Interactive strategies for Enriching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Vocabulary: A Comprehensive Exploration

Asiya Tabassum *

Lecturer, University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Nizwa, Oman

Asma Naveed

Lecturer, University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Nizwa, Oman

Abstract

Vocabulary is rudimentary to learning any language. The size of students' vocabulary determines their learning ability. In a nutshell, vocabulary is vital as it's the foundation of all languages. Recognizing the challenges faced by EFL learners, the study proposes an innovative approach to vocabulary teaching through interactive game-based techniques. This study investigates the use of interactive game-based methods to teach vocabulary to EFL students, highlighting benefits such as improved retention, comprehension, and practical application of new words. Participation in these activities boosts learners' confidence, fostering effective communication skills. Participating in discussions, debates, and presentations fosters critical thinking, motivating learners to analyze and synthesize information. Immediate feedback refines vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar for long-term retention. While interactive methods offer benefits, they have challenges too such as resource-intensive planning and possible participation imbalances. Achieving a balance between fluency and accuracy is crucial for educators, aiming for an approach that optimizes advantages while tackling challenges. This paper underscores the importance of vocabulary in language learning and distinctive requirements of EFL students. It also explores the potential of interactive game-based vocabulary instructions, supported by recent research findings. Vocabulary teaching often follows a cycle of presentation, repetition, and testing. Despite its importance, repetition is frequently neglected due to perceived time constraints and boredom. However, research, as advocated by Paul Nation, highlights its significance. This study, using observational research, examines the effectiveness of game-based techniques. Results indicate that interactive game-based learning yields multiple advantages, including enhanced vocabulary retention, improved comprehension, and practical application of learned words in various contexts.

Keywords: Vocabulary, Game-Based Learning, EFL students, Interactive approach

INTRODUCTION

Mastery of language lexis is the foundation of language learning, serving as a crucial factor of one's foreign language proficiency. Vocabulary is universally recognized as the most

---

indispensable facet in the realm of language education. This importance is highlighted in view of the unique context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, who face recognizable challenges in their pursuit for language proficiency. In consideration of these challenges, this paper embarks on a journey to explore a dynamic and innovative approach to vocabulary teaching, focusing specifically on interactive game-based techniques. As we dig into this exploration, we will explicate significance of vocabulary in language acquisition, provide context for the specialized needs of EFL students, and emphasize the central theme of interactive game-based vocabulary instructions, all backed by recent research findings.

The Crucial Role of Vocabulary in Language Learning

Vocabulary, often referred to as the "Building blocks" of language, and all the language skills- listening, speaking, reading, and writing rest upon it as it serves as a fundamental pillar. Recent research underlines that vocabulary is not just a component of language learning; it is the very scaffolding that supports the structure of linguistic competence (Biemiller, 2019). In the context of EFL students, the acquisition of vocabulary takes on an even greater significance. While the structural framework for language is laid by the grammar and syntax, vocabulary breathes life into this framework, which enables the learners to transcend the boundaries of linguistic fluency (Thornbury, 2002). Current studies have elucidated the close connection between vocabulary knowledge and language comprehension, affirming that a rich vocabulary quips learners with the ability to understand and engage with spoken and written language (Nation & Webb, 2011). Furthermore, vocabulary is a mainstay of language production, allowing learners to express thoughts, ideas, and emotions with accuracy and fluency.

The Specialized Needs of EFL Students

Understanding the context in which EFL students operate is of prime importance to appreciating the necessity for tailored vocabulary teaching techniques. EFL students find themselves in a language environment where English is not the dominant language of communication. Their exposure to authentic English conversations and written materials is often limited, involving conscious efforts to bridge the gap between comprehension and communication. EFL classrooms typically cater to the needs of the learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds, each with distinct language structures and vocabularies. This linguistic diversity requires specialized teaching techniques that cater to the varied needs of EFL students and enable them to harness the power of English vocabulary as a unifying tool.

Additionally, the pursuit of academic and professional goals often motivates EFL students to achieve high levels of language proficiency. Standardized language proficiency exams, such as TOFEL or IELTS, insist a vigorous vocabulary foundation. Mastery of vocabulary, therefore, becomes instrumental in achieving academic and career aspirations.

The Focus on Interactive Game-Based Techniques

The central theme of our inquiry revolves around interactive game-based techniques for vocabulary instructions as we move on with this exploration. The potential of such

techniques in fostering engaging, contextually relevant, and effective vocabulary acquisition has been highlighted in the recent study by (smith & Johnson, 2021; Brown & Lee, 2020). These innovative approaches offer a dynamic and alluring pathway for EFL students to overcome language barriers, making the process of vocabulary learning both enjoyable and effective (Chen et al., 2022).

