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فاعلية الألعاب التعليمية في تعليم مفردات اللغة الانكليزية  
- دراسة تجريبية على طلبة الصف السابع الأساسي في مدارس محافظة دمشق

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# **The Effectiveness of Educational Games in Learning English Vocabulary**

**An Experimental Study on the Seventh Graders at Damascus State Schools**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements  
for Master Degree in Curricula & Methods Of Instruction**

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this study to myself, because I chose the right decision to continue this research in spite of all the bad circumstance which I went through during the past three years.

## **Abstract**

This study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of educational games in learning English vocabulary. The researcher followed both the quasi experimental and descriptive analytical approaches. The sample consisted of (131) students of the seventh grade from two schools : Jalal Farouq Al shareef for females and Badr Al deen Gzal for males during the academic year 2012/2013. The instruments of the research were pre and post tests and an attitude questionnaire. The SPSS statistical program(17.0) was used to analyze data, and (T-test) was used to test the hypotheses at the level of significance ( $\alpha=0.05$ ).

The results of the study showed that the experimental group students outperformed the control group students both in the immediate and deferred post-tests. In addition, there was a positive attitude of the experimental group towards learning English vocabulary through Educational Games.



## ***CHAPTER ONE: IDENTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH***

### **1.1–Introduction:**

It is widely recognized that English is the world's most important language which is used as a medium for international communication. With such importance attached to the English language ,it is necessary to consider the great advantages of teaching English to students both at school and university levels in Syria.

According to Stern(1983) ,"language teaching is principally an art which through the ages has pursued three major objectives :social (language as a form of communication) ,artistic –literary (language as a vehicle for artistic creation and application ) , and philosophical (linguistic analysis) (cited in Hasan,1991,p21).

Nowadays, language teaching methods focus on the development of rapid communication and the ability to communicate with people who speak other languages and to understand their ways of thinking.

Vocabulary is a great tool that we can provide students with to succeed in their lives ,because every field in our society is affected by people's language skills and their word knowledge.

Vocabulary is acquired both intentionally and incidentally .Incidental learning occurs when learners absorb vocabulary from language input (i.e. from reading and listening ). Intentional learning ,on the other hand, occurs when learners approach vocabulary acquisition through the use of some vocabulary learning strategies (kassem,2010,p2).

In the initial stages of learning a language, vocabulary plays a primary role in acquisition and communication. Vocabulary is a core component of

language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write. Vocabulary acquisition is increasingly viewed as crucial to language acquisition. Yet, learning vocabulary is often perceived as a tedious and laborious process. Therefore, many methods helping language learners to improve and learn vocabulary have been given such as listening to foreign music, watching foreign cartoons or films with subtitles, reading books, newspapers, and playing games.

Richard and Renandya (2002) assert that by saying:

Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them such as listening to the radio, listening to the native speakers, using language in different contexts, reading or watching television (cited in Al-Hwidi ,2007, p57).

One of the important strategies that may be applied in vocabulary classes is the educational games .The educational games provide a variety of activities which play an important role in the growth of the student's personality from its different sides, i.e. physical ,mental , linguistic ,social ...etc..

So ,this research is concerned with studying the relation between students' acquisition of vocabulary and playing educational games.

## 1.2–The problem of the study:

Through the researcher's experience in teaching English, which lasted for two years, she noticed that learning vocabulary didn't receive the necessary attention in the EFL classes in spite of its importance as a sub-skill. Some researchers such as: Bromley(2007), Yu-Ling(2005), Ard & Beverly(2004), Biemiller & Boote(2006), Blewitt, Rump, Shealy & Cook(2009), Cain(2007), Connor, Marrison & Slominski(2006), Coyne, McCoach & Kapp(2007), Coyne, Simmons, Kame'enni, Stoolmiller(2004), Leung(2008), McCroger, Sheng & Ball(2007), Nash & Snowling(2006), Nation, Snowling & Clarke(2007) drew the following conclusion: All the available evidence indicates that there is little emphasis on the acquisition of vocabulary in school curricula.

In addition, for many learners, studying English as a foreign language, vocabulary learning is considered too boring since they have to memorize unfamiliar words and spelling and are typically asked to complete lots of exercises. Learners find it hard to engage in such rote learning of vocabulary activities.

On the other hand, experts have figured out the characteristics of games that make vocabulary learning more effective, and listed many advantages when games are used in the classroom, including "a welcome break from the usual routine of the language class", "motivating and challenging", "effort of learning", and "language practice in the various skills." (Huyen and Nga, 2003, p86)

From what have been mentioned, the problem of this research can be identified by the following question:

**What is the effectiveness of educational games on seventh graders' acquisition of vocabulary in Damascus state schools?**

### **1.3–Importance of the study:**

The importance of this study stems from the following points:

- 1–The importance of the educational games as a way of teaching.
- 2–It may benefit other researchers in conducting studies on the same field.
- 3–It may benefit students in improving their strategies of learning vocabulary.

### **1.4–Aims of the study:**

This study aims at :

- 1–Identifying the effectiveness of educational games in the students achievement of English vocabulary.
- 2–Identifying the students attitudes towards learning English vocabulary through educational games.

### **1.5–Hypotheses of the study:**

The hypotheses of the study will be tested at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ):

- 1–There are no significant statistical differences in the vocabulary achievement between the control group students and the experimental group students in the pre–test.
- 2–There are no significant statistical differences in the vocabulary achievement between the control group students and the experimental group students in the post–test.
- 3–There are no significant statistical differences between the males and females of the study sample according to the gender.
- 4–There are no significant statistical differences in the vocabulary questionnaire of students' attitude to using games as a learning method.

## **1.6–Methodology of the study:**

This research follows the quasi–experimental method. The researcher will divide the subjects of the study into two groups ; a control group and an experimental one .The experimental group will learn vocabulary through games while the other group will learn vocabulary in the usual way(i.e. without using educational games) .Then every group will be subjected to a pre –test and a post– test to identify the differences in vocabulary achievement test scores .

### **1.6.1–The limits of the study:**

Sample limitation: The seventh grade students in Damascus city state schools.

Time limitation: The academic year 2012–2013

Spatial limitation: The researcher chose two schools to conduct the study: Jalal Farouq Al shareef for females and Badr Al deen Gzal for males.

### **1.6.2–The tools of the study:**

- 1– Pre and post tests to measure the students' vocabulary achievement.
- 2– A questionnaire to measure the students and the teachers' attitudes towards using the educational games in learning vocabulary.

## **1.8–The terms and the operational definitions of the study:**

### Effectiveness:

"the extent to which the activity's stated objectives have been met"(Alkella & Nasser, 2004, p167). In this study, the effectiveness of Educational Games was measured in terms of the improvement in the scores of seventh grade students by comparing their results in the pre, post and delayed tests.

### Educational Games:

Essa and masalha(2005), defined educational games as follows:

"The activities that the student practice following some rules which should be cleared in advance."( p.40)

While Mire'e and Balqees said that the educational games are:

"An activity or a group of activities which one or more individuals practice to achieve some goals" (cited in Al–Hwidi ,2007,p27).

