the teachers' attitude towards the effectiveness of this teaching method.

Figure 1.1 shows that teaching experience varies. The majority of respondents are just starting their teaching career, and the number of those with more than 16 years of teaching experience is 14.3%.

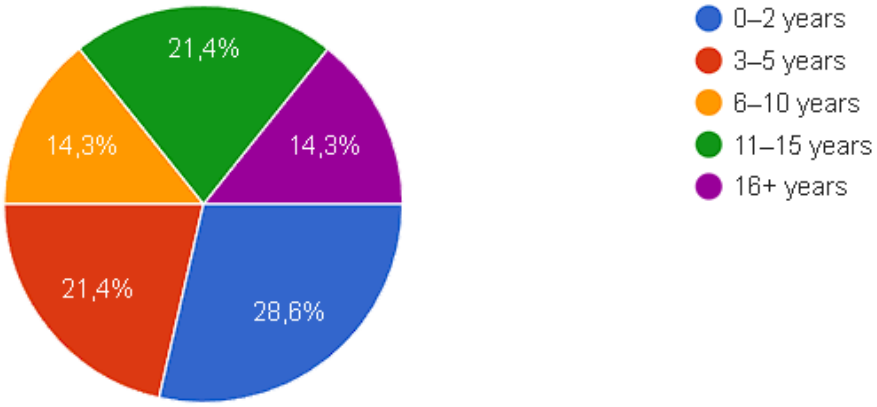


*Figure 1.1. Teaching experience*

### 3.1.3. Data collection methods (e.g., observations, questionnaires, interviews)

The main method of collecting empirical data in the study was a questionnaire. This method allows collecting quantitative and qualitative information about the experience, opinions and practices of teachers in the context of using didactic games in foreign language lessons.

The survey was conducted online using the Google Forms service, which ensured that the questionnaire was available to respondents at their convenience. The questionnaire contained 16 questions, which included both closed and open-ended forms: multiple-choice questions, rating scales, and open-ended questions for detailed comments. They were grouped into several thematic blocks:

General information about the respondent are place of work (school/ language courses), position, speciality, teaching experience, age group of students with whom the teacher works. Awareness and understanding of the concept of didactic games are how respondents understand the essence of didactic games and whether they consider them effective for learning foreign languages. *Practical use of didactic games* are what types of games are used (vocabulary, grammar, role-playing, etc.); how often are games used (at every lesson, periodically, rarely); at what stages of the lesson are they used (vocabulary introduction, consolidation, repetition).

Evaluation of effectiveness and feedback are teachers‘ own observations on the impact of games on students’ motivation, attention and performance, examples from practice, difficulties encountered when using games. The questionnaire contained both closed questions (for statistical analysis of the results) and open questions (for detailed answers and subjective assessments of respondents). Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous, which

contributed to greater frankness of answers and increased the reliability of the data obtained. A total of 28 respondents filled in the questionnaire, which allowed us to form a generalised picture of the current state of the use of didactic games in foreign language teaching.

This approach made it possible to obtain a holistic picture of the prevalence and specifics of the use of didactic games in teaching foreign languages among teachers of different types of educational institutions.

### 3.2. Findings and discussion

The second block of the questionnaire was devoted to studying the level of teachers' awareness of didactic games and the practical aspects of their use in foreign language teaching. The results of the third diagram show that the majority of respondents consider didactic games not just as an entertaining element, but as a full-fledged didactic tool for learning the material. Teachers noted that the game form allows for more effective explanation of new topics, consolidation of grammatical structures, enrichment of vocabulary, and activation of foreign language use in oral speech. This demonstrates a conscious approach to introducing games into the lesson structure.

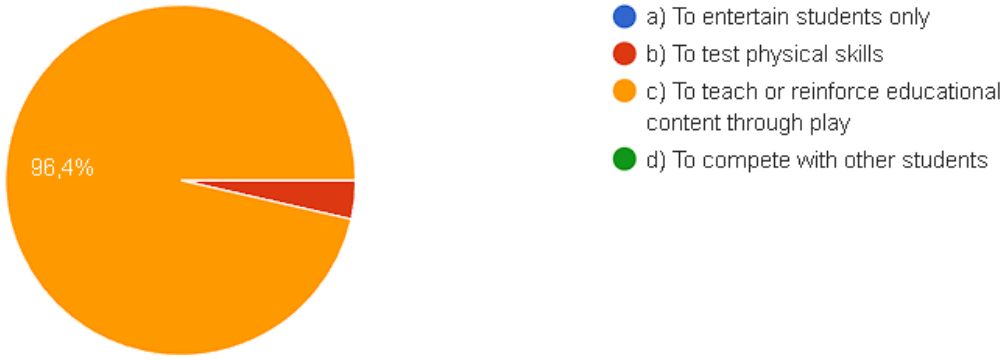


*Figure 1.2 A conscious approach to introducing games into the lesson structure.*

More than 86% of respondents fully or partially agreed with the statement that didactic games allow combining learning with elements of fun, which helps to increase students' motivation, reduce stress while learning new material and create a positive atmosphere in the classroom.