Through this research we attempt to provide educators and language instructors with practical insights into the transformative prospection of interactive game-based vocabulary teaching. The subsequent sections of this paper will delve into various facets of interactive game-based techniques, examining their benefits, implementation strategies, and their capacity to empower EFL students with the linguistic tools they need to thrive in a globalized world.

The paper aims to emphasize the greatest importance of vocabulary in language learning, address the unique needs of EFL students, and shed light on the promising domain of interactive game-based vocabulary instruction, all anchored by recent research findings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Significance of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a key element in language learning as it supports all four skills i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Gyllstad, H (2018) it has been proved by persistent research that language proficiency is strongly predicted by a learner's vocabulary size. Studies keep supporting the idea that learners with extensive vocabulary possess better skills of the target language. A research conducted by Sun and Wang (2019) emphasizes on the dominant impact of vocabulary on language competence. It insists that vocabulary enhancement is a vital component for the improvement of language skills, casting an impact on listening, speaking, reading, and writing potential. In a language classroom, the use of interactive vocabulary techniques motivates students to participate diligently. In a study done by Chen and Liu in (2020), they insist that communicative vocabulary techniques make vocabulary learning process more engaging and enjoyable which sustains longer.

Yang and Chen, in their study in (2021) explain how communicative techniques enhance a learner's independence and motivation by enabling him to choose activities best suited to his preferences and styles of learning. A study conducted by Li and Huang in (2020) investigates how collaborative activities contribute to the growth of productive vocabulary. The study emphasizes the advantages of engaging in group discussions and interacting with peers in the process of acquiring vocabulary.

Despite recognizing and comprehending new words in a contextual setting, when a learner remains unable to reproduce them, it is called receptive vocabulary. It is a kind of vocabulary that learners recognize on seeing it in a reading text but faces a difficulty in using it while speaking or writing (Stuart Webb, 2009). Productive vocabulary is one when a student comprehends, pronounces, and makes correct use of the target vocabulary for both speaking and writing skills in a constructive manner. It not only involves the required components of the receptive vocabulary but also includes the

capability to write or speak at the right time. Since the learners can form the words to convey their thoughts to others, productive vocabulary can be counted as an active process (Stuart Webb, 2005). According to Richards and Rodgers in their 2021 research, they emphasize the importance of language instructors creating teaching methods that encourage the development of both receptive and productive vocabulary (Richards & Rodgers, 2021). This approach is vital for ensuring that learners achieve a comprehensive and balanced language proficiency.

Traditional Vocabulary Teaching Methods

In vocabulary teaching, traditional vocabulary teaching methods typically involve memorization and written exercises, while technology-assisted methods utilize interactive apps and multimedia for more engaging and personalized learning. In their 2018 research, Saricoban and Metin examine conventional approaches, including the utilization of word lists, flashcards, and vocabulary quizzes. They emphasize the long-standing historical use of these methods for the introduction and strengthening of vocabulary (Saricoban & Metin, 2018). In their 2019 study, Wesche and Paribakht investigate the application of conventional vocabulary teaching methods such as memorization and repetition for vocabulary learning. They underscore the significance of these techniques in establishing a fundamental vocabulary base (Wesche & Paribakht, 2019). However, in 2018, Richards recognized that while traditional methods can be successful in helping learners acquire vocabulary initially, they have shortcomings when it comes to sustaining vocabulary over the long term and encouraging its active application in real-life communication (Richards, 2018).

Impact of Technology on Vocabulary Learning

On the other hand, technological growth has opened new doors for communicative vocabulary instruction. Latest research discovered that the usefulness of vocabulary learning apps, digital platforms and systems of adaptable learning play a vital role in the effectiveness of a newly learned vocabulary. (Park & Lee, 2017; Chen et al., 2022). The results of another study have established that a number of vocabulary games and gamification strategies have assisted effectively in vocabulary learning (Lee & Wu, 2018). Moreover, it is investigated in studies that in vocabulary instruction multimedia resources e.g., short video clips, online videos and communicative e-books are being used currently. (Berman & Cheng, 2021). The primary focus of the research remained on the impact of multimedia-assisted vocabulary lessons on students' vocabulary learning and retention (Lin & Chen, 2019).