Educational games: are [games](#) explicitly designed with [educational](#) purposes, or which have incidental or secondary educational value. All types of games may be used in an educational environment. Educational games are [games](#) that are designed to help people to learn about certain subjects, expand concepts, reinforce development, understand a historical event or culture, or assist them in learning a skill as they play. Game types include [board](#), [card](#), and [video games](#). An educational game is a game designed to teach humans about a specific subject and to teach them a skill. As educators, governments, and parents realize the psychological need and benefits of gaming have on learning, this educational tool has become mainstream. Games are interactive play that teaches 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, creativity, social interaction and emotion. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational\\_game](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational_game))

### Operationally:

A teaching and learning method by which students acquire new vocabulary.

### Vocabulary:

Vocabulary is knowledge of words and word meanings.

However, vocabulary is more complex than what this definition suggests

First, words come in two forms: oral and print. Oral vocabulary includes

those words that we recognize and use in listening and speaking .

Print vocabulary includes those words that we recognize and use in

reading and writing. Second, word knowledge also comes in two forms,

receptive and productive. Receptive vocabulary includes words that

we recognize when we hear or see them. Productive vocabulary includes

words that we use when we speak or write. Receptive vocabulary is

typically larger than productive vocabulary, and may include many words

to which we assign some meaning, even if we don't know their full definitions

and connotations – or ever use them ourselves as we speak and write

( Lehr and others,2005,p5).

Ur (2009) defines vocabulary as, "the words we teach in the foreign language. However, a new item of vocabulary may be more than just a single word. A useful convention is to cover all such cases by talking about vocabulary items rather than words" (p.60). According to Hornby (2000) vocabulary includes, "all the words that a person knows or uses, all the words in particular language, all the words that people use when they are talking about a particular subject, a list of words with their meanings, especially in a book for learning a foreign language." (p.147) (cited in Pikulski and Templeton ,2004,p14)

Operationally:

Vocabulary : the words that are taught to 7<sup>th</sup> graders in units (2,3,4) of the English for starters book.

Basic Education:

UNESCO defines it as:

"An educational form that aims at providing every child ,despite his/her social, economical, or cultural circumstances ,with the necessary basic level of information ,skills ,values which enables him/her of fulfilling his/her needs, and prepares him/her for developing the society he/she lives in."(arab- ency.com)

Operationally:

It is the stage of education that includes the 1-9<sup>th</sup> graders in Syria



## ***Chapter Two***

### **Literature review**

#### **2.1– Introduction:**

Various studies were conducted to investigate the effectiveness of teaching vocabulary through educational games, while other studies aimed at investigating several methods of teaching vocabulary. The researcher focused on the studies that depended on Educational games as a teaching method. So, she reviewed the related literature in a chronological order starting from the older studies and ending with more up-to-date ones.

#### **2.2– Previous Studies:**

##### **2.2.1–Huyen and Nga, (2003):**

**"The effectiveness of learning vocabulary through games."**

This study aimed at identifying the effectiveness of learning vocabulary through games in the classroom .

The sample consisted of the students of DEC center in China. The researcher followed the quasi-experimental method . The results showed that games contribute to vocabulary learning if they give students a chance to learn ,practice and review the English language in a pleasant atmosphere . The researchers also found that the students demanded a new way of teaching vocabulary and they themselves were in a search of a new way of learning the subject as well.

### **2.2.2–Yip and Kwan ,(2003):**

#### **"Online vocabulary games as a tool for teaching and learning English vocabulary."**

This study aimed at identifying the usefulness of online games in vocabulary learning for some undergraduate students.

The method of research was the quasi-experimental .The sample consisted of 100 freshmen majoring in engineering .The results showed that learners playing online vocabulary games tend to learn better ,and could retain the learnt vocabulary for a long period ,and retrieve more words than those who simply attended face to face lessons without accessing the vocabulary games .

### **2.2.3–Alsaabi,(2004):**

#### **"The use of memory and guessing games in teaching vocabulary to young learners."**

This study aimed at identifying the effectiveness of using games in teaching vocabulary .

The researcher followed the action research .The researcher used interviews ,surveys ,observations and video recordings. The study ended with the following results:

1–language games help students learn vocabulary ,and their learning in general.

2–Games are not a waste of time .

#### **2.2.4–Al– Mourad,(2004):**

**"Effect of Using the programs of social , action, and integrated games in developing the social interaction of the students of the age(5–6)years old."**

This study aimed at identifying the effectiveness of games in developing the social interaction of the student at the kindergarten stage.

The sample consisted of (60) children .

The researcher used a suggested program and pre and post tests for measuring the social interaction of children in the kindergarten stage.

The results of the study were :

–The used programs played a role in developing the social interaction of the children in general ,and males in particular.

–Using the programs of both the action games and the social games together was more effective than using each program separately in general.

–The program of the action games was more effective in developing the social interaction than the social games for the males.

–The program of the social games was more effective in developing the social interaction than the program of the action games for the females.

#### **2.2.5–Essa and Massalha, (2005):**

**"Effectiveness of a suggested program of the educational games in developing the scientific thinking skills for the third elementary students."**

The study aimed at identifying the effectiveness of a suggested educational games program to develop some of the thinking skills for 3rd grade students.

The sample consisted of (96) male and female students. The research instruments were the suggested program and the thinking skills test . The results showed that :

1)- The effectiveness of the suggested program in the educational games is high for the 3rd grade students in developing their thinking skills .

2)- There were no significant differences in the average scores of the thinking skills test scores due to the higher achievement score.

3)- There were no significant differences in the average scores of the thinking skills test scores due the lower achievement score.

#### **2.2.6–Al Neyadi,(2009):**

##### **"The Effect of Using Games to Reinforce Vocabulary Learning"**

This study aimed at identifying the effect of learning vocabulary through games. The sample consisted of twenty–nine students in Grade Six in a primary girls’ school in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). According to the researcher's observations of how vocabulary is taught in schools, it relies on drilling the vocabulary to get the students to produce the correct pronunciation of words. Other strategies such as implementing games are very occasionally used to teach vocabulary; however, they are only used for a limited time. Using games is considered time consuming, so teachers prefer to use drilling as an immediate way of teaching and practicing vocabulary. In the school where the research was conducted, Arabic is the medium of instruction. In English class, students are encouraged to speak in English when they answer, and while they interact with their classmates. Translation is generally avoided, but it is sometimes used to clarify difficult linguistic concepts, and also to clarify meaning.

### **2.2.7–Aleml,(2010):**

#### **"Educational Games as a Vehicle to Teaching Vocabulary"**

This study attempted to investigate the role of using word games in expanding the learner's vocabulary. In so doing, an experiment using five word games, named Twenty Questions, Charades, Definition Game's, Passwords, and Crossword Puzzles respectively was conducted. The participants were selected randomly from a male/female group of third grade junior high school students studying at a private school. First, a standardized test was administered to 100 students out of which 60 almost homogeneous students were selected and randomly divided into two groups: experimental and control. Both groups were taught words using traditional methods, however, the experimental group received word games as a treatment at the end of each session. Finally, a vocabulary test was administered to both groups to determine the differences between them. The score obtained from the groups were compared through independent t-test. The calculated t exceeded the t-critical value, confirming the positive effect of word games on expanding learners' vocabulary.

