

The effect of games on grade 10th students' motivation in English class at Tran Hung Dao high school

Le Thi Bay*

*Tran Hung Dao high School, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam

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Abstract- This paper aims at investigating the effect of games on grade 10th students' motivation in English class at Tran Hung Dao high school, Quang Ninh province and seeks to determine the extent to which using games in learning process affects the improvement in students' motivation in learning process, how students experience the teacher's practice and behavior and measure the students' perceptions of the using games in learning environment with respect to its effectiveness. Questionnaire, observation and structured interview were used as the main tools to collect data. Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were used to provide enough data for the present study. The results from the data revealed that the using games in learning process significantly affected students' motivation in language classes. In addition, most of the students involved in the study are generally happy about using language games in their study and they recognize the benefits of the language games in enhancing interaction between them and their classmates as well as their teacher

Index Terms- language games, high school students, motivation, attitudes, performance.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the current globalization and integration trend, English is considered to be the most widely used language in the world, as nearly 60 countries use English as their primary language, their mother tongue, and nearly 100 countries use English as second-language English. Therefore, this foreign language plays a very important role in the current integration of globalization.

The demand for training and development of foreign languages, especially English in Vietnam is increasingly focused and enhanced. However, at present, although the focus on foreign language training at the school level, the results have not yet reached the required standards. The objectives set out in the project "Teaching and learning foreign languages in the national education system for the period of 2008 - 2020" have created a strong impetus in teaching and learning foreign languages; However, from the objective to the actual results of the project, the distance is very far. On November 16, 2016, Mr. Phung Xuan Nha - Minister of Education and Training announced that "the government had failed to meet the goals of the NFL scheme for the 2008-2020 periods" (VN, 2016). Limited English proficiency results in loss of the opportunity to study and work for many students.

So as to learn a language well, students demand a relaxed atmosphere that increases motivating and this can be gained through games. Using games in teaching not only helps students to learn better but also increase students' motivation, rapport, cooperation and social interaction. On the one hand, playing games helped the students get ability for language, this good language ability helps students be self-confident and express themselves in their future life.

The game is very useful to improve motivation among shy students who cannot express their feelings or thoughts in front of others. By using the game, students can be more active, self-reliant and energetic to study about the environment, the world they live in, and take part in the teaching and learning process. We can teach all skills and components through game play, based on a learner-centered approach, while we are teaching; we must pay attention to the meaning, relevance and level of learners (Widodo, 2006)

At Tran Hung Dao High School, students live mainly in mountainous areas, with difficult conditions, their English communication environment is not available, and having a few chances to access learning languages resources as well as opportunities to communicate in foreign languages. Most students who have moderate level of learning, limited access to learning and access to outside knowledge, lack of opportunity to practice communication, Besides, being a foreign language teacher, the researcher have been step by step innovating, integrating and diversifying teaching methods into teaching periods in my classes to create the most comfortable atmosphere as possible for students to access the foreign language what they are learning best

Adding that, teaching English in most of Vietnam public schools often only focuses on tasks and exercises in the textbook, lack of many important activities, such as: active discovery, analysis, interpretation, problem-solving, memory, and physical activities, which leads to the boredom and be difficult for motivating students in learning foreign language. Hence in order to improve the teaching English in the classes more and more efficiently, as well as overcome these weaknesses, that is reason the researcher conduct the research "The effect of games on grade 10th students' motivation in English language class at Tran Hung Dao high school". And this research was implemented at Tran Hung Dao High School, Quang Ninh Province.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Definition of Games.

According to Martinson and Sauman (2008, p. 478), "Games are effective tools for learning because they offer students a

hypothetical environment in which they can explore alternative decisions without the risk of failure. Thought and action are combined into purposeful behavior to gain a goal. Playing games teaches students how to strategize, to consider alternatives, and to think flexibly". In other words, games are fun activities that help promote thinking, learning, interacting and solving problem. Normally, games have an aspect that permits the players to produce information in a short time period. Some games require the players to participate in a physical activity or complete a mental challenge.