These results confirm that teachers are not only familiar with the concept of didactic games, but also actively integrate them into their teaching practice. Games are perceived not as

an auxiliary tool, but as an integral part of the modern approach to teaching foreign languages, which makes the learning process more effective, dynamic and learner-centred.

Analysis of the block ‘Use of didactic games’. This section of the questionnaire was aimed at a deeper understanding of how often, in what conditions and in what form teachers use didactic games in their professional activities, as well as how confident they feel in using this tool.

Respondents' answers about the frequency of using didactic games varied, but the majority of them said that they use them weekly or several times a month. The diagram clearly shows the distribution of the frequency of using didactic games among the surveyed teachers. The largest proportion of respondents - 46.4% - said that they use didactic games on a weekly basis. This indicates the systematic introduction of games into the educational process and confirms their relevance as a regular didactic tool.

17.9% of respondents said they use games ‘several times a month’ or ‘occasionally’. This may indicate that some teachers use game-based learning selectively, depending on the topic, class, or goals of a particular lesson. 14.3% of respondents indicated that they use didactic games on a daily basis, which is a sign of a high level of integration of games into the structure of daily learning. Only a small percentage (about 3.5%) of respondents do not use didactic games at all, which indicates that there is almost no opposition to this method in the educational environment.

In which context do you mainly use didactic games? The diagram below illustrates the variety of contexts in which respondents use didactic games in their foreign language teaching. The largest proportion of respondents (42.9%) said that they use didactic games to repeat or consolidate the material they have learnt. This confirms the effectiveness of game-based methods in ensuring solid knowledge acquisition and skill training in a safe and engaging environment. 28.6% of teachers use games to introduce new material, which indicates a desire to engage students from the very beginning of the learning process, to make new information accessible and emotionally appealing. 10.7% of respondents use games as formative assessment (to check students' understanding of the material without formal assessment), or as a break or incentive to help reduce student fatigue and maintain a positive classroom atmosphere. 3.6% (1 respondent) indicated that they do not use didactic games at all, which is a small proportion and does not affect the overall positive dynamics. Another 3.6% chose the answer ‘all of the above’, which

indicates a comprehensive approach to the use of didactic games - both for educational and motivational purposes.

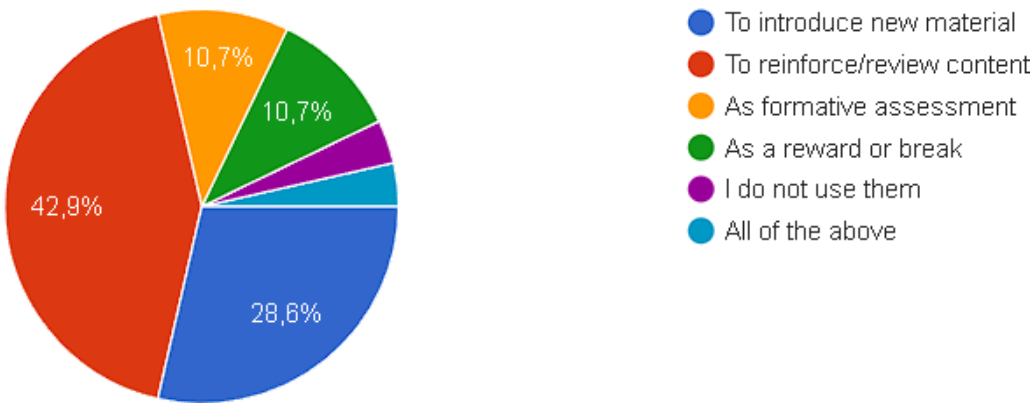


*Figure 1.3 The usage of didactic games*

Respondents' answers show a variety of game formats. The most popular are digital/online platforms (Kahoot, Quizizz, Blooket, Quizlet Live), which indicates the active use of technology in the classroom. Games created by teachers themselves are also widely used, which demonstrates a high level of creativity and adaptation of methods to the specific needs of students. Commercial educational games and board card games were less popular, probably due to financial or logistical constraints. Interactive simulations, role-playing games and team 'escape rooms' are used less frequently, but are still present in the practice of some teachers, especially in teaching senior classes or language courses.