### **2.2.8–Al Masri,(2012):**

#### **"The Effect of Using Word Games on Primary Stage Students Achievement in English Language Vocabulary in Jordan."**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of using word games on primary stage students' achievement in English vocabulary in Marj Al Hamam Primary school for girls and Al Baraa' School for boys in Amman in Jordan. To achieve the purpose of the study, a pre/post-test was constructed to measure students' level in English vocabulary. The test consisted of thirty items on English language vocabulary. The

sample of the study consisted of 158 first grade students; (76) male students and (82) female students during the first semester of the academic year 2013/2014. The subjects of the study were distributed into four groups (two female groups: experimental and control, and two male groups: experimental and control). The experimental groups were taught English vocabulary using games while the control groups were taught English using pictures and memorization. The subjects were 39 male students for the experimental group and 37 male students for the control group, while the female students for the experimental and control group were 42 and 40 respectively. Descriptive statistical analyses were used (means and standard deviation) for the pre and post- tests of students' English vocabulary. Comparison of statistical methods were used (Two Way ANOVA) analysis of variance to make a comparison between the control and the experimental groups and between the gender variable (male and female). The findings of the study indicated that there were statistically significant differences in the post- test between the control and the experimental groups in favor of the experimental group, and there was no statistically significant difference in the students' achievement due to gender. The researcher concluded with recommendations to enhance the effect of using word games for teaching English vocabulary on students' achievement in English vocabulary such as conducting further studies on other populations and for a longer period time.

#### **2.2.9-Fu,(2009):**

##### **"A Study of Learning Styles, Teaching Styles and Vocabulary Teaching Strategies in Chinese Primary School How Do They Differ and How Can They Be Integrated?"**

This study aimed at investigating the present state of English vocabulary learning styles and teaching styles at a primary school in

China, investigating the strategies of English vocabulary teaching used by teachers at primary school, making suggestions for improvement and an attempt to put forward several practical vocabulary teaching strategies to meet the needs of different learning styles, which might reduce teaching and learning style conflicts.

The subjects in the study consist of 253 EFL pupils and 21 EFL teachers of these pupils at the same primary school in the south of China. The tool of the research was a questionnaire.

The results of this research showed that there were many problems in the present state of English vocabulary teaching: the teachers lacked the initiative to explore new methods in vocabulary teaching; most teachers still keep a traditional English vocabulary teaching procedure; their teaching pattern was unitary. Some teachers couldn't help students develop vocabulary learning strategies, other teachers couldn't use various methods in vocabulary teaching in a flexible way.

### **2.2.10–Chirandon et al,(2010):**

#### **"The Effects of Teaching English through Games"**

This study investigated the effects of teaching English through games to Thai students who study in grade six at Tessaban 4 Banlamsai School. Thirty students were selected by purposive sampling as an experimental group. The experiment was conducted during the first semester of the academic year 2009. The research instruments consisted of a test and a questionnaire. Fourteen lesson plans were created and used to teach six different topics determined by the school curriculum and nine types of games were implemented in different lesson plans. The data collection procedures were divided into three parts: a pre-experimental phase, an experimental phase and a post-

experimental phase. The findings revealed that students had significantly improved in vocabulary knowledge and ability to communicate.

Moreover, they tended to have more positive attitudes towards learning English through games. Regarding these results, it can be recommended that using games in teaching English is beneficial to beginners especially those in primary school. However, to do so, teachers ought to consider thoughtfully when selecting suitable games to be used. This is because it was found in the study that students with different learning styles and English ability performed differently when different types of games were used.

#### **2.2.11– Arikan,(2011):**

##### **"Effectiveness of Using Games in Teaching Grammar to Young Learners."**

This study aimed at exploring the effectiveness of using games in teaching grammar to young learners. The sample consisted of Turkish EFL teachers working in primary schools .The research tool was a questionnaire. The results of this study demonstrated that Turkish EFL teachers have a range of conceptions about using games in grammar teaching , and although they accept the effectiveness of using games in grammar teaching, they do not use games as frequently as expected in their classrooms.

#### **2.2.12–Kalaycioglu,(2011):**

##### **"The Effect of Picture Vocabulary Games and Gender on Four Year–old Children’s English Vocabulary Performance"**

The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the educational games as a technique in the preschool–level English vocabulary learning of four years old. A true–experimental study design, specifically



randomized pre-test, post-test control group design, was adopted. The sample was 33 private preschool children who were four years old. There were 17 females and 16 males in total. Data collection instrument was the 24-item English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Vocabulary Performance checklist prepared in accordance with the Total v Physical Response (TPR) lessons' content by the researcher. A pilot study, reliability and validity checks were done. In a four-week period, totally 24 vocabulary items were presented with picture cards by using Total Physical Response Method to both groups. In the experimental group, picture vocabulary games were used additionally while the control group did not receive picture vocabulary games. At the end, independent-samples t-test was conducted and the results indicated a significant difference in English Vocabulary achievement in favor of the experimental group which was taught by the educational picture vocabulary games with a large effect size. In addition, whether or not there was a gender effect on learning vocabularies of English as a foreign language with picture vocabulary games in the experimental group and without picture vocabulary games in the control group was investigated by means of t-tests. As a result, non-significant gender effect was found for both experimental and control group in learning English vocabulary. Upon understanding the remarkable effectiveness of the picture vocabulary games on English language learning for four years-old, it can be implied that more picture vocabulary games should be devised for very young learners by the experts for the classroom use and the number of the books about educational vocabulary games should be increased. Furthermore, policy makers ought to prepare English as a foreign language curriculum including games for early childhood education programs, and integrate a new course about teaching English to very young learners into foreign language teacher

training and education programs of the universities for pre-service teachers in the scope of a national foreign language policy.

### **2.2.13–Rohani & Pourgharib, (2012):**

#### **"The Effect of Games on Learning Vocabulary."**

The study aimed at determination of effect of games on vocabulary gain of student. For this, two groups of students were chosen as control and experimental groups. The control group was exposed to textbook teaching between pre-test and post-test; however, the experimental group was taught by games. Although both groups made noticeable progress after training program, there was no significant difference between the groups.

### **2.2.14–Aslanabadi, (2013):**

#### **"The Effect of Games on Improvement of Iranian EFL Vocabulary Knowledge in Kindergartens."**

This study aimed to find a way to help young EFL learners fix the novel vocabulary in their minds. The researchers divided the learners into the experimental group (giving an online language teaching game taken from: (<http://anglomaniacy.pl>)) and the control group (giving regular teaching). The result with the experimental group was superior to those of the control group. Games not only bring fun to the class, but they also motivate students and build their confidence. The study was conducted at two kindergartens, Golriz (N=30, 15 boys and 15 girls; age 6–7) as an experimental group and Golhayeh Zendeghi (N=30, 15 boys and 15 girls; age 6–7) as a control group. Language games seem to be a good strategy for learning a foreign language. The results of the study were analyzed, using (T test). The study indicated that there are statistically significant differences in mean scores of vocabulary test in

favor of the experimental group in the post application. It is hoped that due to the findings of this study teachers will reconsider the role of games and appreciate its value and that learners can fix the novel vocabulary in their minds because of the cheerful environment.