However, Lengelling and Malarcher (1997) say that choosing a game is not easy task, it should be governed by some rules to guarantee the success of them. So, while planning games, teachers should take into consideration the following features: Classroom space, noise, materials necessary for the game, the amount of time needed for each game, and the level, culture, interest and age of students.

2. Educational Games

Like computer games or online games but these educational games focus on playing in the classrooms, and our definition maintains that such games require the involvement of rules, competition, relaxation and learning. A major purpose for using games in class is to promote students' motivation in learning English.

Prensky (2006 and 2011) defined educational games as interactive plays that teach us goals, rules, adaptation, problem solving, interaction, all represented as a story. They give us the fundamental needs of learning by providing - enjoyment, passionate involvement, structure, motivation, ego gratification, adrenaline, creativity, social interaction and emotion.

3. Games in English language teaching.

Games are useful for students involved in the learning of English since games can strengthen students' motivation and self-confidence. Using games in English teaching process to raise students' motivation and confidence which can then promote higher levels of English learning process. By using a game which helps students lots of opportunities to do, to act, and to move, they can acquire a greater quantity of meaningful lesson.

Foreman (2003, p.16) states that "Learning through performance requires active discovery, analysis, interpretation, problem-solving, memory, and physical activity and extensive cognitive processing". In other words, games provide a constructivist classroom environment where students and their learning are central, from there, students draw their own meaning from these experiences while learning from their mistakes and also from each other.

In other words, games stimulate students' activities in classroom and as a result, students become motivated and willing to learn. Philips (1993) supports this opinion by her statement that enjoyable activity is memorable then and the possible success that the children could reach in language learning will develop motivation for their further learning.

Games allow for creativity, independence and higher thinking. Usually, questions made by the classroom teacher are fact based and have only one answer, not allowing for creativity, personal expression. The answer is either right or wrong, but games can allow for multiple answers. They improve participation, self-confident, and vocabulary usage and moreover, games allow the students to see that there are many ways to solve the same problem. It is more like real life.

In short, the use of games has great pedagogical value in enhancing students' motivation and can be a springboard for teamwork. In a classroom based on teaching through games, there are different types of motivated interactions that make teaching-learning process enjoyable in learners-learners, learners and teachers' interactions.

4. Motivation

Gardner (1985) said that motivation is perceived as a goal-directed factor since it involves four aspects: a goal, effortful behavior, a desire to reach the goal, and favorable attitudes toward an activity. Motivation works as the starting point for learning and supporting the process of foreign language learning. In fact, if there is lack of motivation, no student will be able to continue with the process of achieving language proficiency; in the other word, high motivation will be useful for learners to attain proper proficiency in the second language, even if their ability or learning conditions are not appropriate (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). Motivation has been admitted as a remarkable factor in language learning success. Motivation research has evolved over the years through several stages demonstrating gradual integration with developments in motivational psychology, while having a clear focus on aspects of motivation related to language learning (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2012).

Harmer (2002) said that motivation is a type of initiative that encourages someone to do things to reach a goal. Moreover, this is fundamental to succeed in most fields of learning; without such motivation, we will not be able to make the effort to learn. So, it is necessary to understand the its role when learning a language. The author distinguishes between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation coming from outside and inside the individual respectively.

Research has admitted intrinsic motivation as a decisive factor to stimulate success. Furthermore, in a model of intrinsic motivation proposed by Vallerand (1997), he found that intrinsic motivation is related to knowledge, accomplishment, and stimulation. These three aspects are respectively associated with exploring new ideas and developing knowledge, sensations embraced in attempting to master a task or achieve a goal, and sensations stimulated by performing the task. This kind of motivation is referred to as extrinsic motivation, the motivation that students bring into the classroom from outside (Harmer, 2007).

According to Thomas (2004), Robbins and Timothy (2007). "Motivation is the driving force by which humans achieve their goals. Motivation is said to be intrinsic or extrinsic. The term is generally used for humans but it can also be used to describe the causes for animal behavior as well". This study refers to human motivation. According to various theories, motivation may be rooted in a basic need to minimize physical pain and maximize pleasure, or it may include specific needs such as eating and resting, or a desired object, goal, state of being, ideal, or it may be attributed to less-apparent reasons such as altruism, selfishness, morality, or avoiding mortality. Conceptually, motivation should not be confused with either volition or optimism. Motivation is related to, but distinct from emotion.