Gamification in Vocabulary Learning

Interactive vocabulary games have embraced gamification elements. These include the integration of game mechanics like points, badges, leaderboards, and rewards to motivate learners and enhance engagement with vocabulary tasks (Deterding et al., 2011). Gamification has proven effective in increasing motivation and persistence in vocabulary acquisition (Zainuddin et al., 2018). A research conducted on mind mapping based on gamification and its effects on EFL learners vocabulary, recalling, and retention ability proved to be a positive strategy to teach vocabulary (Chen & Li. 2017). Moreover, Huang

and Hsiao (2018) studied the impact of gamification on the motivation and learning of vocabulary for EFL students, discovering considerable development in both of these areas (Huang & Hsiao, 2018).

Mobile Applications for Gamified Vocabulary Education

The widespread use of mobile devices has sparked a significant increase in the creation of mobile apps designed for interactive vocabulary instructions. Research has assessed the efficacy of these apps in different scenarios, highlighting their accessibility and flexibility for customized learning experiences (Lee et al., 2020). Additionally, scholars have explored the utility of mobile apps in aiding vocabulary acquisition for specific target languages.

Immersive Vocabulary Learning with Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality:

Emerging technologies like Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) have transformed vocabulary learning by offering immersive experiences. These games immerse learners in real-world contexts, enhancing vocabulary retention and comprehension (Chen et al., 2019).

Personalized Vocabulary Learning:

Customized and adaptable vocabulary games have gained prominence. Intelligent systems adjust content and difficulty based on learners' performance and preferences, optimizing the learning experience (Zhang et al., 2019).

Social Engagement in Vocabulary Games:

Interactive vocabulary games foster social interaction. Multiplayer games and online communities encourage collaboration and competition among learners, enhancing vocabulary acquisition (Deters et al., 2020).

Assessment and Progress Tracking:

Interactive vocabulary games include assessment features to measure learners' knowledge and track progress over time, providing insights for improvement (Akcayir et al., 2019).

Use of Technology for Communicative Vocabulary Instruction:

Wattana and Reinders (2018) state, digital games have exhibited a positive effect on communication and readiness to interact in a foreign language (Wattana & Reinders, 2018). In addition, Kim and Kwon (2021) studied the impact of vocabulary learning through the use of mobile phones and published enhanced knowledge of vocabulary and use of techniques in EFL students.

Use of Multimedia and Visuals for Vocabulary Instruction:

Shang (2017) executed a study on the impact of multimedia on vocabulary instruction program and discovered that it had a positive effect on the learning of English language and learning behaviors (Shang, 2017). Moreover, Bae (2022) established through his

"meta -analysis "comprehension and vocabulary retention significantly develop through the use of multimedia (Bae, 2022).

Task-Based Interactive Activities

There is another research with a focus on the usefulness of combined vocabulary exercises and "project/task-based learning" to improve the enhancement of vocabulary (Brown & Lee, 2017). Another study has found out that communicative vocabulary tasks like vocabulary-focused discussions and interpreting the meaning of target vocabulary have an impact on vocabulary learning (Wang & Wang, 2019).

Information Gap Activities:

Information gap activities involve learners in pairs or small groups, with one participant having specific information that others lack. This format encourages interaction, questioning, and knowledge sharing to bridge gaps, as supported by González-Lloret and Rennert (2019).

Role-Play and Simulation

Role-play and simulation immerse learners in real-life scenarios, requiring them to assume roles and engage in authentic conversations. These activities enhance fluency and pragmatic competence, as explored in Hsiao and Oxford's (2020) research (Hsiao & Oxford's, 2020).

Problem-Solving Tasks

Problem-solving tasks present challenges that demand critical thinking and collaboration, involving analyzing information and making decisions in the target language. Hohensinn and Stadler's (2021) research demonstrates their effectiveness in improving language skills and cognitive abilities (Hohensinn & Stadler's, 2021).

Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning engages learners in long-term projects, promoting research, planning, and presenting findings while addressing real-world issues. Lee (2018) finds that it fosters language proficiency and motivation (Lee, 2018).

Debate and Discussion

Debate and discussion activities encourage learners to express and defend their opinions on various topics, enhancing argumentation skills, vocabulary acquisition, and critical thinking. Elahi Shirvan and Izadpanah (2019) investigate their impact on language learners (Elahi Shirvan & Izadpanah, 2019).

Collaborative Writing

Collaborative writing tasks involve learners in jointly creating written documents like stories, reports, or essays, promoting collaboration, peer editing, and language production. Zhang and Li (2020) explore the benefits of collaborative writing in language classrooms (Zhang & Li, 2020).

Storytelling and Storyboard Activities

Storytelling and storyboard activities inspire learners to craft narratives, combining language skills with creativity. These tasks improve narrative competence and vocabulary usage, as highlighted by Nguyen and Nguyen's (2021) research Nguyen & Nguyen, 2021).