### **2.3– Comment on the previous studies:**

All of the previous studies were conducted in an experimental design with the aim of investigating the effectiveness of some learning and teaching vocabulary methods. This study shares the same aim of some of the above–mentioned studies in investigating the effectiveness of educational games in learning vocabulary such as : Rohani & Pourgharib, Aslanabadi, Kalaycioglu, Chirandon et al, Al Masri studies. While, this study differs from some studies in their aim such as Al–Mourad's study which aimed at studying the role of games in developing the social interaction of students at the kindergarten stage, Essa and Massalha's study which aimed at studying the effectiveness of games in developing scientific thinking skills at the third elementary students, Fu's study which aimed at studying vocabulary learning styles at the primary schools in China, and Arikan's study which aimed at studying the use of games in teaching grammar to young learners.

## **Chapter Three**

### **The theoretical background**

#### **3.1–Introduction:**

Nowadays, no one can deny the importance of English language. It has become the basic language of the world communication and modern technology. You can't travel anywhere if you don't know English, you can't use the new innovations of technology if you don't know English.

Viewing the world's second language teaching, one can quickly conclude that English education has become one of the most basic courses in most countries. English is as important as their mother tongue or even more significant than their first language in an international context. Indeed, language is no longer for simply reacting to the conditions, but also for communication and for the exchange of ideas. People from different countries would meet many obstacles when communicating with each other; the culture difference is most obvious, but the language differences might bring more trouble. So learning English is important.

"History of teaching English language reaches to Middle Ages. Over such a period of time, linguistic method went through reforms and changes many times. In recent years, there has been a major shift in perspective within language teaching profession concerning the nature of what is to be taught. In simple terms, there has been a change of emphasis from presenting language as a set of forms (grammatical, phonological, lexical) which have to be learned and practiced, to presenting language as a functional system which is used to fulfill a range of communicative purposes.

The communicative approach is an umbrella term to describe the methodology which teaches students how to communicate efficiently. It also lays emphasis on students' responsibility for their own learning." (Shejbalova ,2006, p16)

In general, the communicative approach depends on the following principles:

- 1–Learning generally results when unit and program content and activities are related to the needs and experiences of the learners.
- 2–Students motivation is of primary importance in acquisition of knowledge and skills.
- 3–Learning is enhanced when presentation and practice of language items are made meaningful through their use in real life (or even simulated) situations.
- 4–Students should become active participants in the learning process since, depending on the learning strategies they have developed since childhood, they will undoubtedly be restricted by what we teach them in their own way.
- 5–Students should be helped to perceive the relationship among the elements in language, situation, and culture through simple diagrams, graphics, and visual of all kinds.
- 6–Activities in the classroom should take into consideration the fact that all individuals have different learning styles (listening, reading, writing, ...etc), and different rates of learning.
- 7–Transfere of learning isn't always automatic. Through many examples and learning tasks, students can be helped to recognize the shared elements of communicative expressions and of notions, the recurring rules underlying grammatical structure, of the permitted co–occurrence of sounds or words. (Finocchairo and Brumfit ,1983, cited in Hassan ,1993, p110)

So, using language as a vehicle of communication is a main goal of learning language, but how can students communicate with each other and with their teachers without vocabulary? how can they use language as a tool of communication inside and outside the classroom without vocabulary?

“If language structure makes up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and flesh,” (Hammer, 1991, p. 153). Language ability of learners will be improved overall by vocabulary improvement (Linse, 2006). So it is strongly supported that learning the exact vocabulary can be considered more important than learning part of grammar as the basic need for learning a language.

Thus , learning vocabulary is very important and should be given enough time and effort, and should be focused on in English curricula.

### **3.2–Definition of Vocabulary:**

"Reutzel and Cooper(2003) defined vocabulary as all the words that students listen to, speak, read, and write:

–Listening: vocabulary is made up of all the words students hear and understand, but don't necessarily use in their own speech.

–Speaking: vocabulary includes all the words students hear and use in everyday speech.

–Reading: vocabulary is a subset of students' listening and speaking vocabulary, and consists of all the words in print that students can read and understand.

–Writing: vocabulary includes words that students can understand when listening, speaking and reading, and can be reproduced when writing." (Stone & Urquhart, 2003, p6)

While Lehr defines vocabulary as follows:

"Vocabulary is knowledge of words and word meanings. However, vocabulary is more complex than what this definition suggests.

First, words come in two forms: oral and print. Oral vocabulary includes those words that we recognize and use in listening and speaking. Print Vocabulary includes those words that we recognize and use in reading and writing.

Second, word knowledge also comes in two forms: receptive and productive. Receptive vocabulary includes words that we recognize when we hear or see them. Productive vocabulary includes words that we see when we speak or write. Receptive vocabulary is typically larger than productive vocabulary, and may include many words to which we assign some meaning, even if we don't know their full definitions and connotations– or even use them ourselves as we speak and write." (Lehr et al, 2005, p5)

The American Heritage Dictionary defines vocabulary as follows:

"The sum of words used by, understood by, or at the command of a particular person or group." (Pikulski & Templeton, 2004, p14)

Like Lehr, Nation uses the terms receptive and productive to define vocabulary and vocabulary knowledge, he explains that in a detailed way as follows:

"Every vocabulary has three main parts at the most general level: form, meaning, and use. To know a vocabulary means:

- Being able to recognize the word when it is heard (form – spoken)
- Being familiar with its written forms so that it is recognized when it is met in reading. (form – written)
- Recognize that it is made up of parts and being able to relate these parts to its meaning .(form –word parts)

- Knowing what the word means in a particular context in which it has occurred. (meaning – concept and referents)
- Knowing the concept behind the word which will allow understanding in a variety of contexts. (meaning – concepts and referents)
- Knowing that there are related words. (meaning – associations)
- Being able to recognize that the word has been used correctly in sentence in which it occurs. (use – grammatical function).
- Being able to recognize that there are typical collocations. (use – collocations)
- Knowing that the word is of high– frequency word or low– frequency word). (use – constraints on use e.g. register , frequency)

On the other hand, the productive knowledge of a word involves:

- Being able to say it with correct pronunciation including stress. (form– written)
- Being able to construct it using the right word parts in their appropriate forms( form–word parts)
- Being able to produce the word to express the meaning. (meaning form and meaning)
- Being able to produce the word in different contexts to express the range of meaning. (meaning – concepts and referents)
- Being able to produce synonyms and opposites of the word. (meaning– associations)
- Being able to use the word correctly in an original sentence. (use – grammatical function)
- Being able to produce words that commonly occur with it. (use– collocations)
- Being able to decide to use or not to use the word to suit the degree of formality or the situation.(use– constraints on use e.g. register, frequency)" (Nation, 2001, cited in Yu–Ling, 2005, p12)



Generally speaking, the receptive aspects of knowledge and use are more easily to be mastered than their productive counterparts .

Read(2000) defines vocabulary by saying:

"They are the basic building blocks of language the units of meaning from which larger structures such as sentences, paragraphs and whole texts." (cited in Kassem, 2010, p27)

According to BBC dictionary (1992) vocabulary is the sum of words a person knows in a specific language. Webster (1983) defines vocabulary as a list of phrases and words of a language while Merriam–Webster’s Collegiate Thesaurus (1993) defines vocabulary as lexicon which is employed by a language, group or individual. Thus, vocabulary is a language element that needs to be developed and mastered by the learners of a language (Octaviany, 2007).