However, in order to understand of terms used in this study, the following definitions are given to research.

The students' motivation is the desire to attend and learn the contents of the subject or the study program, which is the decision-making process of students on the orientation, concentration and

efforts of students in the study process. Learning motivation increases the knowledge and skills acquired by students in the learning process. This is reflected in their academic results. Students will not be able to get the best learning results if they do not have the right learning attitude. Learning attitude, in which motivation is the deciding factor.

5. Previous studies

Although there has been much research in the field of motivation, some studies have emphasized the impact of using games on English foreign language learners' motivation.

AlHaj (2011) conducted research to explore and solve a motivational problem in English foreign language Sudanese secondary students. The author used previous studies, direct observations, and guided interviews so as to obtain valuable information. The results showed that the lack of motivation in English foreign language classrooms within the study was due to the following factors: teachers and their training, schools, families and the lack of developing programs which maintain students' interest in learning process.

Additionally, it was found that a variety of classroom activities play an essential part in motivating students and facilitating the acquisition of English foreign language. Thus, it is recommended that teachers use debates, games, group work, pair-work, interviewing, problem-solving and role-plays to stimulate or motivate English foreign language learners.

In Tuan's (2012) study, key motivational factors which were influencing students' English learning performance and some effective ways of fostering these factors were analyzed. The aim of the research was to find out whether motivation had any impact on students' English learning process. Results showed that 94% of the participants agreed that motivational activities are necessary. Students love playing games, reading, translation, group or pair work, role-plays, and including television for watching films in English and cassettes for listening.

Chou (2014) examined the extent to which activities such as games, songs, and stories helped and motivated 72 Taiwanese English foreign language primary school pupils (between the ages of 8 and 11) to learn English vocabulary. The instruments used to collect qualitative and quantitative data were self-assessment questionnaires, achievement tests, and interviews. The information collected was analyzed using statistics software. The qualitative data was coded, classified and reported according to their similarities and differences. The results demonstrated that games, songs, and stories had a positive effect on learners' motivation to increase their English vocabulary.

Kamra, (2010) concluded that using games is an efficient way to teach English in the classroom. This way you get the best results in the classroom. It arouses students' motivation. Games prepare young learners for life and they acquire positive social attitudes. Games teach sharing, helping each other and working as a team. A child learns by doing, living, trying and imitating. So this kind of learning is lasting. During games some feelings such as the pleasure of winning and the ambition of losing may arise. This gives to the teacher an idea about student's character. So games are must-have activities for hardworking teachers. This is in the line with Buckingham (2003)

In conclusion, Prensky (2011) argued that students are naturally motivated to play games. Serious games are interactive play that teach students goals, rules, adaptation, problem solving,

interaction, all represented as a story. They give them the fundamental needs of learning by providing enjoyment, passionate involvement, structure, motivation, ego gratification, adrenaline, creativity, social interaction and emotion. "Playing has a deep biological, evolutionarily important, function, which has to be done specifically with learning." (Prensky, 2011, p. 134).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. 1. Research design

Action research is adopted as the research approach to answer the two research questions and achieve the aim and objectives of the study. According to Ferrance (2000), action research is a suitable method for teachers who want to make appropriate changes to student learning and measure the possible effects, and he demonstrates "Action research is used to chart the effects of implementation of a curriculum or strategy, to study student learning and responses." This method is also justified to offer significant benefits for the researcher, who is also a teacher.

2. Participants

The participants included 38 students in class 10A1, there were 20 females and 18 males and all of them are at the ages of fifteen at Tran Hung Dao high school. Most of them come from mountainous areas not have many opportunities to learn English. Their parents are mostly farmers, their living condition is quite low, their parents only pay attention to earning a living in order to support their living condition as well as caring their children, they have no time to take care of their children's learning.

3. Research questions

1. What is the impact of using games on grade 10th students' motivation in Tran Hung Dao high school?
2. How are the students' attitudes towards using games in the English foreign language classroom?

