



REPUBLIQUE DU BENIN



MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE (MESRS)

UNIVERSITE D'ABOMEY CALAVI (UAC)

ECOLE NORMALE SUPERIEURE DE PORTO-NOVO (ENS)

DOMAINE : SCIENCES DE L'EDUCATION ET DE LA FORMATION

MENTION : Brevet d'Aptitude au Professorat de l'Enseignement Secondaire (BAPES)

SPECIALITE : Anglais

GRADE : Licence/BAPES

MEMOIRE DE FIN DE CYCLE

Thème

TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH GAMES IN
AN EFL CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY OF
FIRST FORM (6eme M2) LEARNERS OF
BEHANZIN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Présenté par :

Paterne HESSOU

Sous la direction de

Prof. Taofiki KOUMAKPAI

Professeur titulaire
(CAMES) d'Etudes
Anglaises)

ANNEE ACADEMIQUE: 2012-2013

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
General Introduction.....	1
Chapter one Introduction to the Study and Literature Review.....	3
1.1 The Rationale and Limitations of the Study.....	4
1.1.1 The Rationale of the Study.....	4
1.1.2 The limitations of the study.....	5
1.2 Literary Views about the Problem.....	6
1.3 Criticism of these Views.....	10
Chapter two Methodology of the Research.....	12
2.1 Research Methods or Instruments.....	13
2.1.1 Questionnaires.....	13
2.1.2 Class Observations.....	14
2.2 The Target Population.....	14
2.2.1 Teachers.....	15
2.2.2 Learners.....	15
Chapter three The Findings of the Study.....	16
3.1 Data Presentations and Analysis.....	17
3.2 Major Conclusions.....	20
Chapter four Suggestions and Recommendations.....	22
4.1 Suggestions.....	23

4.1.1 Some Oral Games	23
4.1.2 Getting to Know Numbers.....	24
4.1.3 Group Dialogue.....	25
4.1.4 The Alphabet Game.....	26
4.1.5 Verb Review Game.....	26
4.1.6 Getting to Know Days and Months.....	27
4.1.7 Guessing Game.....	27
4.1.8 Crosswords Puzzles.....	27
4.1.9 Just a Minute.....	28
4.2 Recommendations.....	30
4.2.1 Recommendations to the Authorities in Charge of Education.....	30
4.2.2 Recommendations to the Authorities in Charge of the Academic Curriculum.....	31
4.2.3 Recommendations to the Teachers of English.....	31
4.2.4 Recommendations to the Learners of English.....	33
General Conclusion.....	34
Bibliography.....	35
Annex.....	38

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my dear parents and to all the teachers who believe that in foreign-language teaching enjoyment and success go together.

Acknowledgements

I am deeply indebted to numerous people who have helped me during my dissertation work. Then my thanks go to:

- The Almighty God, who has protected and blessed me so far;
- My dear Professor, Taofiki Koumakpaï, he, who has been one of my best professors all along the cycle, for his guidance, support, understanding, patience, and encouragement throughout this work. May God bless and reward him;
- My dear parents for their love and support;
- Dr Bertin Dansou who has helped me through advice and corrections, and who has proofread this dissertation;
- My dear lecturer René AHOUANSON from whom I have learnt a lot;
- My dear lecturer Thomas Houessou-Adin;
- My siblings for their support;
- My friend Vanessa Akplogan for all she has done for me;
- My friend Justin Badjimou for his support;
- My friends: Sergy, Marcellin, Wilfried of the "WESTCOAST" for their support,
- EFL Teachers and students who have helped in Data collection.

INTRODUCTION

All over the world, language is the best mean of communication. Among themselves, men use language to communicate. The English language seems difficult for EFL students who most of the time, lose interest in the learning of the language. We are all aware of the fact that language learning is a difficult job which demands a lot of sacrifice and commitment. Considering the daily development of the world, it is obvious that the teaching and learning of English happen to be important. Unfortunately, students lose all interest in the process because of the fact that it is a foreign language really difficult to learn and there is no interest, nothing to foster the process of teaching/learning. They think it's always the same exposé which is most of the time boring so they don't really sacrifice themselves to the process.

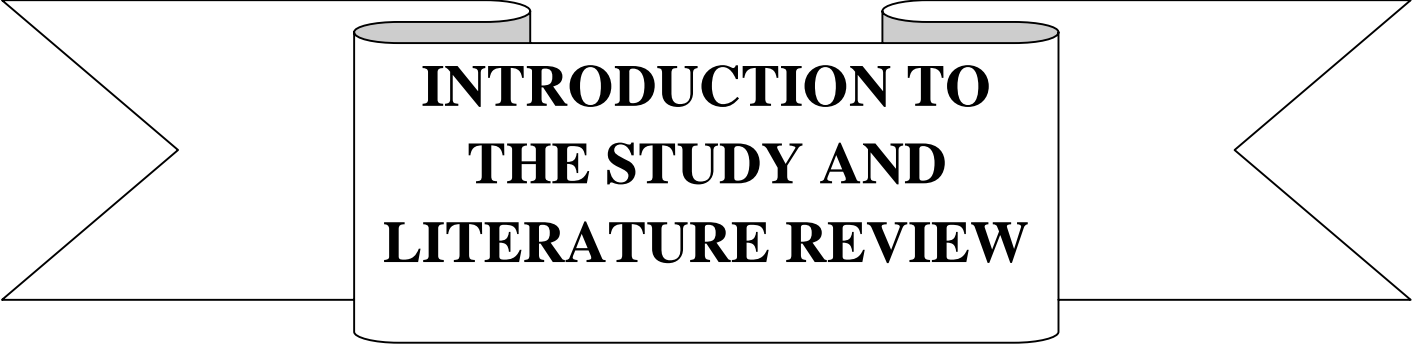
Is it really possible to teach English through games in an EFL class? What is the importance of teaching English through games in EFL classes? Do learners really learn effectively through games in this process of learning a foreign language? Why should language learning not be combined with enjoyment? It is also important to ask the impact of games on learners in the process of learning English in EFL class. Can't we say that the best way of teaching a foreign language is through games? The problem here is to know whether one can teach, a foreign language through games in order to allow or to give students the opportunity to learn effectively. I want to know how the fact of using games has impact on the learning of English as a foreign language. The study aims to know whether it is also possible to learn, to teach English, a foreign language and to enjoy oneself at the same time. In the process of teaching and learning, I don't think learning a language as well as enjoy oneself is impossible. One of the best ways of doing this is through games.