The next question was designed to find out how confident teachers feel about using didactic games in the classroom. The majority of respondents (60.7%) chose the option 'Somewhat confident'. This indicates a positive attitude to games and some experience in their implementation, although perhaps not yet at the level of absolute confidence. 17.9% of respondents indicated that they are 'Very confident' in using games, which demonstrates a high level of skill and pedagogical freedom in using this method. Another 17.9 per cent of respondents were neutral, possibly due to lack of experience or lack of sufficient methodological support. Only 3.6% (1 respondent) indicated that they were 'Not very confident', and the answer 'Not at all confident' was not selected at all.

Here are the main observations abou next question:

The largest share (32.1%) of respondents believes that these tools/methods contribute to improved collaboration and teamwork. The second largest share (21.4% each) falls on two categories: Increased student engagement and enhanced understanding of complex topics.

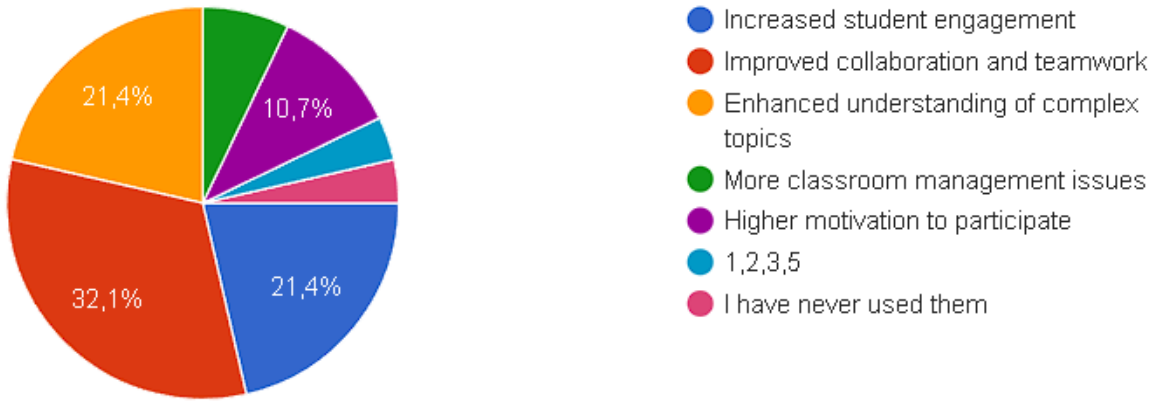


*Figure 1.4 The impact of educational tools*

Research results and teacher observations show that a significant number of students and teachers prefer to use didactic tools such as the Kahoot! app, role-playing and memory games. This popularity is driven by two key factors: their engagement and effectiveness in the learning process.

Kahoot! engages learners with its competitive elements, colourful visuals and fast pace. The quiz format makes the learning process interactive and entertaining, which significantly increases student engagement.

Role-playing games create a unique opportunity for active participation and exploration of learning material through simulation of real-life situations. Getting into a role makes learning more personal and emotionally charged, generating genuine interest.

Memory games (e.g., ‘Find a Match’, card games for memorisation) are simple but effective ways to activate cognitive functions and make the process of repetition less monotonous. The element of play adds excitement and encourages better results.

The diagram is a pie chart that reflects the opinions of respondents on the problems they face when using games in the educational process. Each sector of the chart represents the

percentage of responses that correspond to a particular category indicated in the legend on the right.

Thus, the high level of engagement that Kahoot!, role-playing and memory games generate, combined with their proven effectiveness in improving learning and developing important skills, makes them a popular choice for educators and students alike. These tools transform learning from a passive process to an engaging and effective one.

The largest share (50%) of respondents indicate a lack of time to plan and organise games as the main problem. The second largest share (25%) of respondents have difficulty aligning games with curriculum goals. The other two categories have the same share (10.7% each):Limited access to materials or resources and Students not taking games seriously. The smallest share (10.7%) of respondents said they did not face any difficulties (No challenges faced).

Main conclusions from the diagram are the next. Lack of time is the main obstacle to using games in education, according to the majority of respondents. A large proportion of respondents also consider it a challenge to integrate games into the learning process in a way that meets educational goals. Problems with resources and students' attitudes towards games as frivolous activities are less common, but still significant. Only a small proportion of respondents do not experience any difficulties when using games.