4. Instruments

* Questionnaire

In this study, the questionnaire which consists of six items were designed and delivered to all students. This questionnaire was designed in a five point Likert-scale which descend the meaning respectively from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree to strongly disagree. This model is helpful to figure out students' reaction, attitude, and opinion toward the educational games applied during the treatment time. All of the questions were written in English then translated into Vietnamese to make sure students understand all the items in the questionnaire.

Each question was designed to serve different purpose. To be specific, the 1st item aims to explore students' perception on the important of game in learning English, the 2nd item is to explore students' opinion on using games in teaching English to apply in real context conversation, the 3rd items aims at exploring students' understanding of the lesson when learning with games. Item 4 explores the students' perception on the effectiveness of language games, item 5 explores students' opinion and interaction when learning English with games. The last items deal with students' motivation when learning English with games.

* Observation

Observation was another method used to collect data in this study. Two teachers from the researcher's English division was invited to observe the teaching and learning process. The observers used an available observation form to take notes. In this study, the observation sheet was designed to explore the class atmosphere

and student's ability to speak English when applying language games in learning and teaching. Observers used the observation sheet to tick and check where appropriate with the actual situations in the class.

** Structured interview*

In additional to questionnaire and observation, the interview was conducted to explore students' feelings and opinions in using language games in teaching and learning English. Five students were randomly chosen from class 10A1 to answer the questions. All questions were in Vietnamese so that all students can best express their ideas. Each interview lasted 2 to 3 minutes and all the interviews were noted with the aim to explore the attitude of students to games with hope to show how enjoyable students were with the games and how well students were involved in the lessons. The information was used to reinforce one of the aspects of research questions mentioned above. Like using questionnaire, applying interview also has certain drawback. Some students followed the crowd and they do not express their own feeling because they probably think that their answers can affect their marks in class. Therefore, the researcher met them in person to avoid those negative effects.

4. Data collection and data analysis

The action research was conducted in two months in class 10A1 at Tran Hung Dao high school. Class 10A1 was taught with the implementation of language games integrated when learning language skills. When teaching in 10A1, after students learnt with games, they were asked to use the language they had learned in the game. For example, in one of the students play on a situation and context. Then, they were asked to use it in front of the class. It has much interest when they were divided into several groups and each group was responsible for role playing a specific part. Actually, each week students have 3 periods (45 minutes each) of English. In week 1 and week 2 of the second semester (school year of 2018-2019), there were 2 observations with 2 lessons without language games. In week 6 and week 8, two lessons with language games were observed to have data of students' participation and speaking time during the lesson.

At the end of week 8, questionnaires were delivered to all 38 students in class 10A1. Students were asked to write their responses to the items and then submit to the researcher.

Structured interviews were implemented in week 9 of the semester to gain data of students' feeling and opinions on using language games in studying English for the present study.

The data was categorized this way simply for seeking answers to research questions raised for this study. The quantitative data from questionnaire and classroom observation were collected, analyzed and classified to synthesize in the table statistics. The results were shown in the figures and charts. The data from the structured interview were counted and presented by quoting relevant responses from the respondents

IV. FINDINGS

1. Results of questionnaire.

From students' responses for the 1st item in the questionnaire, most of the students (64%) strongly agree and 4% of the students agree that games play an important role when learning English while 20% of the students think it is neutral, only (12%) of the students disagree and no student strongly disagrees with this statement. It is clear that students realize how essential of using

games in learning English process, they may find it an inseparable activity in the classroom.

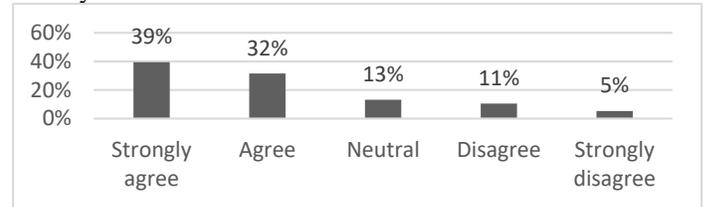


Chart 1: Students' ideas of the importance of using games in English learning process.