It is well known that language learning is a hard work and the routine of everyday doesn't really help the students to learn effectively. When I consider the topic of the study, it is important to confess that we need to show those teachers who believe that there is no place for games in the process of teaching and learning English in EFL class that they are wrong. I want to show that games are really important when we talk about foreign language learning. Students need to get involved in the learning

process so the best way is to learn and to play at the same time. We want to prove that the best way of learning a Foreign Language is through games and it is obvious that games have an important part in teaching and learning Foreign Language process. Some language teachers believe it is impossible to learn while playing at the same time, my research will show them how possible what they think impossible is. My study aims to help teachers and students to avoid the monotonous strategies and techniques in the process of teaching and learning English as Foreign Language. To tell teachers that an English class should be a lively class during which all students are involved and interested in learning and this, through games. To tell all teachers of English that the best way to teach and to learn a Foreign Language is through games.

My research work is subdivided into four chapters; we will focus first of all on the introduction to the study and the literature review. In this part, we will discuss the rationale and the limitations of the study. We will also discuss the literary views about the problem and the criticism of these views. After this first part, we will deal with the methodology of our study. Here, we will put an emphasis on the research methods or instruments and the target populations. After all this, we will discuss the findings of the study, a chapter which deals with data collections and presentations, the analysis of data and the major conclusions. The last chapter will be devoted to an approach of solutions and here the question will be about suggestions and recommendations.

Chapter one



**INTRODUCTION TO
THE STUDY AND
LITERATURE REVIEW**

1.1 The Rationale and Limitations of the Study

1.1.1 The Rationale of the Study

Foreign language learning is not an easy task. The way English is taught in EFL classes does not always help the EFL students to learn effectively. Considering the way English as Foreign Language is taught during language class, we realize that there are very few opportunities for students to get involved in the learning process. In order to learn English as Foreign Language effectively, students need to get involved in the process. They need to get interested in what they are learning in order to get something objective from the process. To learn a foreign language, students need to speak the language, they need to practise the language. These ways of learning a foreign language make things easier and more interesting. The best way of doing this is through games. Unfortunately, in our schools, it is rather scarce to see a teacher, teaching English through games in EFL classes. Students learn just because they are forced to, and they need good marks to succeed at the end of the academic year. They do not learn because they are interested in what they are learning which should normally be the case. During a foreign language class, all students should get involved in the learning process.

Richard Amato, 1988 thinks that Games can make the students more focus in learning, because they do not feel that they are forced to learn. Games can lower anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input more likely. An English class should not be just for the sake of working to get good marks to succeed. Students should not feel forced while learning English. It should be a class with a relax atmosphere. It is obvious that most students in our schools learn English just for the circumstance. The learning process, when it is not enjoyable, bores students and they lose all interest. My study aims to show teachers and students that it is possible to teach in the first side, to learn in the second hand and to enjoy at the same time. When we consider games, we remark that almost everybody likes playing. Through games, it is more interesting and easier to learn and particularly to learn a foreign language. Many teachers ignore the importance of games in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language. Some of them, even though they are aware of the impacts of games on learners' knowledge

acquisition in the process of learning English as a foreign language are still reluctant to use games. Students like playing, entertainment and it is easier for them to learn while playing than to learn with the humdrum strategies which are used by teachers in the teaching and learning process. Some teachers think that games are a waste of time and for them, no one should use games in the teaching process. It is a misconception. They are totally wrong. My study will show them how important games are in the process of teaching and learning English as Foreign Language.

1.1.2 The limitations of the study.

The topic of my study refers to the process of teaching English through games in EFL classes. Especially, I focus my survey on the way English is taught in Benin secondary schools, the impacts of games in the process of knowledge acquisition. My study is mostly based on the case of the first form learners (6ème M2) of Behanzin grammar school of Porto-Novo. The choice of teachers in the survey is random.

Moreover as my field of study deals only with EFL students, the study won't take into account the way English is taught in ESL class or native speakers' class. The study will mostly focus on the impact of games in the process of teaching and learning English as Foreign Language. One more thing is that the study will take into account learners from the first form to the fourth form because I consider that they are the most concerned with games, they are beginners and they need more enjoyment while learning English, a Foreign Language.

Then I should mention that the study doesn't consider those learners who are studying English for Specific Purposes. These are the learners studying accountancy, computer science, medical subjects, and marketing/commerce, and so on, in our schools. Even if I take into account many teachers during my investigations, it is important to signal that most of the teachers, and even the students were already in holidays. It is even the reason why most of my class observations put a focus on the first form (6ème M2) of Behanzin grammar school of Porto- Novo because I had the opportunity to be with the students of this class during five months.

1.2 Literary Views about the Problem

Through this study, my aim is to bring out the importance of games in the process of teaching and learning English as Foreign Language; to show EFL teachers that students can learn English and enjoy at the same time. I have then, for the need of the study reviewed some books, articles and educational papers. In this part of the study, I have given the point of view of some authors on the question of games in the process of teaching and learning English as Foreign Language class.

When I take Lee Su Kim, in 'Creative Games for the Language Class' 'Forum' Vol. 33 No 1, January - March 1995, Page 35, he asserts that 'There is a common perception that all learning should be serious and solemn in nature, and that if one is having fun and there is hilarity and laughter, then it is not really learning. This is a misconception'. It is possible to learn a language as well as enjoy oneself at the same time. One of the best ways of doing this is through games. There are many advantages of using games in the classroom: Games are a welcome break from the usual routine of the language class; they are motivating and challenging; learning a language requires a great deal of effort; games help students to make and sustain the effort of learning; games provide language practice in the various skills-speaking, writing, listening and reading; they encourage students to interact and communicate; they create a meaningful context for language use.

Andrew Wright, David Betteridge and Michael Buckby Cambridge University Press, 1984 in 'Games for Language Learning', are of the same opinion when they assert that:

'Language learning is hard work. Effort is required at every moment and must be maintained over a long period of time. Games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work. Games also help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. The learners want to take part and in order to do so must understand what others are saying or have

written, and they must speak or write in order to express their own point of view or give information.