Communicative vocabulary teaching methodologies have become increasingly popular during recent years. The study focuses on several approaches like the integration of technology, visual aids and multimedia, task-based interactive activities, and gamification. The above-mentioned methodologies have produced productive effects on students' motivation, retention, and engagement in vocabulary learning. Exploration of these methodologies and their implication on teaching and learning vocabulary should remain the focus of future research.

Common Challenges in Teaching Vocabulary to EFL Students

In earlier studies, numerous typical difficulties in teaching vocabulary to the EFL learners have been recognized. A restricted exposure to the genuine use of English Language is a major obstacle (Smith & Johnson, 2019). EFL learners usually find it difficult to encounter English in real-life situation, obstructing their capability to clasp the subtleties in the use of vocabulary. (Brown & Lee, 2020; Wang & Wang, 2019). Moreover, EFL students' varied background causes a hurdle since they may come with diverse native language background and language structures in the classroom. (Khajavy, Ghonsooly, & Asadollahfam, 2019). In the process of acquiring vocabulary, this linguistic variation may cause different needs and challenges. One more typical difficulty is the necessity of retaining vocabulary over the extended period of time (Saricoban & Metin, 2018). Initially, EFL learners might grasp vocabulary efficiently, but they may find it difficult to preserve it for later use, establishing the significance of such teaching methods that help sustaining retention. Additionally, conventional teaching approaches like memorizing word lists and rote learning have constraints in maintaining vocabulary acquisition promoting its practical usage (Richards, 2018). These difficulties highlight the necessity for unique and captivating methods for vocabulary teaching that cater to the individual needs of EFL learners.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present paper employed an observational research design to examine the effectiveness of interactive game-based techniques in enhancing vocabulary acquisition among EFL students. The research design focused on systematic observation of students' behaviors and interactions during the vocabulary teaching sessions. Given the naturalistic setting of a classroom, the observational approach paved way for gathering qualitative data through inconspicuous means, without being directly involved in the instructional process. This research minimizes the risk of participant reactivity allowing the collection of data without altering or influencing participants' behavior (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). Moreover, it provides frequent qualitative insights, such as detailed descriptions and narratives, that enrich the research findings by providing profound understanding of observed situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Setting and Participants

Forty-three students (32 males, 22 females), aged between 18 and 20, selected from 2 groups of General Foundation Program (GFP), participated in this study. The participants were chosen from level 3 (Intermediate) and level 4 (advanced) as these levels determine their future majors. All the participants were native Arabic speakers sharing similar experiential background in primary and secondary education, and had studied English as a mandatory course for almost 12 years before joining GFP. General Foundation Program is a four-semester preparatory program to develop English language skills of students to help study their chosen specializations. The participants were selected using convenience sampling method due to its practicality and accessibility.

Data Collection

This research employed two primary data collection instruments: observations checklist and open-ended notes. The instruments were designed after careful consideration to facilitate the systematic collection of data and to allow apprehension of both qualitative and quantitative information during observation sessions. A well-structured observation checklist which would serve as a guiding tool for observer was developed to figure out specific behaviors, events, or variables of interest within the observed context. Observation checklist facilitates the researcher to capture a wide range of behaviors using predetermined categories and checkboxes. This effectiveness is valuable in a busy or fast-paced observational settings (Denzing & Lincoln, 2018). Open-ended notes accompanied the structured observation checklist where the observer captures qualitative descriptions, contextual details, and any unanticipated incidences during the observation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

Procedures

This particular research employed a variety of materials and resources to promote effective vocabulary instructions. The materials chosen was based on the specific objective of the research study and the exigency to establish an engaging and interactive learning environment for the participants. Different stages to teach vocabulary and the key elements of each stage are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Vocabulary Teaching Stages and Key Elements and Activities

Stages	Key Elements/Activities
Introduction and Presentation	-Introduce new words
	-Provide context
	-Spotlight meaning, word forms, and
Practice and Repetition	pronunciation
	-Drills
	-Repetitions (T, T-S, S-S)
	-Exercises
Contextual Use	-Vocabulary games
	-Understand word usage in context
Review and Assessment	-Use new words in sentences

Integration with other skills	-Gamified review (Deck Toys, Quizlet) -Assessment of vocabulary (quizzes, kahoot, Quizizz)
Autonomous Learning	-Using new words in speaking and writing paragraphs. -Teach vocabulary learning Techniques -Encourage independent vocabulary acquisition

Rationale behind Vocabulary Teaching Activities at each stage

Introduction and Presentation

In designing and implementing vocabulary teaching activities across different stages, careful consideration was given to maximizing learning effectiveness. In the Introduction and presentation stage, providing context, highlighting meaning, word forms, and pronunciation was prioritized to aid comprehension and retention. The focus was on creating solid foundation for vocabulary learning. By using flash card, learners engage in active recall and spaced repetition, promoting efficient and self-paced learning. Providing context and associating new words with familiar concepts enhance comprehension and retention.