Additionally, students can use English in real contexts by studying through games, but it does not at the same rate. In fact, 39% of participants strongly agree that there are more chances for them to use games in real life situations while 32% of the students agree that they are able to apply games when they join in English learning process. 16% of the respondents cannot use the games in their learning process and the number of students answer neutral is 13%. This means that most of students recognize the purpose of using games is not only for creating excitement but also for providing students opportunity to speak out in class. The data are shown as following:

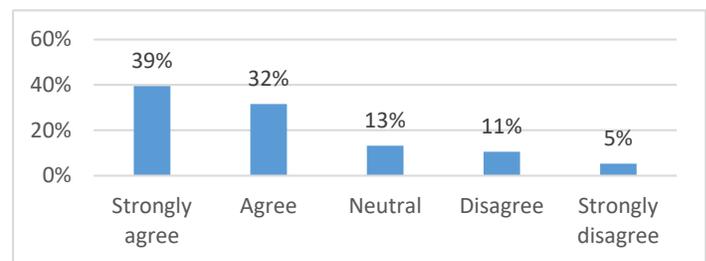


Chart 2: Students' opinion of using games in real contexts.

After English lessons, 74% students agree they can understand and practice lessons in class better through games, while 14% of the students responded that they were not able to understand and practice the lessons, 11% of the students answered they had no ideas. These figures confirm that the understanding of students is high and they really involve and understand in learning languages.

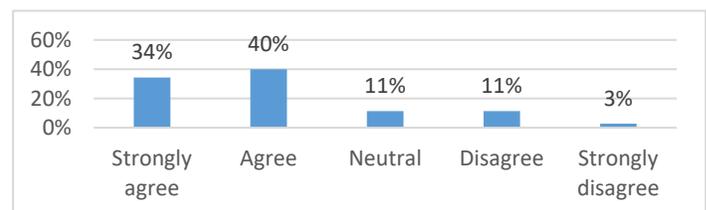


Chart 3: Students' understanding of the lesson

In exploring students' attitude towards using language games in teaching English, 27% of the students strongly agree that teacher's teaching method is effective and useful, 57% of the students agree with the idea and only 11% of the students disagree and strongly disagree with this statements. This indicates that most students like their teacher's new way of applying games in teaching process. As a result, they can be better in learning English and achieving their target.

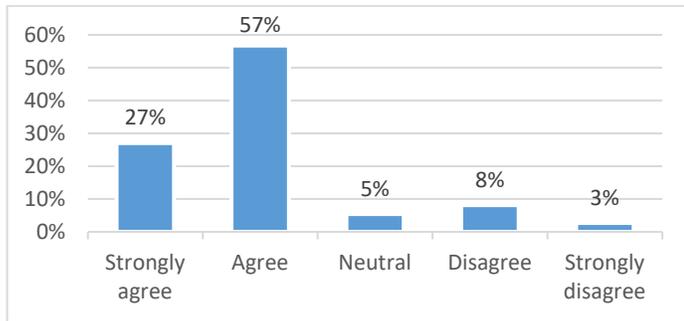


Chart 4: Students' attitude towards teaching method

Besides, the frequency of interaction among students-students and students-teacher through games is highlighted 18% of the students strongly agree that they use more English in their communication with their classmates and their teacher than learning English without games. 53% of the students agree they are able to interact with other students as well as with teacher. 13% of students say it is neutral and 16% of students disagree and strongly disagree with this idea. The data are presented in the following chart:

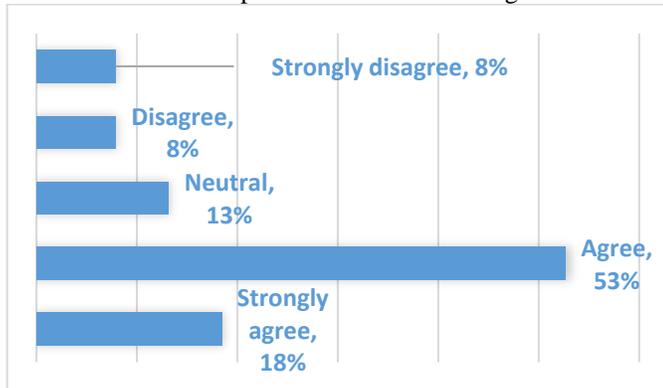


Chart 5: Students' interaction in English lessons

In Chart 6 below, it is clear that students had motivation when learning English with games since 97% of the students agreed that using games in learning English create strong motivation to practice English in class. Only 1 student (3%) did not agree with this idea.