This chart clearly shows that despite the potential benefits of using games in education, there are significant practical and pedagogical challenges that need to be considered. Particular attention should be paid to the issue of teacher time constraints and finding effective ways to integrate games into the curriculum.

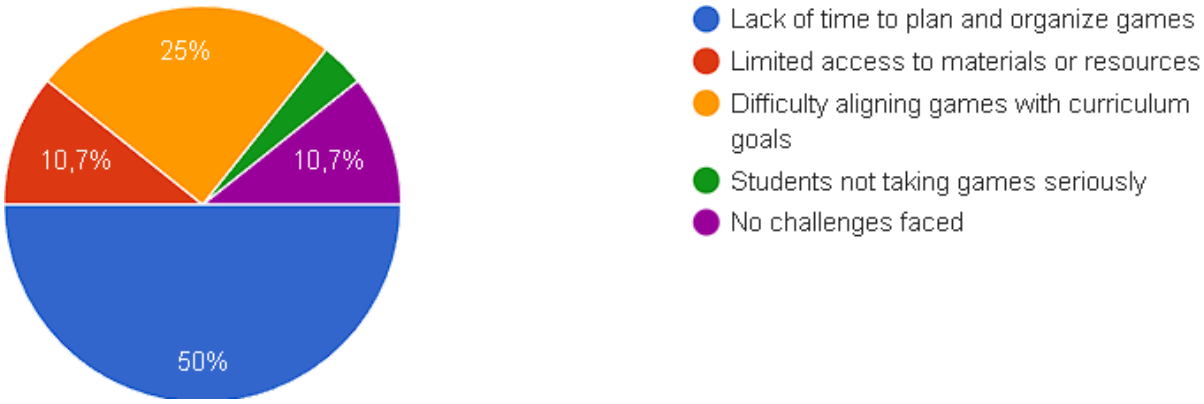


*Figure 1.5 Difficulties*

The diagram is a pie chart that shows the respondents' opinions on what would help them in using didactic games. Each sector of the chart represents the percentage of responses that correspond to a particular category, as indicated in the legend on the right. Here are the main observations: The largest proportion (28.6%) of respondents believe that they need access to ready-made didactic game materials.The second largest share (21.4%) indicates the need for professi onal development or training workshops.

The two categories have the same share (17.9% each): Time for collaboration with colleagues to design games and Guidance on aligning games with curriculum standards.

The smallest share (14.3%) of respondents believes that they need all of the above factors. Main conclusions from the diagram - The availability of ready-made game materials is the most desirable support for the use of didactic games among respondents. This may indicate a lack of time or resources to develop games on their own.

Professional development and training is also an important factor that indicates the need to acquire knowledge and skills to use games effectively in the educational process. A large proportion of respondents also felt the need for time to collaborate and guidance on how to integrate games into the curriculum, highlighting the importance of methodological support and exchange of experience. The fact that only a relatively small proportion of respondents need all of these may indicate that teachers' support needs vary depending on their experience and context.

This diagram highlights the importance of providing teachers with a variety of support to successfully integrate didactic games into the classroom, including access to ready-made materials, training opportunities, collaboration time and guidance.