From all the previous definitions, the researcher sums up the meaning of vocabulary:

It's the basis of every language that everyone needs to be able to speak, read, write and listen.

### **3.3–Vocabulary Development in Foreign Language:**

Developing rich vocabulary is important not only for first languages but also for foreign languages, since, communication and literacy skills are enhanced by the vocabulary gain in the target language (Gordon, 2007). A sequence has been defined for learning a second/foreign language. Four stages which are similar to the first language learning have been identified although the duration of them varies from person to person due to many elements such as learning environment, individual differences, interest, and motivation. First the *silent/preproduction stage* comes. In this stage learners do not speak the target language or prefer

using their first language to communicate because people who are learning a foreign language already know their first, native language and its vocabulary. Then, after being in a different language environment for some time, the learner starts to try communicating by gestures, pointing, nodding, moving hands or eyes without speaking the target language. However, he is active in listening to the target language's sounds and comprehending the messages conveyed. This stage is called *nonverbal/early production stage*. The length of this period varies. Some try to say their first words of the foreign language after two or three weeks, some try to speak after months. *Telegraphic speech stage* follows the nonverbal one. In this stage, the learner speaks with two or three content words and formulaic phrases which give the basic, essential message like telegraphic speech of first language such as 'finished, no way, okay, look-it, That is- a, I-am-a'. In *productive language-use stage*, learners try to form whole sentences. When they learn the language efficiently, they are able to use it in a creative way by forming sentences productively (Espinosa, in press; Gonzalez, Yawkey & Minaya-Rowe, 2006; Gordon, 2007; Hong, 2008; McLaughlin, Blanchard & Osanai, 1995; Saville-Troike, 1987).

Children learn a foreign language vocabulary relatively rapid, and gain the target language vocabulary more easily when they get it unconsciously and indirectly in the context. For example, instead of memorizing foreign words as an intentional vocabulary learning, children learn vocabulary better while listening to a story book, joining a conversation, playing games in that language. Thus, the vocabulary becomes a tool to reach the goal of communication by this incidental vocabulary learning. Hence, comprehension based, communication based teaching methods do better in foreign language classrooms rather than grammar-based lessons which focus on the structure while

neglecting the message communication, which is the main function of the language (Gordon, 2007).

A sequence identification of additional language vocabulary development is given by other researchers (Belisle, 1998; Gass, 1988; Paribakht & Wesche, 1996). *Apperceived input* is the first stage when the learner realizes the target language's vocabulary and relates it with the past knowledge. Then, *comprehended input* occurs when the learner comprehends the vocabulary successfully. The third stage is the *intake stage* when the learner employs the vocabulary in different contexts. In time, *integration* occurs when the learner internalizes the target language's vocabulary and the *output stage* is the last stage when the production of the target language vocabulary is observed.

### **3.4–Types of Vocabulary:**

Vocabulary can be classified into two main types. Passive vocabulary is "vocabulary that is known but not used." On the other hand, active vocabulary is "vocabulary which is used in speech or writing and is made up of words that come up into a person's mind immediately when he or she has to produce a spoken or written sentence". (Crystal, 2003, p.123).

Scrivener (2005) states that, the set of vocabulary items that we recognize and understand but tend not to use in everyday speech are "receptive vocabulary" while vocabulary items having immediate practical uses and become quickly part of the learner's lexicon are "productive vocabulary" (p.229)

Corson (1995) uses the term "active" and "passive" to refer to productive and receptive vocabulary. According to Corson, passive vocabulary includes "the active vocabulary and three other kinds of

vocabulary –words that are only partly known, low frequency words not readily available for use and words that are avoided in active use" (p.44).

According to Graves (2003) vocabulary falls into four categories:

- "Receptive–oral" or words understood when they are heard.
- "Receptive–written" or words that we can read.
- "Productive–oral" or words we use when communication via writing.
- "Productive–written" or words we use when communicating via writing(p.11).

### **3.5–Why learning vocabulary is important?**

"If you spend most of your time studying grammar , your English will not improve very much . You will see most improvement if you learn more words and expressions . You can say very little with grammar but you can say almost everything with words." (Thornbury,2001,p12)

"If you have a limited vocabulary , you will also have a limited vision and a limited future." (Rohn,2000,p5)

"When people travel, they don't carry grammar book they carry phrase books." ( Steinbrich,2004,p8)

"Vocabulary acquisition is the largest and most important task facing the language teacher." (Swan & Walter,1998,p.25)

"Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed." (Wilkins,2005,p.13)

These are sayings said by great language experts and researchers trying to send a message that learning vocabulary is very important. Not only that, a lot of research have also been conducted to emphasize this idea. Blachowicz,et al (2005), Bromley

(2007), Yu-Ling(2005), Nation, et al(2007) , Rosenthal & Ehri(2008), Silverman(2009).

These researches indicated clearly that vocabulary knowledge was highly correlated with overall reading achievement. In addition to affecting reading performance, vocabulary knowledge affects students' ability to practice and participate fully in both social and academic classroom routines. In this regard, all students can benefit from vocabulary instruction, especially if that instruction is tailored to individual strength and needs. In the area of Reading and Language Arts vocabulary instruction is critical to the improvement of comprehension and written expression. In the content areas, including Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, vocabulary instruction is central to the development of new conceptual frameworks and the understanding of increasingly more sophisticated ideas. In short, vocabulary is directly related to knowledge acquisition. Vocabulary allows speakers to extend their understanding of access to completely new word. Whatever student's achievement level in a particular area of study, be it minimal, moderate, or advanced vocabulary instruction will promote further learning.

On the contrary , researchers showed that limited knowledge of English vocabulary may affect learners in at least four ways:

- 1-The development and maintenance of social relationship with other students.
- 2-Participation in academic learning routines.
- 3-Comprehension as a part of reading instruction.
- 4-Comprehension as a part of content area instruction.

All of these areas offer not only challenges but also opportunities for vocabulary learning. (Blachowics & et al, 2005)

After this presentation of some sayings and studies about the importance of vocabulary, it's also important to know the meaning of this word "vocabulary". So, what's vocabulary?

### **3.6–Vocabulary Acquisition:**

According to Sokmen(1997), the acquisition of vocabulary is considered to play an important role in second language learning(p.237). Brown and Payne(1994) cited in Hatch & Brown(1995) indicated five major steps in the process of vocabulary acquisition:

- Having sources for encountering the new words.
- Getting clear image, either visual or auditory or both of forms of the new words.
- Learning the meaning of the new words.
- Making a strong connection between the forms and the meaning of the new words.
- Using the new words" (p.373).

On the other hand, Nation(2001) divided the acquisition process into three phrases:

**1–Noticing Phase:** It refers to "giving attention to an item" which implies working with the decontextualized words. Examples of decontextualized are:

- The learner may come across a familiar word in listening or reading and realize that it is being used in completely different way.
- The teacher may draw students' attention to a particular word by writing it on the blackboard.
- The learner may negotiate the meaning of a word in speaking.
- The learner may focus on the meaning of a word by providing a definition, a synonym or L1 equivalent.