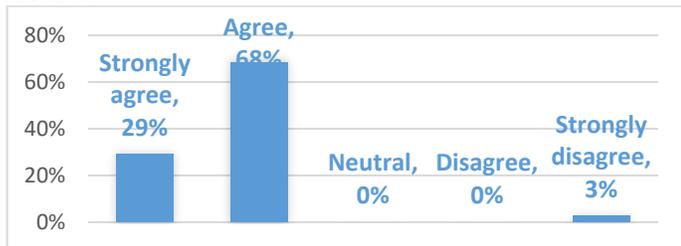


Chart 6: Students' motivation in learning English with language games

In sum, the above findings show that using games in teaching process can create strong motivation for students to practice English as well as provide real life situations so that students are able to apply what they studied to interact between students-teacher and students -students in class and outside class. This is a very positive outcome, particularly in light of the association between students' motivation and learning success.

2 Results of observation

When comparing these lessons with those using games, students had less chance to communicate and exchange ideas with others: about 48% for students spent too much time to do exercises.

Moreover, here the atmosphere was quiet and sometimes nervous but not funny and exciting. From the observation, students were tired at the end of the lesson. In fact, competition rate was about 30% because do not compete to answer teacher's questions. Furthermore, students' motivation was identified through the atmosphere inside classroom and students' English speaking time. Needless to say, two lessons using games create active and lively learning environment and students had more chances to speak English than the ones without games.

Comparison of students' motivation through lessons.

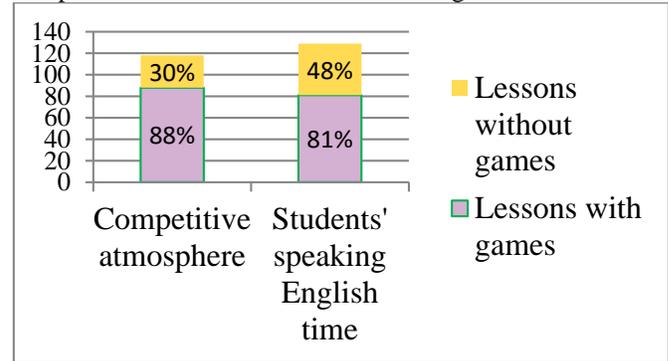


Chart 7: Comparison of students' motivation through lessons.

To sum up, findings of observation show that games seem to be relevant for students thanks to the extreme students' English speaking time as well as the collaborative learning. As a result, students can be successful in applying what they studied to real contexts.

3 Results of semi-structured interview.

The information collected from the interview, students' motivation is clarified through their feedback as well as suggestion in lessons and emotion to those games used in class. After the interviews with six students, the results are presented as below.

Question 1. Do you enjoy the games instructed by teacher?

All 6 students when interviewed responded that they "feel really exciting when studying with games" and they eagerly took part in more games and attempt to win these games. S1 said that he "enjoyed the non- stressful atmosphere, high motivation, as well as positive competition inside the classroom which is created by games". In fact, the students try to win because they receive the small gifts once they are winners. Sometimes, it is a lovely pencil, a small notebook or even lollipop or candy but these presents stimulate students to win the games as S4 said "it's lovely". S6 added "I can understand the games instructed by the teacher that made me enjoyed learning English". However, S3 made the researcher keep in mind when instructing games in class "I do not know how to play at first, so it is better to observe my classmate".

Question 2. Are you able to use new language when joining the games?

Most of the students said that they were able to use new structures when joining the games. S1 eagerly told the researcher that "I am sure I can use those structures immediately" or "why not, it's easy to practice with my friends when I am happy", said by S2. S5 added "I find it easier when speaking without pressure". Only 1 students found that it was difficult for him when he joined grammar game as he said "I need more time to think about the form to go to board and finish the game" (S4).

