

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The relationship between language board games and learning motivation and student engagement has drawn a lot of attention, highlighting the value of creative teaching strategies in classroom environments. The study findings from multiple studies that demonstrate how language board games can improve student motivation in English vocabulary building are compiled in this overview of the literature.

#### **A. English Vocabulary Mastery**

In the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, where students often grapple with expressing complex ideas and navigating academic texts, vocabulary mastery emerges not merely as a beneficial skill, but as an indispensable cornerstone. As evidenced by Siregar (2013), vocabulary is a collection of terms that a proficient person can use to express ideas. It denotes that vocabulary is the total quantity of words a person possesses to express oneself in a dialect during a discussion. Since dialect application may be essential for conveying ideas, feelings, identities, and goals, lexicon appears to be a significant problem while teaching English. In every situation, a distinction between a word and its lexicon must be formed. Although it is true that lexicon is the word itself, different meanings attach to different words.

According to Martin (1991), most educated individuals view developing a strong vocabulary as a lifelong endeavor, while Pittman (2003) views EFL vocabulary acquisition as the most crucial component of language learning. Furthermore, lexical confidence is helpful while taking standardized tests and in the four language skills of speaking, writing, listening, and reading (Pittman, 2003). Accordingly, a student's

current level of vocabulary, grammar, and idiom competency is crucial for text comprehension, for instance (Xiao-hui, Jun, & Wei-hua, 2007). Furthermore, by making connections between new terms and what they already know, teachers can help children learn new terminology (Iwai, 2007).

For many students who learn English primarily in schools and colleges and have little opportunity to use it outside of the classroom, building an EFL vocabulary becomes both necessary and challenging. This idea is crucial since most, if not all, vocabulary growth occurs in both the primary and foreign or second languages, often when students try to understand written material (Pulido, 2004). Reading extensively is frequently suggested as a means for EFL readers to increase the size of their vocabulary (Dycus, 1997). However, many EFL students, such as those in vocational schools or scientific fields, may only acquire subject-specific vocabulary while lacking broader communicative vocabulary needed for everyday interactions.

In such contexts, vocabulary mastery becomes even more critical. Students who aim to pursue careers in industry, hospitality, business, or technology often need English to communicate with clients, access manuals, write reports, or attend training sessions. Thus, developing a broad and functional vocabulary is not only an academic goal but a professional necessity. Vocabulary mastery allows learners to not only recognize and recall words but also use them accurately and fluently in various real-life and professional situations. This includes understanding word meaning, spelling, pronunciation, collocation, and usage in context.

Mastery also implies long-term retention and the ability to transfer vocabulary knowledge to new situations. It is not limited to rote memorization but extends to

depth of word knowledge, including form, function, register, and connotation. Nation (2001) notes that full mastery includes knowing a word's form, meaning, and use.

However, the difficulty of vocabulary acquisition especially for EFL students in specialized disciplines, begs the important question of how to effectively create and maintain the motivation required to participate in this demanding process. Since motivation is a key determinant of successful language acquisition, the next section explores the critical role that learning motivation and its varying levels play in English Language Teaching (ELT), and how they interact with vocabulary learning strategies such as board games.

## **B. Students' Learning Motivation and Levels in ELT**

One of the most important components of an efficient English language learning program is student motivation. It takes into account both external and internal factors that motivate students to participate in the learning process, persevere in the face of difficulties, and work toward their language learning objectives.

Learning motivation is a key factor that propels students' achievement and performance. Students' enthusiasm to learn has been impressively increased when instructional board games are incorporated into particular learning environments. According to Wen et al.'s study conducted in a Chinese learning environment, the use of educational board games improved learning outcomes and reduced the learning gaps amongst students with different skill levels (Wen et al., 2019). The thorough analysis by Bayeck (2020) emphasizes the need to investigate further the ways in which board games might motivate students in both formal and informal learning situations by providing challenges and simplifying complicated subjects.

There are two primary types of student learning motivation influence English language learning:

- a. **Intrinsic Motivation:** English language acquisition that comes from an authentic desire to learn the language for its own sake is known as intrinsic motivation. Students that are intrinsically driven appreciate and find fulfillment in language learning, constantly striving to increase their knowledge and abilities for their own fulfillment (Ryan & Deci, 2000).
- b. **Extrinsic Motivation:** This type of motivation is derived from outside sources, including accolades, scores, or social acceptance. Pupils that are driven by extrinsic motivations may have aspirations to win praise from peers, parents, or instructors as well as benefits from outside sources (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Gardner's Socio-Educational Model of Second Language Learning (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), developed in the 1970s, adds further depth to our understanding of motivation in language learning. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972) proposed that there are two primary types of motivation in second language acquisition: integrative motivation and instrumental motivation, which align closely with intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.