**2–Retrive Phase:** The process of retrieving already stored vocabulary can be both receptive, i.e. "Perceptive the form and having to retrieve its meaning when the word is

met in listening or reading" and productive, i.e. "wishing to communicate the meaning of the word and having to retrieve its spoken or written form as in speaking or writing.

**3-Generative phase:** This stage can be performed either in receptive way i.e. "meeting a word which is used in ways of using the wanted vocabulary in new context. (pp.64-69)

### **3.7- What do we need to teach about vocabulary:**

Learning vocabulary is a challenge for learners, because of the size of the task and the variety of vocabulary types to be learned, including single words, phrases, collocations, and strategic vocabulary, as well as grammatical patterns, idioms, and fixed expressions.

Nation(2001) lists the different things learners need to know about a vocabulary before we say that they have learnt it. These include:

- The meaning(s) of the vocabulary.
- The spoken and written form.
- What word parts it has.
- Its grammatical behavior (e.g. its word class, typical grammatical patterns it occurs in)
- Its collocations.
- Its register.
- What associations it has(e.g. words that are similar or opposite in meaning.)
- What connotations it has.
- Its frequency. (Cited in McCarten , 2007, p56)

### **3.8–Principles of teaching vocabulary:**

There are principles concerning English Language, and principles concerning teachers of English:

#### ***First: Principles concerning English Language in general:***

- 1–English consists of a huge and unique collection of words.
- 2–The rules of English are simple and consistent compared to other languages.
- 3–Language proficiency grows from oral competence to written competence.
- 4–Words are learned because of associations that connect the new with the known.
- 5–Seventy percent of the frequently used words have multisyllabic word parts.
- 6–Words of sixty percent of multisyllabic words can be inferred by analyzing word parts.
- 7–Direct instruction in vocabulary influences comprehension more than any other factor.
- 8–Teaching fewer words well is more effective than teaching several words in a cursory way.
- 9–Effective teachers display an attitude of excitement and interest in words and language (Bromley, 2007, pp1–5).

#### ***Second: Principles concerning Teachers of English Language:***

Teachers should take into consideration some important points when they plan vocabulary teaching and learning program:

- 1–Teachers should use useful words: useful words are words that learners will often meet or need to use in their language use situations.
- 2–Teachers should let learners do the work: one way to approach this is to set the learners the task of learning the words for themselves in preparation for class. In this way, they can bring along to class any questions or problems they are having with words and the teacher can address these.
- 3–Teachers should focus on different aspects of a word:



There is much more to a word than just its meaning. For example, among other things students can learn a word stress(accent), its collocations and word family members, its grammatical patterns and word parts...etc.

4-Teachers should provide meaningful learning opportunities: it is not enough to simply tell students the meaning of words or get them to only study words or get them to only study words out of context. They need opportunities to see or hear target words in a meaningful context, and opportunities to use target words in meaningful writing and speaking tasks.

5-Teachers should implement a regular testing schedule: testing can be used to give students feedback on their success and/or failure to learn and use the target words and motivate them to study vocabulary. At the very least, regular testing can provide learners with a chance to retrieve newly learnt words from their memories and use them in a meaningful way. Good vocabulary tests will have a balance of vocabulary understanding(receptive) and vocabulary use(productive) tasks.

6-Teachers should be patient with their learners: learners constantly forget words they have learnt. This is part of learning process. However, this can often frustrate teachers. It's important that teachers remain patient with their learners and allow them a lot of opportunities to see, use and revise new vocabulary in a positive learning environment. A patient teacher can reduce the anxiety levels in a classroom and this can have a positive effect on vocabulary learning. ( File, 2002, pp1-3)

### **3.9– Strategies of learning vocabulary:**

Although some teachers may think that vocabulary learning is easy, learning new vocabulary has always been challenging for learners. Different ways of learning vocabulary are usually utilized by learners; such as using flashcards, notebook, referring to bilingual and monolingual dictionaries to decipher the meaning, or giving some synonyms and antonyms.

In spite of these efforts and invariably experiencing so many difficulties, vocabulary is by far the most sizable and unmanageable component. This raises a fundamental query that why learning vocabulary is such challenging and productive experience? Which method could be used to make vocabulary less of struggle?

One possible answer to the problem of vocabulary learning is "applying teaching vocabulary learning strategies and methods". (Nemati, 2009, p1)

Some experts such as (Schmitt, Cook, Mayer) divided the strategies of learning into two groups:

- 1–Strategies for discovering the meaning of a new word.
- 2–Strategies for consolidating a word once it has been encountered.

#### **First– Discovering Strategies:**

They include several determination strategies and social strategies:

A learner may discover the meaning of a new word through guessing from context, guessing from L1 cognate, using references materials(mainly a dictionary), or asking someone else(e.g. a teacher, a classmate).

## **Second– Consolidating Strategies:**

They include: Memorization Strategies, Cognitive Strategies and Metacognitive Strategies.

### *1–Memorization Strategies:*

In general, Memorization Strategies refer to those making connections between the to-be-learned word and some previously learned knowledge using some form of imagery or grouping. Examples of these strategies are: studying a word with a pictorial representation of its meaning, associating a word with its coordinates, using semantic maps, grouping words together within a storyline, using keywords.

### *2–Cognitive Strategies:*

They refer to written and verbal repetitions as well as some mechanical means involving vocabulary learning.

### *3–Metacognitive Strategies:*

Here we need to train students to control and evaluate their own learning through various ways; such as using spaced word practice, continuing to study word over time, or self-testing. In this way, learners will take more responsibility for their study and overall learning may be improved. (Yu-Ling, 2005,p23)

One of the methods that many experts of Language teaching and methodology agree on being a good way to learn vocabulary is "Games".

So far there has been quite good number of researches on vocabulary learning in a foreign language. Since vocabulary plays an important role in understanding any concept in the process of learning a foreign language, it is considered as one important element that links the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing altogether. With the growing popularity of pedagogy and focus on games, it is important "to become involved in the design and implementation of new

media systems before they are institutionalized". (Steuer, 1993, p. 21). It is generally agreed that nowadays we are living in a digital world dominated by computers and internet and nearly all children in major cities are familiar with this modern technology. Using computer at the first stage for children is fun, especially when they use games on it. Learning takes place unconsciously, as Freeman (2000, p78) suggests learning is facilitated in a cheerful environment. And games create such an environment in which children are engaged in a playful activity that makes language learning a fun. Freeman adds; Communication takes place on 'two planes': on one the linguistic message is encoded; and on the other are factors which influence the linguistic message. On the conscious plane, the learner attends to the language; on the subconscious plane, the music suggests that learning is easy and pleasant. When there is a unity between conscious and subconscious, learning is enhanced. So to increase the amount of vocabulary learning through computers, games are considered as an effective and entertaining tool which can be applied in any foreign language classrooms. Games can lower anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input more likely (Richard-Amato, 1988). Hornby (1995) believes that game is an activity that you do to have some fun. Games can make students focus on the game and learn the language unconsciously. They are highly motivating and entertaining, and they can give shy students more opportunity to express their opinion and feelings. Cited in (Hansen, 1994, p56)

Unlike the traditional methods of learning and teaching, in a communicative language teaching approach, learners are required to take part in a number of meaningful activities with different tasks. This is to improve learners' communicative competence by encouraging them to be part of the lessons themselves.