The need for meaningfulness in language learning has been accepted for some years. A useful interpretation of 'meaningfulness' is that the learners respond to the content in a definite way. If they are amused, angered, intrigued or surprised the content is clearly meaningful to them. Thus, the meaning of the language they listen to, read, speak and write will be more vividly experienced and, therefore, better remembered. If it is accepted that games can provide intense and meaningful practice of language, then they must be regarded as central to a teacher's repertoire. They are not for use solely on wet days and at the end of term!

Agnieszka Uberman in 'The Use of Games for Vocabulary Presentation and Revision' 'Forum' Vol. 36 No 1, January - March 1998 Page 20 asserts that:

'Many experienced textbook and methodology manuals writers have argued that games are not just time-filling activities but have a great educational value. W. R. Lee holds that most language games make learners use the language instead of thinking about learning the correct forms (1979:2). He also says that games should be treated as central not peripheral to the foreign language teaching programme. A similar opinion is expressed by Richard-Amato, who believes games to be fun but warns against overlooking their pedagogical value, particularly in foreign language teaching. There are many advantages of using games. "Games can lower anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input more likely" (Richard-Amato 1988:147). They are highly motivating and entertaining, and they can give shy students more opportunity to express their opinions and feelings (Hansen 1994:118). They also enable learners to acquire new experiences within a foreign language which are not always possible during a typical lesson. Furthermore, to quote Richard-Amato, they, "add diversion to the regular classroom activities," break the ice, "[but also] they are used to introduce new ideas" (1988:147).

In the easy, relaxed atmosphere which is created by using games, students remember things faster and better (Wierus 1994:218). S. M. Silvers says many teachers are enthusiastic about using games as "a teaching device," yet they often perceive games as mere time-fillers, "a break from the monotony of drilling" or frivolous activities. He also claims that many teachers often overlook the fact that in a relaxed atmosphere, real learning takes place, and students use the language they have been exposed to and have practised earlier (1982:29). Further support comes from Zdybiewska, who believes games to be a good way of practising language, for they provide a model of what learners will use the language for in real life in the future (1994:6). Games encourage, entertain, teach, and promote fluency. If not for any of these reasons, they should be used just because they help students see beauty in a foreign language and not just problems that at times seem overwhelming.

In the same work he said: 'Games are often used as short warm-up activities or when there is some time left at the end of a lesson'. Yet, as Lee observes, a game "should not be regarded as a marginal activity filling in odd moments when the teacher and class have nothing better to do" (1979:3). Games ought to be at the heart of teaching foreign languages. Rixon suggests that games be used at all stages of the lesson, provided that they are suitable and carefully chosen. "Games also lend themselves well to revision exercises helping learners recall material in a pleasant, entertaining way. All authors referred to in this article agree that even if games resulted only in noise and entertained students, they are still worth paying attention to and implementing in the classroom since they motivate learners, promote communicative competence, and generate fluency.

Always discussing the advantages of games in the process of teaching and learning English as Foreign Language, Angkana Deesri in 'Games in the ESL and EFL Class' Khon Kaen University, (Khon Kaen, Thailand) asserts that:

“One useful strategy to encourage language acquisition is using language games. When using games in the classroom, it is beneficial for teachers to have

a complete understanding of the definitions of games, which usually are defined as a form of play concerning rules, competition, and an element of fun. Teachers should also consider the advantages of games: the ability to capture students' attention; lower students' stress; and give students the chance for real communication. Lastly teachers need to assess how to use games appropriately in the classroom. It is important to choose an appropriate time and integrate them into the regular syllabus and curriculum. However, because of the limitations of the syllabus, games often cannot be used, as much as they should be. Therefore, it may be challenging for teachers to try to add some games in class in order to develop students' English proficiency of the target language.'''

According to Macedonia (2005) games may serve to practise foreign language knowledge, i.e. to encourage and support fluency against the generally rule-based, declarative approach to foreign language teaching. In moving from declarative to procedural knowledge game-based language learning may serve to provide practice as well as a basis for the repetition of grammatical structures in the foreign language.

Games have a number of potentials for foreign or second language learning. Most of these potentials are associated with the ability of games to provide learning environments that contextualize knowledge and provide immersive experiences for learners. As suggested by a recent review in *Languages, technology and learning* (Milton 2006) learning a language is different from any other subject in the curriculum as it combines explicit learning of vocabulary and language rules with unconscious skill development in the fluent application of both these things. For language learners this implies that they should be able to master both grammatical knowledge and fluency, the latter being often difficult to provide in classrooms where a couple of lessons a week may fail to provide the meaningful exposure to the foreign language required for learning. Games and simulations have been part of language learning for decades, and have had a role in supporting communicative approaches to language learning, i.e. in providing authentic and meaningful opportunities for language production and use. Game-based language learning has for instance supported fluency and Research, Reflections and Innovations in Integrating ICT in Education715

communicative competence by letting learners simulate or play real life situations, drama or narrative (Crookall 2007, Li & Topolewski 2002, Crookall & Oxford 1990).

1.2 Criticism of these Views

Many authors have given their different points of view about the question when I discuss the process of teaching and learning English through games. Most of them admitted that games are really important when it is about teaching and learning, and especially teaching and learning English as Foreign Language. I agree with Lee Su Kim when he asserts that: 'There is a common perception that all learning should be serious and solemn in nature, and that if one is having fun and there is hilarity and laughter, then it is not really learning. This is a misconception '. It is really a misconception because when I consider a foreign language I know that it is hard to learn and to master the phonetics. Learning a language is not an easy task particularly a foreign one. During the process, games have an important role to play. Games motivate learners and through games, they learn more effectively. Students are more interested in learning through games that learning through the monotonous strategies and techniques used by teachers.

Agnieszka Uberman even asserts that ‘‘Games encourage, entertain, teach, and promote fluency. If not for any of these reasons, they should be used just because they help students see beauty in a foreign language and not just problems that at times seem overwhelming.’’ Through games, learners interact and learn better, they are more motivated and they feel the need to learn contrary to the routine of everyday which is used by teachers to teach, I mean the common exposé. Language teachers, in order to help their students, should create a relax atmosphere, a context in which the language is useful, Andrew Wright, David Betteridge and Michael Buckby are right when they think that games help the teacher to create contexts which are useful and meaningful for the learning of English. Students need to speak the language while learning, they need to do practical things with the language and the best way is through games.