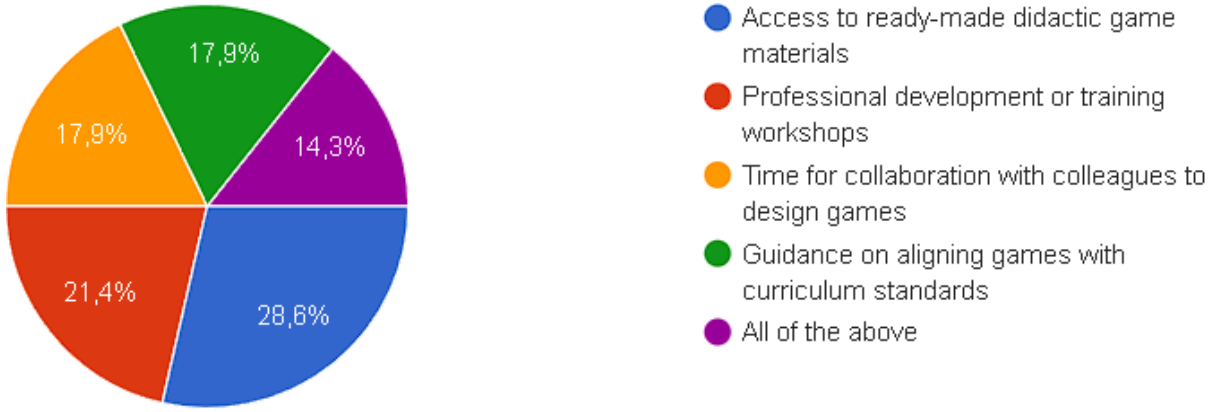


*Figure 1.6 The importance of providing teachers*

The colleague described a successful lesson because it was successful due to several factors. High student engagement: The game format of the Economic Detective motivated students to actively participate in the learning process. They felt like researchers solving economic ‘mysteries’. Active application of knowledge: Instead of passively listening to a lecture, students applied their knowledge of supply and demand to analyse specific situations. Development of critical thinking: The game encouraged students to analyse cause and effect relationships and draw reasonable results. Cooperation and communication: Working in teams helped to develop skills of cooperation, exchange of opinions and argumentation. Visibility and visualisation: The use of graphs on the board helped students visualise changes in the market and better understand the concept of market equilibrium. Instant feedback: Team presentations and teacher comments provided timely correction of students' understanding. Positive atmosphere: The element of competition and rewards created a positive and encouraging atmosphere in the classroom.

The lesson resulted in a better understanding of the topic of market equilibrium, increased interest in the subject of economics, and the development of important skills of analysis and collaboration. The game made a complex economic concept more accessible and interesting to understand.

### 3.3. Consequences and pedagogical implications

In contemporary education, the integration of didactic games has emerged as a transformative pedagogical approach, with engagement being fostered and learning outcomes being enhanced. As innovative methods are increasingly sought by educators to address diverse learning styles and promote critical thinking, didactic games are served as a valuable tool in the instructional toolkit. Not only is knowledge retention facilitated by these games, but collaboration among students is also encouraged, whereby a dynamic learning environment is cultivated. Furthermore, the multifaceted consequences of incorporating such games are highlighted by research, ranging from improved student motivation to the development of essential problem-solving skills. As such, an understanding of the pedagogical implications tied to these interactive learning experiences is vital for educators aiming to have their teaching strategies optimized. Both the positive outcomes and challenges presented by didactic games will be explored by this essay, with their role in shaping effective educational practices in the modern classroom ultimately being emphasized. How these games can be harnessed to support deeper learning and skill acquisition will be illuminated by the following discussion.

Didactic games, designed for learning to be integrated with play, have garnered significant attention in educational contexts due to their multifaceted benefits. A vital pedagogical tool, facilitating active engagement and promoting critical thinking among students, is served by these games. By traditional learning paradigms being transformed, learners are encouraged by didactic games to explore concepts through interactive experiences that have knowledge retention reinforced. Moreover, collaboration and teamwork, essential skills in today's interconnected world, are fostered by them. As challenges are navigated and problems are resolved by participants within game frameworks, not only are subject-specific competencies developed, but crucial social and emotional learning outcomes as well. A broader pedagogical shift towards experiential learning, wherein students become co-creators of knowledge rather than passive recipients, is reflected by the incorporation of didactic games into curricula. Ultimately, the ability of didactic games to create dynamic and enriching learning environments that cater to diverse learning styles, preparing students for future academic and personal success, is where their relevance in education lies.

A spectrum of positive consequences that influence both cognitive and social development in learners is yielded by the implementation of didactic games in educational settings. By gamification being integrated into the curriculum, an engaging learning environment

that motivates students to actively participate and collaborate with peers is fostered by educators. Not only are critical thinking skills enhanced by this interaction as challenges are navigated by learners within game frameworks, but important social competencies, such as teamwork and communication, are also cultivated. It is indicated by research that the playful nature of didactic games can have anxiety associated with traditional learning methods reduced, enabling students to have risks embraced in their learning journey. Furthermore, diverse learning styles are often accommodated by these games, allowing for personalized learning experiences that cater to individual strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, a powerful pedagogical tool, transforming educational practices and supporting holistic student development while preparing them for real-world applications, is served by the strategic incorporation of didactic games.