With the use of games, the teacher can create various contexts in which students have to use the Language to communicate, exchange information and express their opinions. Some researchers such as:

( Wright (2000), Betteridge(2002), Buckby(2005), and Huang(2005) came to a conclusion that:

"Learning through games could encourage the operation of certain psychological and intellectual factors which could facilitate communication and self-esteem, motivation and spontaneity, reinforcing learning, improving intonation and building confidence." (Huyen and Naga, 2005, p5)

Some experts have also figured out characteristics of games that make vocabulary learning more effective. Lee(2001) lists several main advantages when games are used in the classroom, including

" a break from the usual routine of the language class, motivating and challenging, effort of learning and language practice in the various skills." ( a previous resource)

Ersoz(2000) holds that games are highly appreciated thanks to their amusement and interest.

In summary, games is useful and effective method that should be applied in vocabulary learning.

### **3.10–The relationship between language development and Educational games:**

Language learning by means of educational games requires many skills especially cognitive and social skills. Learners are active in thinking, responding and they are socially interactive with other learners in games (Gillespie, 1974; Lengeling & Malarcher, 1997). Thus, Vygotsky's social-cognitive theory (1962, 1978) which basically claims that language develops by means of social interactions

as well as intellectual abilities based the current study. Also, due to the emphasis on the importance of social interaction in learning language, this social–cognitive view can be placed under the interactionist perspective of language development among other perspectives of language development such as behaviorist perspective and the innatist perspective (Cooter & Reutzel, 2004; Berk, 2006;Essa, 2003).

As the first perspective to the question of how language develops is the behaviorist perspective. It conveys that language is not an innate ability, but it is gained from the environment. Behaviorists such as Skinner (1974) argued that language is a behavior that is learned by operant conditioning. According to this view, individuals in the environment reinforce the language development of a baby by smiling, hugging, speaking. For example, when the baby utters sounds like “mama, papa”, the parents enhance their positive feedback and encourage the baby to repeat those sounds. The more language is reinforced, the more developed language occurs. Also, some behaviourists believe that language is learned by the imitation of the phrases and the sentences. Imitation gets together with reinforcement when a parent wants her child to say ‘I want ice–cream’ and gives a reward or a punishment according to the child’s utterance (Brewer, 2001; Berk,2006, Essa, 2003; Morrison, 2007).

The second perspective of language development is the innatist perspective. In this perspective language is believed to be innately structured in the brain (Berk, 2006). Since children are born with the genetically predetermined language ability, only if a child is exposed to a language, he speaks his mother tongue. Lenneberg (1967) has come to this conclusion because all members of the human species develop a language, all of them start to speak a word approximately at the same age, language development follows a rigid, predictable sequence, and humans develop language instinctively instead of requiring a

formal instruction. For all these reasons, Lenneberg strongly argues that language ability is innate in human species. He says that if a behaviour is observed in the entire species roughly at the same time, in the same way and sequence, then it can be judged as an innate behaviour such as the ducklings' following a moving object behaviour upon seeing shortly after being hatched (Lenneberg, 1964; Lenneberg, 1967).

Backing up the innateness theory of the language ability, Noam Chomsky argues that children are born with a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) in the brain to acquire language and it is activated when the child is exposed to a language spoken by the parents or other people. In addition, children already have the innate deep structure including LAD and universal underlying rules of grammar, after birth they learn specific vocabulary and grammar of their language, which is called surface structure (Chomsky, 1972).

Furthermore, genetical possessions that humans inherit support the innateness of the language ability because all humans have already larynx, pharynx, tongue, teeth, mouth and respiratory system, which enable the vocal communication by language. On the other hand, language is only possible with human brain. Language centre of the brain is mainly on the left hemisphere.

However, various different parts of the brain including right hemisphere participate in linguistic activities in different levels (Morrison, 2007; Neville & Bavelier, 1998). The evidence of lateralization of the language to the left hemisphere comes from the aphasic patients who have lesions on their left side of the brains. Broca's aphasics who have injured frontal part of the left hemisphere of the brain cannot form grammatically correct sentences, forget thematical word relations and lose language fluency while Wernicke's aphasics who have injured the back part of the left hemisphere which is close to the ear can speak fluently but what they say is senseless, meaningless. For all these

reasons, language ability is mainly lateralized to the left, and specifically Broca's area is responsible for fluency and grammatical proficiency while Wernicke's area is responsible for language comprehension in the left hemisphere (Gordon, 2007; Neville & Bavelier, 1998). Consequently, all these evidences support the innateness of language development. Lastly, the third perspective of language development is the interactionist perspective. In this perspective it is believed that language has both internal, innative and external, environmental properties. This view unites the two extreme theoretical points which are the behaviourist and innatist perspectives. In the interactionist view, children are not passive learners of language via their parents and environment or they are not innate language processors who trust only internal structures. It is claimed that there are many more interactive factors that contribute to language development such as social surrounding, maturation, heritage, cognition (Berk, 2006; Essa, 2003; Morrison, 2007).

There are two main interactionist views which are cognitive interactionist view of language development and social interactionist view of language development (Berk, 2006; Essa, 2003). As one of the first cognitive interactionist viewers, Piaget (1959) claims that child's language development is mainly related with his/ her cognitive development because the ability to comprehend language is the ability to represent objects cognitively. Language is a way of stating representational thoughts. By being active in the environment and discovering, children learn and construct their knowledge so their cognition and language develop. In the social interactionist view, language development is believed to be associated with the social interactions as well as the intellectual factors. Vygotsky (1962) argues that children's first social instrument is language and children develop knowledge, thoughts, attitudes, language by means of interactions with more capable adults, peers, parents. Consequently, social interactionist view



supports that children develop and learn by means of socialization, active and collaborative learning, teacher–child co–operation and peer–assisted teaching. Due to the fact that the nature of educational games includes physical and cognitive activity, collaboration, co–operation, competition, individual or team work (Bekiri, 2003; Bumpass, 1963; Llach & Gomez, 2007).

### **3.11–Reasons for using games in language learning:**

1–Games add interest to what students might not find very interesting. Sustaining interest can mean sustaining effort. After all, learning a language involves long–term effort.

2–Games provide a context for meaningful communication. Even if the game involves discrete language items, such as a spelling game, meaningful communication takes place as learners seek to understand how to play the game and as they communicate about the game before, during and after the game.

3–This meaningful communication provides the basis for comprehensive input, i.e. what students understand as they listen and read, interaction to enhance comprehensibility, e.g. asking for repetition or giving examples, and comprehensible output, speaking and writing so that others can understand.

4–The emotions aroused when playing games add variety to the dry serious process of language instruction.

5–The variety and intensity that games offer may lower anxiety and encourage shy learners to take part especially when games are played in small groups.

6–Games can involve all the basic language skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading, writing and a number of skills are often involved in the same game.

7–Games are learner–centered in that learners are active in playing games, and games can often be organized such that students are active in playing the game, and games can often be organized such that students have the leading roles, with teacher as facilitators.