1. **Integrative Motivation:** This motivation, similar to intrinsic motivation, involves a desire to learn a language to connect with the culture and community of the language speakers. Learners with integrative motivation are driven by a genuine interest in understanding and integrating into the target culture, often leading to more successful and sustained language learning. Gardner (2003) elaborates that integrative motivation includes:

- Integrative Orientation: this aspect refers to the learner's internal desire to interact with and become a part of the target language community. Learners with integrative orientation are not only focused on acquiring the language for communication purpose but also wish to understand, appreciate, and engage with the culture and lifestyle of native speakers. This motivation often stems from a genuine curiosity and openness to cultural exchange.
- Attitude toward Learning Situation: this refers to the learner's perception of the classroom environment, including the teacher's teaching style, instructional methods, and learning materials. A positive attitude toward these elements often leads to greater classroom engagement and willingness to learn. For instance, learners who enjoy the way the teacher conducts the lesson or feel comfortable in the classroom are more likely to be motivated and actively participate in language learning.
- Interest in Foreign Languages: this component reflects the learner's general interest in languages beyond the target language itself. It represents an intrinsic enthusiasm for exploring different languages, their structures, and the cultures they represent. Learners with this trait often see language learning as an enjoyable and intellectually stimulating activity.
- Desire to Learn the Language: this represents a strong personal interest and intrinsic drive to master the target language. Learners with a high desire to learn are motivated not by external rewards, but by their own satisfaction in being able to understand and use the language effectively. They usually exhibit a long-term commitment and are willing to invest effort and time into learning.

- **Motivational Intensity:** this aspect measures the amount of effort and persistence a learner puts into language learning. High motivational intensity is evident in learners who consistently study, practice independently, seek extra resources, and do not give up easily when facing difficulties. It shows their seriousness and determination in achieving language proficiency.
2. **Instrumental Motivation:** This motivation is akin to extrinsic motivation, where learners are motivated by practical benefits such as job opportunities, academic success, or social mobility. There learners see language learning as a means to achieve external rewards or recognition. Gardner (2003) highlights five aspects of instrumental motivation:
- **Academic Achievement:** this refers to the motivation to learn a language in order to perform well in academic tasks, obtain high grades, or meet educational requirements. Students with this motivation view language learning as essential to their academic progression.
  - **Career Advancement:** many learners are motivated by the belief that mastering a foreign language can improve their career prospects. In today's globalized job market, foreign language skills are often seen as valuable assets that can lead to better job opportunities, promotions, or international assignments.
  - **Economic and Social Mobility:** learners with this motivation see language learning as a tool for upward mobility-either economically or socially. Proficiency in a foreign language may help them improve their standard of living, access better networks, and gain societal recognition.
  - **Requirement Fulfillment:** this component includes learners who study a language because it is required by academic institutions, workplaces, or

immigration processes. Their motivation is driven by the need to meet specific institutional or policy-based requirements, such as university language prerequisites or visa application conditions.

- Examination and Certification: learners under this category are motivated by the goal of passing standardized language tests (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS, JLPT) and obtaining recognized certificates. These certifications are often used to prove language proficiency for educational, professional or migration purposes.

In Gardner's (2003) view, motivation in second language learning is a construct consisting of three key components: the effort put forth by the learner, the desire to attain the goal of learning the language, and the attitudes toward the learning experience itself. These aspects must all be present for a learner to be truly motivated. He also underlines that motivation is not fixed, but rather a dynamic process shaped by context, individual goals, and the learning environment.

Following this theoretical framework, it is necessary to recognize that learners not only differ in the type of motivation they possess but also in the intensity or level of that motivation. These varying motivation levels play a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness of different instructional strategies, such as the use of language board games in English language classrooms.

It is essential to recognize that motivation levels among learners can vary considerably, and these variations significantly influence how students respond to instructional methods. As Dörnyei (2001) highlights, motivation is not a static trait but varies in strength and stability across individuals and contexts. For practical

purposes, many educational researchers categorize motivation into two broad levels: high motivation and low motivation.

- **High Motivation:** Learners with high motivation typically display persistent engagement, curiosity, goal-setting behaviors, and resilience in overcoming obstacles. They often benefit more from interactive and cognitively demanding strategies, such as educational board games. Ushioda (2008) explains that highly motivated students frequently adopt autonomous learning strategies and are more likely to sustain long-term academic commitment, resulting in greater achievement.
- **Low Motivation:** In contrast, students with low motivation may show limited attention, low interest in English learning tasks, and a reliance on external prompts to participate. Without supportive interventions, these learners often experience difficulties in acquiring vocabulary and other essential language skills. Dörnyei (2001) emphasizes that low-motivation learners are prone to demotivation and require targeted strategies to rebuild their interest and confidence in the learning process.