Significant positive effects on student engagement and motivation have been demonstrated by the integration of didactic games into educational settings. By the learning process being transformed into an interactive and enjoyable experience, students' interests are piqued by these games, and active participation is encouraged. When students are immersed in gameplay, they are more likely to have the material engaged with on a deeper level, with their understanding and retention of complex concepts being enhanced. Furthermore, a sense of community is fostered by the competitive and collaborative nature of many didactic games, and peer interaction, which can further stimulate motivation, is encouraged. A heightened sense of achievement and empowerment is often reported by students when an active role is taken in their learning through these playful methodologies, leading to improved academic performance. As such, the implications of incorporating gamified elements into their curricula to create a more dynamic and motivated learning environment that caters to diverse learning styles are prompted for consideration by educators.

Significant pedagogical implications that enhance the learning experience are presented by the integration of didactic games into educational settings. Firstly, an engaging learning environment is fostered by these games, with students being motivated to actively participate and collaborate with peers, thereby promoting social interaction and teamwork. Not only is knowledge acquisition facilitated by this collaborative aspect, but essential soft skills such as communication and problem-solving, which are vital in today's workforce, are also nurtured. Furthermore, a variety of learning styles are often incorporated by didactic games, with visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners being catered to, thus diverse educational needs and preferences are accommodated. This inclusivity helps to ensure that all students, regardless of

their learning styles, can have the material accessed and benefited from. Additionally, immediate feedback is provided by the use of games, enabling students to have their understanding self-assessed and their learning strategies adjusted accordingly, which fosters a growth mindset. Collectively, the profound pedagogical benefits that didactic games can offer within the educational landscape are highlighted by these factors.

A transformative approach that enhances the learning experience by fostering engagement and motivation is represented by the integration of didactic games into curriculum design. By games that align with educational objectives being strategically incorporated, a dynamic classroom environment where students actively participate in the learning process can be created by educators. Not only are opportunities for experiential learning provided by these games, but critical thinking and problem-solving skills are also promoted as challenges are navigated by students within a structured framework. Moreover, collaborative learning is facilitated by didactic games, encouraging peer interaction and communication, which are crucial for social development. It is indicated by research that the successful implementation of these games leads to improved retention of knowledge and a deeper understanding of complex concepts. Consequently, when thoughtfully integrated into the curriculum, didactic games serve not merely as an adjunct to traditional teaching methods but rather as a fundamental pedagogical tool that caters to diverse learning styles and fosters lifelong learning skills. Educators' strategies are informed by such implications, reinforcing the value of innovative practices in modern education.

In conclusion, not only their profound impact on learning outcomes but also their broader pedagogical implications are revealed by the exploration of didactic games. It is indicated by the findings that critical thinking is fostered, collaborative skills are enhanced, and engagement among students is increased by such games, effectively bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. As these interactive elements are incorporated into their curricula by educators, the diverse needs of learners must be considered, ensuring that game design is aligned with educational objectives. Additionally, the necessity for ongoing assessment and adaptation of didactic games is underscored by the research, as their effectiveness can vary based on context, age group, and subject matter. Ultimately, a transformative approach that encourages active participation and meaningful learning experiences is represented by the integration of didactic games into educational practice. By the insights gleaned from research being recognized and applied, the full potential of these tools can

be harnessed by educators, thereby fostering a more dynamic and inclusive learning environment.

In summary, a multifaceted impact on both learning outcomes and teaching practices is revealed by the research on didactic games, emphasizing their role as powerful pedagogical tools. Key findings indicate that engagement is significantly enhanced, critical thinking is promoted, and collaboration among students is fostered by these games, thereby an enriched learning environment is created. Moreover, diverse learning styles are catered to by them, facilitating differentiated instruction and enabling educators to have varied student needs addressed. However, longitudinal studies should be focused on by future research to assess the sustained effects of didactic games over time, as well as their efficacy across different educational contexts and age groups should be explored. Additionally, the integration of technology in didactic games needs urgently to be investigated, as advancements in digital learning tools may further enhance their potential. By these areas being addressed, their understanding of didactic games and their broader implications for teaching and learning can be deepened by educators and researchers, subsequently informing effective implementation strategies in contemporary education.

The third section was devoted to the practical application of didactic games. It described a survey that studied the respondents' opinions on their general use in the educational process.

## CONCLUSION

Didactic games, viewed as a pedagogical tool, provide an interesting angle on the blend of education and play. Lately, incorporating game-based learning has become quite popular with educators and researchers, who emphasize how games can boost thinking skills and keep students interested. In this paper, it will be pull together existing research on these educational games, specifically looking at how well they work in different classrooms. By looking at research and ideas, it will be pointed out what makes these games work when used in teaching. The following discussion will show that didactic games can handle different learning styles, improve critical thinking, and encourage working together. Basically, this introduction prepares you for a full look at the findings, helping you understand the big part these games can play in today's education.