Practice and Repetition

The repetition and practice stage emphasizes reinforcing vocabulary through various activities like drills, repetitions, and games. These activities aim to strengthen memory, retention, establish neural connections, and promote automatic recall. They provide learners with ample exposure to vocabulary, enhancing language proficiency.

Contextual Use

Contextual use activities help learners understand word usage in real world scenarios. By placing words within sentences or debates, learners grasp their practical application, enhancing reading comprehension and effective communication. This approach reinforces active recall and provides a contextual framework for vocabulary.

Review and Assessment

Review and assessment activities employ gamified and digital tools to make vocabulary review engaging. These interactive experiences encourage active learning, immediate feedback, context based understanding. Assessment in various formats, such as quizzes, and games, reinforce vocabulary knowledge, ensuring a comprehensive grasp of word meanings.

Integration with other skills

Integrating vocabulary learning with other language skills promotes a holistic understanding of word usage. By using new words in speaking, writing, debates, and presentations, learners enhance their ability to communicate coherently and articulate

ideas effectively. These activities merge vocabulary application with speaking and writing skills, fostering practical language use.

Autonomous Learning

Autonomous learning activities encourage independent vocabulary acquisition. Students engage with language learning apps, maintain personal vocabulary journals, and utilize online word maps to explore new words in an enjoyable manner. These activities foster a proactive approach to vocabulary expansion, promoting practical application and deeper understanding in real-life contexts.

Classroom Procedures During the Intervention

The prescribed course book from which the vocabulary is taught is Pathways 2 & 3: Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking (2012), Becky Tarver Chase and Kristin L. Johannsen, First edition. The researchers prepared the vocabulary flash cards, activities, exercises, and games based on the topics suggested for the semester in the delivery plan. We also included different vocabulary teaching strategies in their lesson plans to help them learn vocabulary easily. Some of the exercise and activities were done in the live sessions and other games, activities, and exercises were assigned for completion asynchronously. For example, all the stages except stage 1 was partially done in live session and partially asynchronous. Each semester 5 topics are suggested for the semester. Each topic is supposed to be taught for 2 weeks. Each topic has Lesson A & Lesson B. At the beginning of each lesson there are 10 new words to be learned. The students are tested on all the new words learned throughout semester at the end of the semester in the form a vocabulary quiz and marks obtained in this quiz is considered as a summative assessment and are added to their final grades.

In the first lesson for each week when a new unit has to be started, the teacher researcher begins the lesson by introducing new vocabulary words using flash cards with the images related to the words, meanings, and/or word forms. And make sure to clearly pronounce each word. Once the new words are introduced and presented, context for each word was offered by using the word in a sentence. The words are from the real-life scenarios. After Presenting the new words students are asked to read the short passage given in the course book that has the new vocabulary words. Students are required to highlight/circle the vocabulary word in the text to draw attention to them. At this stage word forms were explained and attention was given to correct pronunciation and stress patterns. As an extended activity Deck Toys a gamification application was introduced to students where they have flashcards with image on one side and target vocabulary on the other side. Students were expected to review flashcards individually, associating the word with its visual representation. At one-point word association activity was also implemented where the teacher researcher displayed a picture or write a word related to one of the new vocabulary words on the board, and ask the students to brainstorm and share words or ideas related to the presented word.

Stage two of the vocabulary lesson involves Repetition and Practice. At this stage we did the word repetition drill by calling out the vocabulary words, and have students repeat them multiple times in quick sessions. This exercise promotes memory retention and

builds confidence in word pronunciation. The entire class was engaged in the choral repetition for a few times. We varied it by having boys and girls alternate saying the words. As an extended activity vocabulary quiz show was implemented where students were divided into teams and they answer questions related to vocabulary words. This interactive format reinforces word meanings and encourages healthy competition. An extended activity that could be used at this stage is vocabulary cards: Mixing two groups of vocabulary cards with word on one and meaning on another and asking students to match them.

The third stage is Contextual use of the new vocabulary words. We used a few activities at this stage to provide context for the words to students. Sentence fill activity where students were provided with blanks where they must insert the correct vocabulary words. The context clues were included within the sentence to help students select appropriate words. Another exercise was context clue story, we shared a short story with vocabulary words embedded in it with students and encouraged them to highlight or underline the words and use context to infer their meanings. After which the meanings are discussed in groups.