Understanding motivation levels is particularly crucial when integrating instructional approaches like language board games. These tools may yield different outcomes depending on the learners' motivational profiles. For instance, while highly motivated students may use the games to push their own limits, less motivated students might discover a renewed interest in English through the fun and interactive elements of gameplay.

Given the strong correlation between motivation and language learning success, it becomes vital to explore how these motivational dynamics can be harnessed

effectively within EFL classrooms, especially when dealing with the complex challenge of vocabulary mastery. One promising approach is the use of language board games, which combine learning with engagement. These games can stimulate both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation by offering interaction, competition, collaboration, and enjoyment. As such, board games are capable of addressing various motivational levels and learning preferences, thus enhancing student participation and outcomes in vocabulary learning.

### **C. Language Board Games**

Language learning board games, sometimes referred to as language learning games, have become a popular and useful instrument for improving English language acquisition. These interactive games encourage student motivation, engagement, and general language acquisition by skillfully fusing educational objectives into a lighthearted and entertaining manner. A wide variety of games created, especially to encourage English language learning are included in the category of language board games. Usually, they include aspects like conversation starters, grammar exercises, vocabulary building, and cultural study, all of which are offered inside an interesting gaming framework (Bayeck, 2020; Stebbins, 2001).

It has been widely demonstrated that language board games can enhance language proficiency while also providing fun and social interaction in the learning process. Youngman (2007) emphasized that board games are effective not only in improving language and mathematical skills but also in fostering enjoyment in learning. Similarly, Wen et al. (2019) found that instructional board games help maintain students' attention and create a positive learning environment. These findings suggest

that incorporating game-based strategies in language education can lead to more engaging and productive learning outcomes.

Language board games used in English classrooms provide various pedagogical benefits. According to Stebbins (2001), these games promote interaction among learners and offer meaningful opportunities for language use in natural contexts. By playing games in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere, students are more likely to experiment with language, communicate spontaneously, and reduce language anxiety. As Frasca (2001) notes, the gamified environment increases learners' engagement and participation, making the language learning process more dynamic and student-centered.

One of the games implemented in this study is "Word Cham", a vocabulary-based board game designed to strengthen students' mastery of English words related to specific topics. In this game, students draw word cards and are required to explain, define, or use the words in context to move forward on the board. The game combines elements of competition, chance, and collaboration, encouraging both active recall and communicative practice (Bayeck, 2020). For the control group, the "XO Game" (also known as Tic-Tac-Toe Game) was adapted into a vocabulary challenge format, in which students must correctly answer a vocabulary question to claim a spot on the board. Although simpler in design, it still offers opportunities for review and reinforcement of English vocabulary (Tian et al., 2010).

Using such games in the classroom presents several advantages:

- a. Increased Motivation and Engagement: Language board games make learning enjoyable and captivating. According to Frasca (2001), students are more motivated

when they are actively involved in a game, showing greater willingness to participate and stay focused during lessons.

b. Encouraged Social Interaction and Collaboration: These games serve as platforms for students to collaborate and communicate with peers. Youngman (2007) noted that such interaction enhances peer learning, builds teamwork, and creates a sense of community among learners.

c. Comprehensive Language Development: As explained by Tian et al. (2010), language board games address various components of language learning including vocabulary expansion, grammar application, pronunciation practice, and fluency in communication within one engaging activity.

d. Intrinsically Motivating Learning: Nickell and Cimpian (2008) asserted that board games offer intrinsic motivation because they are both challenging and enjoyable. This motivation arises internally as students find satisfaction in their achievements during gameplay.

To ensure effective implementation, a systematic procedure is followed when using language board games in class. First, the teacher introduces the game, explains the rules clearly, and connects the objectives to current learning outcomes. Students are then organized into small groups or pairs, each equipped with the necessary game materials (e.g., word cards, dice, boards). During the game, students are encouraged to use English actively while interacting with one another. The teacher monitors the activity, provides guidance, and ensures fair play (Bayeck, 2020). After the game session, a debriefing activity follows such as vocabulary reflection, sentence construction, or group discussion to consolidate the language learned during the game

(Stebbins, 2001). This structured approach transforms a simple game into a valuable learning experience aligned with curricular goals.

#### **D. Previous Studies**

In order to make the thesis layout easier and to avoid using the same title as the study, the writer presents important research from other theses that are relevant to our own investigation.