I don't totally agree with Angkana Deesri in 'Games in the ESL and EFL Class', when he asserts that: "however, because of the limitations of the syllabus, games often cannot be used, as much as they should be." Those who design syllabus are men and if they really want, I think we will have more place for games, they can be used often the way they should and the learning process will be more effective and students will be able to learn more about the language I mean English which, here, happens to be a foreign language. Through games, students can learn English the way children learn their mother tongue without being aware they are studying; thus without stress, they can learn a lot. Through well-planned games, learners can put into practice and internalize vocabulary, grammar, and structures extensively. Play and competition that are provided by games enhance the motivation of the young learners. They also reduce the stress in the classroom as Krashen S.D (1988) suggested.

Chapter two



**METHODOLOGY
OF THE
RESEARCH**

2.1 Research Methods or Instruments

This part of my study deals with the questionnaires and the class observations which are the methods of my investigation.

2.1.1 Questionnaires

In order to succeed this research work, I have elaborated two types of questionnaires. The first one is designed for EFL teachers and the second one is designed for EFL students. The questionnaire which is designed for English as Foreign Language teachers is about the importance of games in the teaching process, their experiences in the field and their points of view about the question. On the other hand, the questionnaire to learners is about their feelings while learning English as Foreign Language through games. The questionnaire to teachers is composed of four questions which they have to answer by yes or no and justify; the one to learners is composed of four questions too. Questions which they have to answer by yes or no and justify, in order to allow me to collect all the data I need. Because of the period of our investigation, only forty-five of the questionnaires addressed to EFL teachers have been sent to different English teachers and among the forty-five, forty-one have been answered and returned to me. When I take the questionnaire addressed to EFL learners, seventy students answered and most of them are the first form (6ème M2) learners of Behanzin grammar school students. The questionnaire addressed to teachers deals with the importance of teaching English through games, its advantages and weaknesses. It also deals with teachers' points of view about the process of teaching/learning English through games in EFL classes. On the other hand, the questionnaire addressed to EFL learners aims to know if they like learning through games and the impacts of games on the knowledge acquisition.

2.1.2 Class observations

As far as class observation is concerned in the field of the different instruments for the research work, I should confess that I attended English classes during the academic year 2012-2013. It is mostly in the field of my training course at Behanzin grammar school, especially in the first form (6ème M2) of Behanzin grammar school, class in which I worked during my training course. While using this instrument, I have behaved as a member of the class in order not to distract students. I have focused on the way English have been taught and the way students have reacted at each level and whenever the teacher has changed his teaching strategies.

It has helped me to recall years ago when I was still a students, the way we behaved, my classmates and I. From my observation I have realized that there are two different ways the students react during an English class. On the first hand, they react actively when the teacher uses games to teach them; sometimes I have even been surprised seeing some shy students raising their fingers to participate because they could not stand seeing others playing while they are silent in their corners. On the other hand, only a few students react and they even feel bored and most of them start discussing among themselves instead of following the teacher because they lose all interest. Some of them missed English classes because they were not interested in.

2.2 The Target Population

I have appointed a sample population in order to succeed in this research work. My target population is the one composed of English as Foreign Language teachers and English as Foreign Language learners who are the most concerned in the field of education. Particularly when I consider my study's topic which is about the process of teaching and learning English as Foreign Language. When I take students, most of them were first form (6èm M2) of Behanzin grammar school' students, the remaining learners were secondary students that I have chosen randomly. For the research work, I have chosen some teachers in Porto-Novo, some others at Ouidah were I attended my secondary school.

2.2.1 Teachers

I started this part of the target population by mentioning teachers because they are the first actors in the teaching/learning process. A teacher is a person who teaches, as a job in a school or any similar institution, he is the facilitator of the knowledge acquisition; he is the one who helps students to learn effectively. The teacher of English has a great responsibility in the process of teaching/learning English as Foreign language. I have submitted forty-five questionnaires to different teachers of English. Most of them are teachers who hold from first form to fourth form. In order to make them feel free while answering the different questions, I granted them a whole week to. It is important for me to point out the fact that I used to call them from time to time in order to remind them the task that I have entrusted them. Forty-one of the forty-five questionnaires that I have submitted to teachers were sent back to me. I have also dealt with English learners who are also important for the success of my survey.

2.2.2 Learners

In order to succeed my study, I dare not forget students because they are at the center of the learning process. Considering this fact, I got into touch with seventy students. It was really hard to meet them so I was obliged to go to some houses. My luck was that during my training course when I was about to be inspected, I tried to know the different houses of some of them. Randomly, I met some of them at school because they were already in holidays. Most of the students were learners from first form to fourth form because I considered them as being mostly concerned with games when we consider teaching and learning English through games in EFL classes. Whenever I met them, I presented the topic of my study and my objectives then I explained what I wanted from them. I gave them the questionnaire and explained them the questions; then I helped them to answer, it took me a lot of time but I succeeded in collecting the information I needed from them.

Chapter three



**THE FINDINGS
OF THE STUDY**

In this chapter, I will present the data collected through the research work. After the presentation of the data, I will analyze them then I come to the major conclusions as far as data are concerned

3.1 Data presentations and analysis

A- Teachers' responses

Statements	Teachers' responses : frequency and percentage per statement Population: 41			
	YES	%	NO	%
1- Do you think that teaching English through games in EFL classes has any advantage?	25	60.97%	16	39.02%
2- Have you ever taught through games?	12	29.3%	29	70.7%
3- Does teaching English through games have any weakness?	34	82.92%	07	17.1%
4- Do you think it's better to teach English through games?	28	68.3%	13	31.7%

This table shows that twenty-five teachers out of forty-one, which is sixty-one percent of them, think that teaching English through games has some advantages; while sixteen, teachers which is thirty-nine of them think the contrary. As justification, the twenty-five teachers say that while teaching English through games, learners are involved in the learning process, they learn effectively in a relax atmosphere, they also say that games make the learning concrete and learners learn without any pressure, they develop their language skills while learning through games. The sixteen teachers who think learning through games has no advantage argue that games are a waste of

time and we play when there is no important thing to do; they also say that with games it's impossible to complete the curriculum so they don't think games has advantages in English class.