To summarize, didactic games represent a crucial instrument within education, stimulating engagement while also nurturing critical thought. These games help with involvement, shifting conventional methods to active experiences appealing to different learners. By weaving gameplay into instruction, educators can appeal to different learning preferences and bolster student teamwork, encouraging collective problem-solving. Additionally, the prompt feedback from such games allows students to judge comprehension and tweak approaches, thus strengthening learning. Crucially, they establish secure environments where errors are seen as avenues for advancement, thus growing resilience and a growth-oriented attitude. As teaching approaches change, using didactic games might well be a key tactic to boost motivation and hit educational aims, which should yield better learning in both regular and casual situations.

Research into didactic games generally shows they can really help with learning in different school settings, which suggests they're good teaching tools. These games tend to get students involved, help them think more critically, and encourage teamwork, all of which are important for learning. Studies often find that students who play these games remember more and understand hard ideas better than if they just learn in the usual way. Plus, because these games are interactive, students feel like they're in charge of their learning, which makes them more motivated and like school more. More and more, teachers are using technology in their classrooms, so making and using didactic games that fit what they're teaching is becoming more

popular. So, this research seems to say that using didactic games in class every day can make learning more exciting, useful, and fun - an enjoyable educational experience.

To summarize, this work has shed light on the important place of educational games in learning. It has been shown how they can make students learn better and feel more involved. Looking at past studies, it's clear these games help grow key skills like solving problems, working together, and thinking critically because they make people join in and think strategically. The evidence indicates that fun games ease the stress usually felt during learning, making education better. Adding these games to what is taught not only fits different ways of learning, but also makes students feel like they belong and are part of a group. As teachers see how important learning by doing is, they should use these games in their teaching. This will lead to a more lively and good way to teach that meets what students need today.

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## SUMMARY IN UKRAINIAN

Дидактичні ігри, що розглядаються як педагогічний інструмент, дають цікавий погляд на поєднання освіти та гри. Останнім часом впровадження ігрового навчання стало досить популярним серед освітян та дослідників, які підкреслюють, що ігри можуть розвивати навички мислення та зацікавлювати учнів. У цій статті ми об'єднаємо існуючі дослідження про ці освітні ігри, зокрема, розглянемо, наскільки ефективно вони працюють у різних класах. Розглядаючи дослідження та ідеї, ми вкажемо на те, що робить ці ігри ефективними при використанні у навчанні. Подальше обговорення покаже, що дидактичні ігри можуть працювати з різними стилями навчання, покращувати критичне мислення та заохочувати до спільної роботи. По суті, цей вступ готує вас до повного ознайомлення з результатами дослідження, допомагаючи зрозуміти, яку важливу роль ці ігри можуть відігравати в сучасній освіті.

Дослідження дидактичних ігор загалом показують, що вони дійсно можуть допомогти у навчанні в різних шкільних умовах, що свідчить про те, що вони є гарним інструментом навчання. Ці ігри зацікавлюють учнів, допомагають їм мислити більш критично та заохочують до командної роботи, що є важливими для навчання. Дослідження часто показують, що учні, які грають у ці ігри, запам'ятовують більше і краще розуміють складні ідеї, ніж якщо б вони просто вчилися у звичайний спосіб. Крім того, оскільки ці ігри інтерактивні, учні відчувають, що вони самі відповідають за своє навчання, що робить їх більш вмотивованими і вони більше люблять школу. Все більше вчителів використовують технології у своїх класах, тому створення та використання дидактичних ігор, які відповідають тому, що вони викладають, стає все більш популярним. Отже, це дослідження доводить, що щоденне використання дидактичних ігор у класі може зробити навчання більш захоплюючим, корисним і веселим - приємним освітнім досвідом.

Підсумовуючи, можна сказати, що ця робота пролила світло на важливе місце навчальних ігор у навчанні. Ми показали, як вони можуть допомогти учням краще вчитися і відчувати себе більш залученими. Дивлячись на попередні дослідження, стає зрозуміло, що ці ігри допомагають розвивати такі ключові навички, як розв'язання проблем, спільна робота та критичне мислення, оскільки вони змушують людей

долучатися до процесу та мислити стратегічно. Докази свідчать про те, що веселі ігри полегшують стрес, який зазвичай відчувається під час навчання, що робить освіту кращою. Додавання цих ігор до того, що ми викладаємо, не лише відповідає різним способам навчання, але й дає учням змогу відчути себе частиною групи. Оскільки вчителі бачать, наскільки важливим є навчання через практику, вони повинні використовувати ці ігри у своєму викладанні. Це призведе до більш жвавого та ефективного способу викладання, який відповідає потребам учнів сьогодні.