Question 3. Do you have more opportunities to communicate through game?

Five out of six questioned students said that they had more opportunities to communicate when joining the games. Data from observation also recorded about two third of the students often take part in the games positively. S2 said that “I have more opportunities to speak out what teacher instruct when they play the games”. S3 added “sometimes, I could not do finish the conversation but my friends forced me to finish to win the game”. S5 also explained “how could I shut my mouth when my friends kept asking me to speak”. S6 affirmed “even me, I have to speak”. However, S4 confessed “I am not good at English, even my teacher encouraged me but I think it’s difficult to speak”.

Question 4. Do you have stronger motivation when studying English with games?

When asking about motivation after studying English with games, S1 said that he “feel really interesting to learn English through the games, English is not too difficult as I thought”. S2 agreed “I think I am pretty good at playing language games”. S3 added “While I was working on the task I was thinking about how much I enjoyed the candy”. S4 believed he could do better when he said “I am suddenly stupid when everything was already clear at that time, I will do much better next time”. The similar statements were also expressed by S5 and S6.

Question 5: Are there any obstacles as you participate in the games?

Despite the fact that games bring many benefits, some students have unavoidable problems when they join the games. Most of the students said that there were not any obstacles as participating in the games, however, some minor difficulties when playing language games experienced by the students were: “I had wrong partners, they did not want to perform”, stated by S1 or “I had to run back and forth, because my friends were lazy. It was tired” mentioned by S2 or “teachers should give more time for us to prepare” (S3). S5 and S6 agreed that they need more time to be ready for the game. Only S6 had his own difficulty as he said “It’s fun but it’s difficult for me”.

In general, games or game like activities encourage most of the students positively to involve in lessons which can be seen through their motivation when playing games. Students feel confident and they are able to communicate better at the end comparing to those who are in traditional class. Although Translation Methods still affects the way students learn English, a good sign is that after the games students express their enjoyment as well as they think that games are beneficial for applying language features in their communication

V. CONCLUSION

This paper clarified the strong points of using games for students at Tran Hung Dao high school. The results from this action research expressed the positive influences of games on students’ motivation. Three kinds of datasets consisting of questionnaire, observation, and interview which showed an attempt to answer the two research questions posed at the beginning of the study and gave researcher evidence-based judgments to the innovation. They have promoted the trend of adopting games in teaching process for students at Tran Hung Dao high school. The using games in learning process offers to the students was successful due to a combination of factors. In addition, the games tasks were enjoyable, which increased their motivation to learn and gave them higher confidence in persisting with more challenging tasks.

Vitally important, pertinent games and activities should be examined to identify the most relevant ones for studying English. The upcoming study of using games in teaching process could be continuously investigated in different high school of Vietnam. Therefore, the collected information is more valid and reliable.

Games play an important role in teaching and learning process as well as they promote students’ motivation. The data was collected from the questionnaire, observation and interview were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The data analysis helped the researcher achieve the aims of the study.

Major findings of the thesis, from the thorough analysis and discussions of the data collected from the survey questionnaires and score analysis, significant findings were identified.

Firstly, it was discovered that using games in teaching and learning process did have positive effects on the students’ motivation. Games provide comprehensible input while learners interact in the group and allowing students to clarify the ways of learning new languages. Implementing games in teaching also enhanced students’ motivation to learn English in class. The strategy also allows the students to interact effectively with peers, which is also used as student-centered method. The games also provided a challenge, where they need their concentration to get the tasks done which strengthen students’ mental work. Such activities were also new to students’ experience and they think carefully to get the right answers.

Secondly, from the questionnaires, it was found that most of students had positive view toward the implementation of using games in class. Most students liked learning through games it could improve students’ motivation. Last but not least, by implementing the games in the class students could improve their interest in learning process. The win as a drive to play a language game cannot be underestimated. It is the factor which allows a learning class environment to be conditioned and shaped according to the needs of the students, the learning process, or the requirements of a course.

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AUTHORS

Le Thi Bay – Tran Hung Dao high school, Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam
Email: lebay109@gmail.com.

Correspondence Author – Le Thi Bay. Email: lebay109@gmail.com. Tel: +84.988476919.