Considering the second statement in the table, we see that only twelve teachers which is twenty-nine percent of the whole have taught English through games while twenty-nine which is seventy-one percent of them have never taught English through games as a matter of fact they argue that it's a waste of time to try to teach English through games, they say that an English class is not a fun class where we can play games, they also say that games take too much time and while teaching through games, it's almost impossible to complete the whole curriculum of the academic year. Some of them say that with games we have too much noise and there are no suitable materials to conduct games in classroom during English class, not only that they don't really know games they can use considering the topics they have to deal with during the academic year.

The third statement of our table shows that thirty-four teachers which is eighty-three percent of the whole forty-one think that teaching English through games has weakness. The last statement of the table shows that twenty-eight teachers which is sixty-eight percent of the whole think it's better to teach English through games; they say that students feel free to learn when they are playing and the class atmosphere is relaxed and vivid, learners learn more. The thirteen remaining which is thirty-two percent think the contrary because they argue that it is impossible to complete the curriculum while teaching through games; and it's difficult to find suitable games for the English class. Not only that, materials and environment are also actual problems one can face while teaching through games. Some teachers argue that they follow the curriculum they are given and if there is no game in the curriculum they don't feel like using games while teaching.

B- Learners' responses

Statements	Learners' responses : frequency and percentage per statement Population: 70			
	YES	%	NO	%
1- Have you ever learnt English through games?	21	30%	49	70%
2- Do you think that learning through games has any advantage?	63	90%	07	10%
3- Would you like playing at the same time while learning English?	70	100%	00	00%
4- Do you think learning English through games is a good strategy?	70	100%	00	00%

The first statement of this table shows that forty-nine learners out of seventy, which is seventy percent of the whole have never learnt through games while only twenty-one learners which equals thirty percent have learnt at least once through games. When learners are asked to justify, they argue that their teachers have never taught them through games. The second statement of this table shows that sixty-three learners out of seventy which equals ninety percent think that there are advantages while one is learning English as Foreign Language through games. They say that they can learn and play at the same time and they can feel free to participate, they are more involved in the learning process and they are always happy while attending English class. The third statement of the table shows that hundred percent of the learners would like to play at the same time while learning English. It's amazing because when they are asked to justify why, they argue that it is more interesting while one plays and learn at the same time, they also say that they are not forced by the teachers and it is no more the humdrum strategies used by the teachers and they feel the need to learn a new thing. When we go far, through the forth statement, we realize that all the seventy learners considered in the field of our study that is hundred percent think that learning

English through games is not only a good strategy but also the best one since English is a foreign language.

Considering the data I have collected during my investigations, only a few teachers teach English through games. They don't even care if their learners really learn; the most important for them is to come to the end of the curriculum before the end of the academic year. Some teachers think there is no way teaching English through games because they think games are just for fun and cannot be used in the field of teaching a foreign language. Even though most of them recognize that there are advantages while using games in teaching English, only a few of them have taught at least once through games. They think that it's most of the time difficult to find suitable games and even if they find, they have a curriculum to follow and to finish at the end of the academic year. Most teachers of English admitted that it is important to use games while teaching English considering the level and the need of their learners. For most of the learners, games in the field of learning English are all they want. They admitted that they can learn easily and in a relaxed atmosphere without any pressure, they will all have the opportunity to communicate to use the target language in real situation while playing roles. How could teachers refuse to teach English through games even though they are aware of the fact that there are advantages for both the teacher and the learner? There should be a problem somewhere in the system. Is the government or the authorities in charge of Education responsible for this? They are concerned since they are decision takers.

3.2. Major conclusions

Language teaching is far from being an easy job. Several teachers of English find it difficult to teach through games. Teaching through games is not impossible but teachers think if they teach English through games, they won't be able to complete the whole curriculum before the end of the school year. As if the most important for them is to manage in order to finish with the academic curriculum, the students' book becomes the only guide that they have to follow with the same humdrum. Some teachers think games are just for fun and they have no place during an English class which absolutely is a misconception. Students are willing to learn the foreign language

but they need motivation, they need to be interested in the language and all this depend on their teachers. Students in foreign language class in order to learn effectively need to get involved in the process, they like learning through games unfortunately they are not taught through games most of the time. This doesn't really help them and when they attend English class, they get bored most of the time and they do not learn, they just try their best to get good marks at the end of the semester.

Chapter four



**SUGGESTIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Considering the findings of this study, some problems have been raised and it urges to find some solutions in order to facilitate the process of Teaching and Learning English through games.

4.1 Suggestions

My suggestions are addressed to teachers of English.

Most of teachers of English claim that even though teaching English through games is very useful and pragmatic, it is difficult to find games for the EFL class. Here are some games which can be used in the process of teaching English in EFL class in order to help students to learn more effectively and to get involved in the learning process.

4.1.1 Some Oral Games

The best way of learning a language is to use it. Oral activities are really important in the process of using the target language. Here are some oral games which can be used by teachers to help their students to learn more effectively.

4.1.1.1 Calling the roll

In many schools the teacher has to check attendance by calling a class register or roll, but even where this is not obligatory it might well be done, for a time at least, in the language lesson.

Calling the bare names does not give much language-practice. Teacher: 'Student A?' Student A: 'Here, Miss Jones.' (Or: 'Present, Miss Jones.')

And so throughout a long list. There is more language-practice if the teacher picks out only a few names and asks, for instance: 'Is student A here?' Student A: 'yes, I'm here.'

Teacher: 'Where are you, student A? Put up your hand. Oh, there you are. Is student B here?' Class: 'No, teacher.'

Teacher: 'Isn't he? Oh. Was he here yesterday, Student C?' Student C: 'Yes, he was.'

Teacher: 'Where is he today?' Student D: 'He's at home in bed, M.'

And so on. How much and what can be said depends, as usual, on how far

the class has got with its language-learning, but there is no need to hurry these little conversations, which the class will look upon as games. What matters is not so much calling the roll as seizing the opportunity to use language in a meaningful situation. (Adapted from *Language-Teaching Games and Contests* by W.R. LEE).