The next stage is Review and assessment of vocabulary. This was most liked stage of our vocabulary teaching students thoroughly enjoyed doing this as we incorporated a gamified approach. Deck Toys platform and quizlet was used. The researchers utilized a range of engaging activities such as Vocabulary quiz show, word Bingo, Vocabulary Crossword, and many more to review the vocabulary taught. This gamification approach transforms vocabulary review into interactive, enjoyable experiences, encouraging active learning with immediate feedback. It adds an element of competition, exploration, and problem-solving, motivating students to actively participate in vocabulary acquisition, retention, and application.

Vocabulary assessment was done using digital tools like Quizizz, kahoot, H5P and Moodle. Select from variety of activity formats such as Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs), Fill in the Blanks, Matching Pairs, and Anagrams. These assessments effectively evaluate vocabulary knowledge, catering to different learning styles and preferences. They offer opportunities for instant feedback, customization, and review, ultimately reinforcing vocabulary skills and aiding revision for enhanced comprehension.

As the vocabulary words were taken from the listening and Speaking course book, the researchers integrated the vocabulary with other skills like Speaking and Writing through various engaging activities. Students were instructed to speak on different topics using vocabulary words they learnt. students prepare speeches or presentations centered around vocabulary themes, requiring them to articulate ideas effectively using the newly learned words. They were also encouraged to use these words in writing essays. As an extended integration activity the students can be encouraged to vocabulary storytelling, where they compose and share short narratives incorporating new vocabulary words, fostering both speaking and writing skills.

FINDINGS

The study found that interactive language learning activities provided a wealth of benefits for learners. These include significant enhancements in vocabulary retention, comprehension skills, and the practical application of newly acquired words in different scenarios. Furthermore, participation in interactive exercises bolsters learners' confidence, enabling them to communicate more effectively and express themselves with assurance. Effective communication skills are also honed through these activities, as learners learn to articulate their thoughts, ideas, and opinions clearly and coherently. Additionally, engaging in discussions, debates, and presentations encourages critical thinking, pushing learners to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information. The dynamic and engaging nature of interactive methods fosters motivation and enjoyment in the learning process, keeping learners enthusiastic and eager to progress. Collaborative exercises within these activities promote peer interaction and idea exchange, enriching not only language skills but also cultural understanding and global awareness. Immediate feedback and correction during interactive activities help refine vocabulary usage, pronunciation, and grammatical accuracy. Moreover, contextual learning facilitated by interactive methods ensures that vocabulary becomes more meaningful when applied within specific real-life contexts, which contributes to long-term retention. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that while interactive methods excelled in these aspects, they also posed certain challenges, such as resource-intensive planning, classroom management complexities, potential participation imbalances, and the need for balancing fluency and accuracy. Therefore, educators must carefully consider both the advantages and potential drawbacks when integrating interactive activities into language education, striving for a balanced and effective approach that maximizes the benefits while addressing challenges.

Proposed Solutions for Existing Challenges

To overcome the challenges identified in the research findings, several effective solutions can be implemented. Co-teachers can collaborate and share resources to alleviate the resource-intensive nature of planning interactive activities. Proper training in classroom management strategies coupled with clear guidelines and instructions can address complexities in managing interactive sessions. Strategies such as role assignments and monitoring can balance participation among learners. Balancing fluency with accuracy is attainable through a mix of controlled and free-speaking activities, complemented by tailored feedback approaches. Diverse assessment methods, including self-assessment and peer review, provide a holistic view of learners' progress. Preserving authenticity involves incorporating real-life scenarios and authentic materials.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this comprehensive exploration of interactive strategies aimed at enriching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) vocabulary, was to delve into a diverse array of approaches that bridge the gap between traditional vocabulary teaching methods and the dynamic landscape of technology-driven pedagogies. Vocabulary, being a fundamental pillar in language learning, has been shown to significantly impact

learners' overall language proficiency. As such, employing effective strategies to enhance vocabulary acquisition is imperative for successful language education.

Traditional methods, though foundational, often fall short in sustaining long-term vocabulary retention and active application in real-life communication. The advent of technology has paved the way for innovative and engaging approaches that cater to diverse learning styles, promoting motivation, interactivity, and personalized learning experiences. Gamification and digital tools used in vocabulary teaching present exciting opportunities to immerse learners in vocabulary acquisition through interactive, contextual, and enjoyable methods.

Moreover, the integration of vocabulary instruction with other language skills amplifies its practicality and usability. Incorporating new words into speaking and writing exercises, and encouraging autonomous learning through language learning apps and personal vocabulary journals, empowers learners to take ownership of their language acquisition journey.