First, the study was conducted by Malik (2020) explorer the implementation and the improvement of the students' vocabulary by back to the board game. The participants in this study were ninth grade students of SMPI Nurul Yaqin Banyuates Sampang, with uses classroom action research. The results of this study clearly show that both Post Test 1 and Post Test 2 showed improvement. If 80% of students receive a minimum score of 70, the cycle will be considered successful. Following the computation of the pre-test and post-test scores, the results indicated that the pre-test mean score was 45,74, and the post-test mean was 74,95. Thus, the test results showed that 15 students had met the necessary requirements, negating the need for the researcher to conduct another cycle.

Second, the research was conducted by Pavita (2022) examines the use of a snake and ladder board game implemented in SMK N 1 Banyumas. This research was applied a case study as the research design. The participants in this study were thirty-three (33) students and an English teacher of the English Club. The results of this study clearly show that using snake and ladder board games piqued the participants' interest. The usage of a snake and ladder game to help students improve their vocabulary was really recognized by the participants, who recommended using the game as a teaching tool for vocabulary.

Third, the study was carried out by Dewi (2021), the points of this study are to describe how the board game can be used in the process of learning English especially speaking descriptive texts, and to find out how students' respond to their use in the learning process. The participants in this study were an English Teacher and twenty-nine students of X IPA 3 class of SMAN 1 Sumenep, with used qualitative research. The result of this study clearly shows that the board game had a positive effect on the students' improved speaking ability.

Fourth, the research was carried out by Azzahroh (2015), the objective of this research is to find the effectiveness of using board games towards students' speaking skill for the tenth-grade students of SMAN 1 Parung. The participants in this study were 40 students of X MIA 2 as experiment class, and 40 Students of X MIA 3 as controlled class, with used quasi experimental design. The result of this study clearly shows that the mean score of experimental class was 67.05. After using board games, the mean score increased to 76.20. Thus, board games are beneficial for improving students' speaking skill.

Fifth, the research were conducted by Chotimah and Astiyandha (2022), the purpose of the research is to improve studens' vocabulary knowledge by using race to the Board game for ESP in the class XI accounting students of SMK Utama. The participants in this study were the eleventh-grade accounting students of SMK Utama consist 32 students, with used Classroom Action Research. The result of this study clearly shows that it can be quite helpful and beneficial to use Run to the Board Language Games for ESP to help students learn or teach vocabulary in English.

Sixth, the study was conducted by Soumia (2020), this study attempts to give a clear picture of the effect of educational games on teaching grammar. The participants

in this study were first year EFL students in the English department of Biskra University, with used mixed method approach. The result of this study showed that a board race game is an effective instrument for improving the grammatical skills of first year EFL students, and both teachers and students have positive opinions toward it as a way to increase EFL students' engagement with grammar.

Seventh, the study was carried out by Trujillo (2020), the aim of this study is to improve English learners' motivation using board games. The 15 participants were randomly chosen and assigned to extra classes with previous parent's consent with used action research. The result of the five sessions showed that in addition to helping students learn a language, board games also support their multifaceted personal development, making them an important and versatile instructional strategy.

Eighth, the research was conducted by Rahmawati (2019), which aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using Scrabble board games to improve students' vocabulary mastery. The study involved thirty students of the eighth grade at SMPN 3 Malang and applied a pre-experimental design. The results showed a significant improvement in the students' vocabulary scores after the implementation of the board game. The mean score increased from 59.30 in the pre-test to 78.50 in the post-test, indicating that Scrabble as a board game can be an engaging and effective tool to enrich students' vocabulary in a fun way.

Ninth, the study was carried out by Fitriyani (2020), which explored the use of Monopoly board game to enhance students' speaking skills in descriptive texts. The research took place at SMA Negeri 6 Jakarta with 32 tenth-grade students as the sample. The research design was classroom action research. The findings indicated that students became more active and confident in expressing ideas orally. The

improvement was reflected in the speaking test scores which increased significantly after two cycles. Students also reported enjoying the learning process, showing increased motivation and enthusiasm.

Tenth, the research conducted by Nasution (2021) aimed to examine the effect of Guess Who board game on students' ability to ask and answer questions in English. The participants were 28 seventh-grade students at MTs Al-Ma'arif Sukabumi, using a quasi-experimental design. The data analysis revealed a noticeable improvement in the experimental group's performance in forming questions and giving accurate responses. The post-test mean score was 82.14, significantly higher than the control group's 68.50. the study concluded that the Guess Who board game effectively encouraged interactive learning and improved communicative competence.