4.1.1.2 Doing it Quickly.

About six pupils face the others, who in turn give commands to them as quickly as possible (each pupil should have one ready). All six obey the commands at the same time. If one makes a mistake, he or she drops out and is replaced by the pupil who last gave a command. The teacher is the judge of what commands are both reasonable and in reasonable English, but if some of them raise a laugh so much the better.

Examples: Touch your noses. Touch your shoes. Turn round three times. Shake hands with each other. Draw a circle on the board. Fold your arms. Look out the window. Smile brightly. Brush your hair (in mime). The objective is to make the learners more familiar with words and expressions they already know and to get them to like language-learning. (Proposed by W.R. LEE in *Language-Teaching Games and Contests*).

4.1.2 Getting to Know Numbers

Common numbers should be learnt gradually, there are many games which can help students to know numbers easily.

4.1.2.1 Numbers on the Board

Here, the teacher writes numbers all over the board, at a height the pupils can reach; or better still, pupils write them there themselves, so long as they can write firmly and clearly. There are two or more teams, and one member of each stands at the blackboard, colored chalk in hand (each team has a different colour). The teacher calls out a number and the first to put a ring round it scores a point. The players should be changed after they have ringed three or four numbers, and any player who rings one wrongly is replaced. The numbers may be simple or difficult. They can also be clock

times, weights and measures, dates, sums of money, telephone numbers, etc. (proposed by W.R. LEE in *Language-Teaching Games and Contests*).

4.1.2.2 Claps, Crosses, Knocks, etc.

This is rather obvious but can be great fun. The teacher or a pupil claps a number of times, or knocks on a desk or table, or makes crosses or circles or ticks on the board, and then asks 'How many ?'

Similarly, the pupils can be told to clap or knock a certain number of times together, or players from different teams at the blackboard can be told to make a certain number of crosses or circles or whatever it is (and the quickest wins a point). These are ways of familiarizing young children with the smaller numbers. The different forms of practice can be mixed, especially when the class is taken as a whole ; for instance : Clap three times-now tap four times on your desk-clap twice-tap five times-etc.

N.B. Clapping, tapping, etc., can assist elementary practice with certain adverbs: e.g. Clap loudly/quickly/slowly. There is also a situation here for comparative forms : Clap more loudly/less loudly – Don't clap so loudly – Tap more quickly than John/as loudly as Mary/twice as quickly as Peter –etc. (proposed by W.R. LEE in *Language-Teaching Games and Contests*).

4.1.3 Group Dialogue

Following a simple warm-up where each person must say a word associated with the word mentioned by the person before him or her, I have them repeat the same procedure but with complete sentences, as if it were a discussion between two people. For example: student 1, "Hi how are you Joe?"; student 2, "Oh pretty good Sue. How about you?"; student 3, " Well, not so good."; student 4, " Why not?", etc. The dialogue must proceed in such a way that the last person concludes the discussion and they bid each other goodbye. You never know where the conversation will lead and it's excellent for listening.

4.1.4 The Alphabet Game

This game is used to practice alphabet and check their vocabulary. Do as a competition. Divide Students into groups of five (it depends on the number of students you have) and ask them to stand in line. Give to the students of the front a marker to write on the blackboard. Then draw with your finger an imaginary letter of the alphabet on the back of the students at the end of the line. They must do the same with the student in front of him/her and so on. The students with the marker are supposed to run to the board and write any word that begins with that letter.

4.1.5 Verb Review Game

This game can be played in teams or individually, depending on the size and knowledge of the students.

Step 1:

The teacher gives the students 5 minutes to review a list of both regular and irregular verbs.

Step 2:

Then the teacher writes something like this on the board: "things we do with our feet"

Step 3:

The students then have exactly one minute to write all the verbs related to this topic, such as: walk, kick, dance, run, jump, etc.

Step 4:

After the time is up, the teacher checks the students' lists of verbs. Each verb counts for one point. Any verbs appearing in more than one list are eliminated.

Then the teacher writes another topic on the board, "things we do with our mouth", for instance.

The student or team with the most points is the winner.

NOTE: This game can be used to review not only verbs but also adjectives, nouns etc.

4.1.6 Getting to Know Days and Months

Here is a way to master the days of the week and the months of the year. With groups of 7 (or 12), each representing a day or a month the game is done. 'Sunday' (or 'January') throws against a wall and names another day or month who has to catch and throw the ball again, calling on the third player. (Proposed by W.R. LEE in *Language-Teaching Games and Contests*).

4.1.7 Guessing Game

By guessing game, students are asked to do guessing activities in pairs or in groups. To do this game, the teacher can provide a short incomplete story plot to the students to discuss and find the way it ends. One example of such a game is "A man has been found dead in a call box. He was bleeding. We know that he was speaking to someone on the phone just before he died because the receiver is off the hook. How did the man die?". The teacher whispers the answer to only one student. The others must guess the answer by asking the student questions that can be answered only by "yes", "no" or "irrelevant about the plot. Such an activity allows learners to be English full time speakers and it helps them to communicate easily among themselves.

4.1.8 Crosswords Puzzles

This game is proposed by Glenn Wharton to improve communication strategies. According to Wharton (1995) p.47, the crosswords puzzles require a list of words with which the students should be familiar. This is a good way to recycle their vocabulary so that learners get used to seeing and hearing these words. To perform this game, the teacher provides learners with words having common letters. After the learners have grouped these words on each sheet, they will arrange them in the puzzle so as to build the whole crosswords puzzles. This is a sample of a crosswords puzzle,

		¹ D	O	W	N	² S	T	A	I	³ R	S	
⁴		E									U	
⁵		S						⁶ D	A	N	C	⁷ E
		K								N		V
		S		⁸				⁹ T		I		E
								R		N		R
¹⁰	R	O	¹¹ B	B	E	R		¹² U		G		Y
			A				¹³ L	C				T
			R		¹⁴ D	R	I	N	K		¹⁵	H
			G				G					I
¹⁶		A				H			¹⁷ M	O	O	N
			I			T						G
	¹⁸	A	N	D	E	R	S	T	A	N	D	

This game reinforces learners' vocabulary level and teachers should familiarize them with such a game in order to foster their English language acquisition.