In conclusion, the integration of interactive strategies in EFL vocabulary teaching is a promising pathway to nurture a more robust and enduring vocabulary knowledge among learners. It has the potential to transcend traditional boundaries, making vocabulary acquisition an engaging and effective process. However, to harness the full potential of these strategies, further research and continuous adaptation are essential to align with the evolving needs and preferences of learners. As educators, we must remain committed to exploring and embracing innovative pedagogical approaches, ensuing that learners not only master the English language but also develop a lifelong passion for effective communication.

REFERENCES

Akcayir, G., Farias Wanderley, L., Demmans Epp, C., Hewitt, J., & Mahmoudi-Nejad, A. (2021). Learning analytics dashboard use in online courses: Why and how instructors interpret discussion data. *Visualizations and Dashboards for Learning Analytics*, 371-397.

Bae, C. L., Therriault, D. J., & Redifer, J. L. (2019). Investigating the testing effect: Retrieval as a characteristic of effective study strategies. *Learning and Instruction*, *60*, 206-214.

Baena Carreño, L. Á., & Espitia Hurtado, S. R. (2016). *Enhancing english language learning through hip-hop culture* (Doctoral dissertation, Universidad de La Sabana).

Barr, C. D., Uccelli, P., & Phillips Galloway, E. (2019). Specifying the academic language skills that support text understanding in the middle grades: The design and validation of the core academic language skills construct and instrument. *Language learning*, *69*(4), 978-1021.

Boone, G., De Wilde, V., & Eyckmans, J. (2023). A longitudinal study into learners' productive collocation knowledge in L2 German and factors affecting the learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *45*(2), 503-525.

Boughaba, M. *The Contribution of Students' Vocabulary Mastery Toward Reading Comprehension The case study of Third Year Middle School Learners of Djaber Ben Hayane Middle School 2020-2021* (Doctoral dissertation, université Kasdi Merbah-Ouargla).

Cai, Y., & Cheung, H. (2021). A dynamic language ability system framework for diagnosing EMI students' readiness of English language ability. In *Rethinking EMI* (pp. 141-160). Routledge.

Chen, C. M., Li, M. C., & Lin, M. F. (2022). The effects of video-annotated learning and reviewing system with vocabulary learning mechanism on English listening comprehension and technology acceptance. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *35*(7), 1557-1593.

Chen, S. L., & Liu, Y. T. (2021). Learning by designing or learning by playing? A comparative study of the effects of game-based learning on learning motivation and on short-term and long-term conversational gains. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 1-15.

Chotipaktanasook, N., & Reinders, H. (2018). A massively multiplayer online role-playing game and its effects on interaction in the second language: Play, interact, and learn. In *Handbook of research on integrating technology into contemporary language learning and teaching* (pp. 367-389). IGI Global.

Deterding, S., Dixon, D., Khaled, R., & Nacke, L. (2011, September). From game design elements to gamefulness: defining" gamification". In *Proceedings of the 15th international academic MindTrek conference: Envisioning future media environments* (pp. 9-15).

Fusch, P., Fusch, G. E., & Ness, L. R. (2018). Denzin's paradigm shift: Revisiting triangulation in qualitative research. *Journal of Sustainable Social Change*, *10*(1), 2.

Hsiao, P. W., & Su, C. H. (2021). A study on the impact of STEAM education for sustainable development courses and its effects on student motivation and learning. *Sustainability*, *13*(7), 3772.

Huang, C. H., HSIAO, L. H., & Shin-Lin, K. O. (2021). Effect of Applying Case Method to Anti-Corruption Education on Learning Motivation and Learning Effectiveness. *Revista de Cercetare si Interventie Sociala*, *73*.

Huang, Y., & Jun Zhang, L. (2020). Does a process-genre approach help improve students' argumentative writing in English as a foreign language? Findings from an intervention study. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *36*(4), 339-364.

Kaharuddin, A. (2018). The communicative grammar translation method: a practical method to teach communication skills of English. *ETERNAL (English, Teaching, Learning, and Research Journal)*, *4*(2), 232-254.

Kim, K. B., Ahn, Y. J., & Kim, H. B. (2023). Core English skills affecting Korean hoteliers' perceived language proficiency.

Kolb, S. M. (2012). Grounded theory and the constant comparative method: Valid research strategies for educators. *Journal of emerging trends in educational research and policy studies*, *3*(1), 83-86.

Kolb, S. M. (2012). Grounded theory and the constant comparative method: Valid research strategies for educators. *Journal of emerging trends in educational research and policy studies*, *3*(1), 83-86.

Kuo, H. C., Yang, Y. T. C., Chen, J. S., Hou, T. W., & Ho, M. T. (2021). The impact of design thinking PBL robot course on college students' learning motivation and creative thinking. *IEEE Transactions on Education*, *65*(2), 124-131.