# APPENDIX

Teacher Survey: Use of Didactic Games in the Classroom

Background Information

1. Your role:
    - Classroomteacher– an educator who teaches an academic discipline with the general student population.
    - Subject specialist -experts or professionals who have extensive knowledge and expertise in a particular *subject* area or field.
    - Special education teacher - teacher who supports students with disabilities in accessing the general education curriculum by working collaboratively with a team to design individual education plans (IEPs) and monitoring learning progress.
    - Teaching assistant - support teachers in the classroom and help children with reading, writing and learning activities.
    - Other: _____
2. Grade level(s) you teach (select all that apply):
    - ☐ Preschool
    - ☐ Elementary (Grades 1–5)
    - ☐ Middle school (Grades 6–8)
    - ☐ High school (Grades 9–12)
    - ☐ Other: _____
3. Years of teaching experience:
    - ☐ 0–2 years
    - ☐ 3–5 years
    - ☐ 6–10 years
    - ☐ 11–15 years
    - ☐ 16+ years

Didactic games are educational activities designed to teach or reinforce specific knowledge, skills, or attitudes through play. They combine elements of fun with learning objectives, making education more engaging and effective.

What is the main purpose of a didactic game?

a) To entertain students only

b) To test physical skills

c) To teach or reinforce educational content through play

d) To compete with other students

Which of the following is a key feature of didactic games?

a) They are played only at recess

b) They avoid any form of structure or rules

c) They are designed for entertainment with no learning goals

d) They combine fun with learning objectives

Didactic Games Usage

5. How frequently do you use didactic games in your teaching?
    - ☐ Daily
    - ☐ Weekly
    - ☐ A few times per month
    - ☐ Occasionally
    - ☐ Never
6. In what context do you primarily use didactic games?
    - ☐ To introduce new material
    - ☐ To reinforce/review content
    - ☐ As formative assessment
    - ☐ As a reward or break
    - ☐ Other: _____
7. What types of didactic games do you most often use?*(Select all that apply)*
    - ☐ Digital/Online games (e.g., Kahoot, Quizizz, Blooket, Quizlet Live)
    - ☐ Physical board/card games
    - ☐ Teacher-created classroom games
    - ☐ Commercial educational games
    - ☐ Interactive simulations/role-playing
    - ☐ Collaborative escape rooms or puzzles
    - ☐ Other: _____
8. How confident do you feel using didactic games as an instructional strategy?

- ☐ Very confident
- ☐ Somewhat confident
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not very confident
- ☐ Not at all confident

Game-Specific Usage

9. Please rate your usage of the following didactic games:

| Game Name | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Very Often |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bingo | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Memory Match | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Kahoot | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Quizizz | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Pictionary | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Jeopardy (quiz format) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Word Scramble | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Mathopoly/Board Games | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Escape Room tasks | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Role-playing activities | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Perceptions & Outcomes

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?*(Likert scale: Strongly disagree – Strongly agree)*

| Statement | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Didactic games increase student engagement. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Games help students retain information better. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I can align games easily with curriculum objectives. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Students demonstrate improved collaboration skills through games. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Digital games are more effective than physical games in my classroom. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| I have access to enough resources to implement didactic games effectively. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Feedback

12. What benefits have you observed from using didactic games in your teaching?
    a) Increased student engagement
    b) Improved collaboration and teamwork
    c) Enhanced understanding of complex topics
    d) More classroom management issues
    e) Higher motivation to participate

    Other...

13. What challenges or barriers have you faced in implementing didactic games?
    a) Lack of time to plan and organize games
    b) Limited access to materials or resources
    c) Difficulty aligning games with curriculum goals
    d) Students not taking games seriously
    e) No challenges faced
14. Describe one successful lesson or activity where a didactic game significantly helped student learning.
    *(Open-ended)*
15. What support, training, or resources would help you use didactic games more effectively?
    a) Access to ready-made didactic game materials
    b) Professional development or training workshops
    c) Time for collaboration with colleagues to design games
    d) Guidance on aligning games with curriculum standards
    e) All of the above
16. Any additional comments or suggestions?

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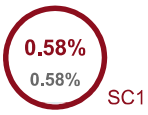



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