4.1.9 Just a Minute

This game is adapted from a radio game show broadcast over the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). It was aired over the BBC many years ago and was highly entertaining. This is how you play the game:

1. Divide your students into groups. Get each group to give themselves a name.
2. The objective of each group is to get as many points as possible.
3. The task is to speak on a topic for a minute. The referee (the teacher) will provide the topics.
4. The competition-members of the other groups-should try to "wrestle" the topic away from the person who is speaking on it. There are three ways to do this:
 - i. Hesitation: When a student pauses for too long a break, it is considered a hesitation.
 - ii. Repetition: When a student keeps repeating a particular word or phrase, it is considered repetition.

iii. Deviation: When a student digresses, he can be faulted for deviation.

5. A timekeeper will ring the bell once the minute is up. The person who is speaking when the bell rings will win 10 points.

6. The group with the most points is the winner.

7. The teacher should determine the topics based upon the students' level of proficiency. Some examples of topics are:

- My Childhood
- My Family
- My Favorite Things
- Ghosts
- My Ideal Partner
- Teenagers
- A Country I'd like to Visit
- My Favorite Food
- If I Had Three Wishes, I'd like . . .

The choice of topics would also depend on what is being taught in the lesson for the day. For example, if the teacher is conducting a lesson on describing people and places, she/he could provide topics such as My Mother, Someone I Admire, A Teacher I'll Never Forget, My Hometown, or My School.

This game is particularly suitable for teaching oral communication skills. It is also useful as a pre-writing or pre-reading activity. It can be effectively utilized when teaching topics such as describing, narrating, expressing viewpoints, agreeing, disagreeing, and describing procedures.

These games are some proposals made to help EFL teachers. It is up to them to modify, to recreate, to use these games according to their learners' need and level, to the environment where the teaching process is taking place. Teachers should be creative and adapt their teaching to circumstances, learners are more interested in games, it is an opportunity for teachers to lead them, to guide them so that they learn and play at the same time. While doing this, learners use the foreign language in real life situation without even being aware of it most of the time. In my opinion, using the language in real life situation is the first aim of learning a foreign language so here is the best way. There is one aspect that teachers should not overlook. Whenever a game is to be conducted, the number of students, the proficiency level, the cultural context, the timing, the learning topic and the classroom settings are factors that should really be taken into account.

The next section of this study will take into account recommendations addressed to the authorities in charge of Education, the authorities in charge of the academic curriculum, the teachers of English and to learners of English.

4.2 Recommendations

My recommendations are addressed to the authorities in charge of Education, the authorities in charge of the academic curriculum, the teachers of English and to learners of English.

4.2.1 Recommendations to the Authorities in Charge of Education

Considering the level of Beninese EFL learners, the authorities in charge of Education should take into account the needs of the learners and the needs of teachers of English in order to make the task easier to teachers and even to students. The government should provide schools and teachers with all kinds of appropriate materials which are important in the teaching and learning process. The authorities in charge of Education should organize seminars, workshops and conferences for teachers of English in order to help them carry out the task the way they should so as

to help students learn more effectively. Teachers conditions should be improved and to practise games, teachers need well equipped classrooms in order to undertake games in the teaching process so the authorities in charge of Education should take their responsibilities and equip classrooms with all teachers need to teach English through games, The government should motivate teachers of English in order to give them the desire to teach the way they should. The authorities in charge of Education should provide schools with good and equipped libraries; they must facilitate the training of teachers of English all over the world particularly in English speaking countries in order to help them grow professionally.

4.2.2 Recommendations to the Authorities in Charge of the Academic Curriculum

Taking into account the fact that the teaching/learning process is based on the academic curriculum, it urge to ask the authorities in charge of the academic curriculum to review the latter, they must set games which can facilitate the learning process, they must find games which suit with the activities and make proposals to teachers of English. The different authorities in charge of the curriculum should recognize that the most important in the field of Education and especially in language learning is not what they want but what learners need and the appropriate way to make those learners learn effectively, they should adapt the curriculum to learners reality and what they like the best, and it is obvious that learners like learning through games while playing because they all feel free to participate.

4.2.3 Recommendations to the Teachers of English

As long as they are concerned with the teaching process, teachers of English should do their best in order to acquire professional qualification which is the first important thing in the field of teaching. After that, they should adapt their teaching style and strategies to the needs of their learners, teachers of English should know their learners in order to be aware of their needs. They must break with the monotonous strategies of teaching. Considering games in the field of teaching language, teachers of English must set appropriate games considering activities and the environment; they must give all learners a chance to participate actively in the activities; they must find

suitable conditions to practise games, they must define appropriate place and time for games. They must encourage their students and give them the desire to learn the foreign language; another important thing, teachers of English must speak acceptable English with their students in order to give them the opportunity to follow them and to discuss with them whenever needs be. They should collaborate among themselves and work in order to share experiences and solve problems related to the subject. Another important aspect of improving the intrinsic motivation of students is to be a caring teacher. Although guidelines and rules must be set and understood by the students, and if they cross the guidelines a punishment will follow, the teacher must be caring, approachable, and understanding.

Teachers must be kind and helpful to the students, and be patient when they don't understand. There are some teachers, who conduct their classes very strictly, almost as a sort of dictator in class. The teacher gets upset when it appears that the students don't understand what is taught in the class. A caring teacher tries to develop a relationship with the students. If the teacher sees potential in all students, and communicates this well to the students, they will in return build a desire to learn and participate. When the students realize that teacher is not going to get angry, s/he is being nice and understanding, and the reason they are trying so hard is because it is important to them that their students learn and do well. A teacher's positive energy could lead to the students becoming more motivated. If the students see that the teacher is happy to be in the classroom and excited to teach them, then the students can learn by example. A smile is contagious. Positive attitude is a must for successful learning atmosphere. To promote self-confidence, it helps if the teacher is self-confident. Positive approval and appreciation of student efforts is very effective, even if the student is wrong. Let the student know that the teacher is glad, they tried and being wrong or making mistakes is not such a big problem, and the students won't be so reluctant the next time when they are called on to participate. Positive energy affirmation and a belief in the student's ability develop a comfortable atmosphere for the students in the classroom

4.2.4 Recommendations to the Learners of English

It is obvious that there is neither teaching nor learning without learners. They are the most important actors in the field of Education. Considering how difficult it is to learn a foreign language, learners of English must show a great interest in the English language, they must attend English classes and participate with all their heart. They must give their best and participate actively in the learning process. Learners of English must offer themselves opportunities to practise the language; they must be ready to learn whenever and wherever.