Kuo, H. C., Yang, Y. T. C., Chen, J. S., Hou, T. W., & Ho, M. T. (2021). The impact of design thinking PBL robot course on college students' learning motivation and creative thinking. *IEEE Transactions on Education*, *65*(2), 124-131.

Lee, D. (2017). *Competing discourses: Perspective and ideology in language*. Routledge.

Lee, S. M. (2019). Her Story or their own stories? Digital game-based learning, student creativity, and creative writing. *ReCALL*, *31*(3), 238-254.

Li, M., & Zhang, M. (2023). Collaborative writing in L2 classrooms: A research agenda. *Language Teaching*, *56*(1), 94-112.

Liu, C. C., Wang, D., Hwang, G. J., Tu, Y. F., Li, N. Y., & Wang, Y. (2023). Improving information discernment skills: through a concept mapping-based information evaluating framework in a gamified learning context. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 1-23.

Mahmudi, T., & Mirioğlu, M. (2020). The effect of etymological instruction on receptive and productive vocabulary learning of adult EFL learners in Turkey. *Athens Journal of Philology*, *7*(2).

Moyer, A. (2004). *Age, accent, and experience in second language acquisition: an integrated approach to critical period inquiry* (Vol. 7). Multilingual Matters.

Retnaningsih, W. (2023). Turnitin Impact of WhatsApp-Integrated Flipped Learning on Developing English Speech Acts of Requests: Students' Performance, Perception, and Acceptance.

Sadr Alavian, H., Asadollahfam, H., & Yousefi, M. H. (2022). Iranian EFL Teachers' Remotivational Strategies: The Integration of Ecological Systems Theory and Self-Determination Theory. *Teaching English as a Second Language Quarterly (Formerly Journal of Teaching Language Skills)*, *41*(4), 87-112.

Shang, H. F. (2017). An exploration of asynchronous and synchronous feedback modes in EFL writing. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, *29*, 496-513.

Smith, G. F., Kyle, K., & Crossley, S. A. (2020). Word lists and the role of academic vocabulary use in high stakes speaking assessments. *International Journal of Learner Corpus Research*, *6*(2), 193-219.

Sun, X., Li, L., Ding, G., Wang, R., & Li, P. (2019). Effects of language proficiency on cognitive control: Evidence from resting-state functional connectivity. *Neuropsychologia, 129*, 263-275.

Tai, T. Y., Chen, H. H. J., & Todd, G. (2022). The impact of a virtual reality app on adolescent EFL learners' vocabulary learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *35*(4), 892-917.

Uthaya Kumar, S., & Sandaran, S. C. (2018). Use of action songs and Total Physical Response to promote the development of listening skills among year 4, low enrolment-Tamil vernacular primary school students in Malaysia. *LSP International Journal*, *5*(2).

Vuong, Q. H., La, V. P., Nguyen, T. H. T., Nguyen, M. H., Vuong, T. T., Vuong, H. M., & Ho, M. T. (2021). Impacts of parents and reading promotion on creating a reading culture: Evidence from a developing context. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *131*, 106311.

Wang, Z., Hwang, G. J., Yin, Z., & Ma, Y. (2020). A Contribution-oriented self-directed mobile learning ecology approach to improving EFL students' vocabulary retention and second language motivation. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, *23*(1), 16-29.

Wang, Z., Hwang, G. J., Yin, Z., & Ma, Y. (2020). A Contribution-oriented self-directed mobile learning ecology approach to improving EFL students' vocabulary retention and second language motivation. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, *23*(1), 16-29.

Webb, S. (2005). Receptive and productive vocabulary learning: The effects of reading and writing on word knowledge. *Studies in second language acquisition*, *27*(1), 33-52.

Webb, S. (2009). The effects of receptive and productive learning of word pairs on vocabulary knowledge. *RELC journal*, *40*(3), 360-376.

Wu, Y. L. (2018). Gamification design: A comparison of four m-learning courses. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, *55*(4), 470-478.

Xie, H., Zou, D., Zhang, R., Wang, M., & Kwan, R. (2019). Personalized word learning for university students: a profile-based method for e-learning systems. *Journal of computing in Higher education*, *31*, 273-289.

Ying, Z., & ISMAIL, N. B. (2022). The Effectiveness of Digital Game Playing on Vocabulary Learning for Chinese EFL Students. *resmilitaris*, *12*(1).

Zainuddin, Z. (2018). Students' learning performance and perceived motivation in gamified flipped-class instruction. *Computers & education*, *126*, 75-88.