General Conclusion

It is not convincing to say that one knows English grammar rules but cannot speak the English language. The most important aim of the learning of a foreign language is to be able to speak the latter as long as possible. Nowadays, most of EFL learners argue that they know the grammar rules but cannot speak the language. What a shame! This is one of the consequences of the humdrum strategies of teaching English as Foreign Language. In the process of teaching/learning a foreign language, both teachers and learners are involved, they all have an important role to play. “Teaching English through games in an EFL class” is a topic which should not be neglected considering the level of our EFL learners these days.

Today, it is said that students do not learn anymore, that they hate the English language that's why they are not interested in English class. I don't share that point of view. Surveys show that learners do love the English language but to learn it effectively they need motivation, they need to get involved in the process and they need to be active during English classes. Investigations show that learners like games and with games, they feel free. They are not forced to learn even shy students have an opportunity to participate actively. To succeed in this, learners are not the only actors to be considered. The government, the authorities in charge of Education, those in charge of the academic curriculum and teachers of English are all concerned. Each of them has a part to play. Games are really important in teaching English as Foreign Language in order to give students a chance to learn without being forced to. Teachers should use games to teach learners so that the latter learn the language by using real life situations.

Games shouldn't be just for fun or time killer. Games should have a central place in the process of teaching/learning English as Foreign Language. Language learning is not an easy task. It is then obvious that a kind of motivation and will is needed from both teachers of English and learners. When we see teachers of English nowadays, we realize that most of them have never taught through games. Some of them think games are a waste of time and it's practically impossible to use games to teach because they won't be able to end the academic curriculum as if the most

important for them is to end the curriculum not to be sure that learners learn effectively.

The authorities in charge of the academic curriculum should take all this into account. They should insert games at the center while designing students' book. They should give teachers the possibility to choose suitable games according to the activity and the kind of students they have. Authorities in charge of Education should take their responsibilities by providing schools with appropriate materials and environment for games in the field of teaching a foreign language. They should also motivate teachers too. Learners should show their will to learn the foreign language and get involved in the learning process.

Even though English is a foreign language, it is possible to make EFL learners love the language if we teach them through games, considering who they are and what they like. English class should be a vivid one. One can learn effectively a foreign language and have fun at the same time. All this is possible through games in the process of teaching/learning English as Foreign Language.

Bibliography

- ❖ Agnieszka Uberman. *'The Use of Games for Vocabulary Presentation and Revision'*. 'Forum' Vol. 36 No 1, Page 20. January - March 1998.
- ❖ Ali Sorayaie Azar. *'The Effect of Games on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Learning Strategies'*. English Department, Maragheh Branch-Islamic Azad University, Maragheh, Iran. Oct 2012.
- ❖ Andrew Wright, David Betteridge and Michael Buckby. *'Games for Language Learning'* (2nd. Ed.). Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- ❖ Aydan Ersöz. *'Six Games for the EFL/ESL Classroom'* The Internet TESL Journal, Vol. VI, No. 6. June 2000.
- ❖ Ellis, R. *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1985
- ❖ Glenn Wharton. *One Way to Improve Communication Strategies*
- ❖ I.S.P. Nation and J. Newton. *Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking*. 270 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016. 2009
- ❖ Lee Su Kim. *'Creative Games for the Language Class'*. 'Forum' Vol. 33 No 1, Page 35. January - March 1995
- ❖ M. Martha Lengeling and Casey Malarcher. *'Index Cards: A Natural Resource for Teachers'* 'Forum' Vol. 35 No 4, Page 42. October - December 1997
- ❖ Mario Rinvolucri and Paul Davis. *More Grammar Games. Cognitive, affective and movement activities for EFL students*. Cambridge University Press
- ❖ Yin Yong Mei and Jang Yu-jing. *'Using Games in an EFL Class for Children'*. Daejin University ELT Research Paper. Fall, 2000.
- ❖ W.R.LEE. *'Language-Teaching Games and Contests'*. Oxford University Press, 1965.
- ❖ Weimin Zhang. *' In Search of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teachers' Knowledge of Vocabulary Instruction'* A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences Georgia State University

Dissertations

- ❖ Ndiaga SYLLA. ' *The impact of songs and games in English language teaching* ' Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar Faculté des Sciences et Technologies de l'Education et de la Formation. 2010. (unpublished)
- ❖ Tchokponhoue Guy V., *Teaching English as a Foreign Language: The mechanisms to improve fluency; the case of some secondary schools in Benin.* Mémoire de maîtrise, Université d'Abomey-Calavi. 2011. (unpublished)

Websites

| iteslj.org/games |

www.teflgames.com

<http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Deesri-Games.html>

<http://iteslj.org/>

<http://teaching/English/through/games.html>

<http://iteslj.org/Handouts/Kelly-Classmates.html>

http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/usia/E-USIA/forum/vols/vol33/no1/P47.htm#author_61

<http://exchanges.state.gov/englishteaching/forum/archives/1998/docs/98-36-1-d.pdf>

http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/dec_03_sub.Vn.php

<http://exchanges.state.gov/englishteaching/forum/archives/1997/docs/97-35-4-h.pdf>

<http://exchanges.state.gov/englishteaching/forum/archives/1995/docs/95-33-1-1.pdf>

Annex

Research Questionnaire to EFL Teachers

1- Do you think that teaching English through games in EFL classes has any advantage?

Yes

No

If yes, what are those advantages?

If no, justify.

2- Have you ever taught through games?

Yes

No

If yes, how do you proceed?

If no, justify

3- Does teaching English through games have any weakness?

Yes

No

If yes, name them.

If no, justify

4- Do you think that it's better to teach English through games?

Yes

No

If yes, justify

If no, justify

Research Questionnaire to EFL Learners

1- Have you ever learnt English through games?

Yes

No

If yes, explain

If no, justify

2- Do you think that learning through games has any advantage?

Yes

No

3- Would you like playing at the same time while learning English?

Yes

No

4- Do you think learning English through games is a good strategy?

Yes

No

If yes, explain

If no, justify