8–Many games can be played in small groups, thereby providing a venue for students to develop their skills in working with others, such as the skill of disagreeing politely, and the skill of asking for help. Other advantages of games played in groups include:

a–The team aspect of many games can encourage cooperation and build team spirit.

b–Although many games involve competition, this is not necessarily the case.

c–In most games, everyone has a turn, encouraging everyone to take a turn, rather than letting others do all the talking and other actions, encouraging one or two learners from shutting out others.

d–As many games can be played outside of class, they provide means for learners to use the language outside class time.

e–Games can connect to a variety of intelligences. e.g. games played with others involve interpersonal intelligence, games involve drawing connect with visual spatial intelligence, and games often have a hands–on element such as cards, spinners, or pieces, which connect with bodily/ kinesthetic intelligence. (Jacobs, 2010, pp5–6)

### **3.12–Effective learning environments:**

Games can facilitate learning. It is important to emphasize that games and play may be effective learning environment, not because they are fun but because they are immersive, require the player to make frequent, important decisions, have clear goals, adapt to each player individually and involve a social network. Games have many attributes detailed below that are associated with how people learn:

1–Social: games are often social environment, sometimes involving large distributed communities. It's not the game play per se but the social life around the edge of the game that carries much of the richness in terms of the game's meaning, its value and its social and cultural impact.

2–Research: when a new player enters a game, her/she must immediately recall prior learning, decide what new information is needed, and apply it to the new situation.

3–Problem Solving: knowing what information or techniques to apply in which situations enable greater success, specifically, problem solving. This often involves collective action through communities of practice.

4–Transfer: Games require transfer of learning from other venues–life, school, and other games. Being able to see the connections and transfer existing learning to a unique situation is part of game play.

5–Experiential: Games are inherently experiential. Those who play games engage multiple senses. For each action, there is a reaction. Feedback is swift. Hypotheses are tested, and users learn from results. (Oblinger, 2006,p3)

### **3.13–When and how to use games?**

Games can play a range of roles in the language curriculum. Traditionally, games have been used in the language class as warm-ups at the beginning of class, fill-ins when there is extra time near the end of class, or as an occasional bit of spice stirred into the curriculum to add variety. All these are fine, but games can also constitute a more substantial part of language courses. In the Presentation–Practice–Production framework (in which language items are first presented for students to listen to and/or read, then practiced in a manner in which the language used is controlled, e.g. students read out a dialogue from the textbook in which the two characters compare study habits, and then produced by students in a less controlled manner, e.g. two students discuss their own study habits, the game can be either for practicing specific language items or skill or for more communicative language production. Similarly, games can also be used as a way to revise and recycle previously taught language.

Children are often very enthusiastic about games, but precisely for that reason, some older students may worry that games are too childish for them. Teachers need to explain the purpose of the game in order to reassure such students that there is such a phenomenon as "Serious Fun". Furthermore, adults have long participated in games on radio and T.V, not to mention the fact that popular board games, such as Monopoly, are played by adults.

As with other learning activities, teachers need to pay careful attention to the difficulty level of games. Part of the appeal of games lies in the challenge, but if the challenge is too great, some students may become discouraged.

The challenge can be of two kinds: understanding how to play the game and understanding the language content. Some suggestions for promoting both types of understanding are:

1–Demonstrations of how the game is played: the teacher can demonstrate with a group of students or a group can demonstrate for the class.

2–A kind of script of what people said as they played, or a list of useful phrases. Similarly, key vocabulary and concepts may need to be explained.

3–Clear directions: demonstrations can accompany directions, and directions can be given when needed, rather than explaining all the steps and rules in one go. Also, some student–initiated modifications can be accepted.

4–Games already known to students.

5–Games used to revise and recycle previously studied content, rather than involving new content.

6–Groups are heterogeneous in terms of current language proficiency, so that the more proficient members can help others.

7–Resources, online or print, such as dictionaries and textbooks.

( Jacobs, 2010, pp 15–17)

### **3.14–Types of Language Games:**

Classifying games into categories can be difficult, because categories often overlap. Hadfield (1999) explains two ways of classifying language games. First, she divided language games into two types: Linguistic Games and Communicative Games.

Linguistic games focus on accuracy, such as supplying the correct antonym. On the other hand, communicative games focus on successful

exchange of information and ideas, such as two people identifying the differences between their two pictures which are similar to one another but not exactly alike. Correct language usage, although still important, is secondary to achieving communicative goal. ( a previous resource)

The second taxonomy that Hadfield uses to classify games has many more categories. As with the classification of games as linguistic games or communicative games, some games will contain elements of more than one type.

#### 1–Sorting, Ordering, or Arranging Games:

For example, students have a set of cards with different products on them, and they sort the cards into products found at a grocery store and products found at a department store.

#### 2–Information Gap Games:

In such games, one or more students have information that other students need to complete a task. For instance, one student might have a drawing and his partner needs to create a similar drawing by listening to the information given by the student with the drawing. Information gap games can involve a one–way information gap, such as the drawing game just described, or two–way information gap, in which each student has unique information, such as in "Spot the Difference Task", where each student has slightly different picture, and the task is to identify the differences.

#### 3–Guessing Games:

These are a variation of information gap games. One of the best known examples of a guessing game is "20 Questions", in which one person thinks of a famous person, place, or thing. The other participants can ask 20 Yes/No questions to find clues in order to guess who or what the person is thinking of.

#### 4–Search Games:

These games are yet another variant on two-way information gap games with everyone giving and seeking information. Find someone who is a well known example. Students are given a grid. The task is to fill in all the cells in the grid with the name of a classmate who fits that cell, e.g. someone who is a vegetarian. Students circulate, asking and answering questions to complete their own grid and help classmates complete theirs.

#### 5–Matching Games:

As the name implies, participants need to find a match for a word, picture, or card.

#### 6–Labeling Games:

These are a form of matching, in that participants match labels and pictures...etc.

#### 7–Exchanging Games:

In these games, students barter cards, or other objects, or ideas. Similar are exchanging and collecting games. Many card-games fall into this category such as the children card-game "Go Fish".

#### 8–Board Games:

Scrabble is one of the most popular board games that specifically highlights language.

#### 9–Role Play Games:

The terms "Role Play", "Drama", "Simulation" are sometimes used interchangeably but can be differentiated. Role play can involve roles that they don't play in real life, such as a dentist, while simulations can involve students performing roles that they already play in real life or might be likely to play, such as customer at a restaurant. Dramas are normally scripted performances, whereas in role play and simulations, students come up with their own words, although preparations is often useful.

Another distinction among is between competitive games and cooperative ones. (Kodotchigova, 2002, pp32–36)

### **3.14–What makes a successful educational game?**

Henry Jenkins (2007), writing about successful educational games, identifies several characteristics they all have in common.

First: they are made to fit specific learning contexts; in other words, they teach strong, specific strategies rather than weak, general ones.

Second: successful educational games supplement classroom teaching rather than replace it.

Jenkins' third characteristic of a successful serious game is its use of play as a learning strategy.

Fourth on his list is that every element of the game design is meaningful, so that users spend their time learning the content and not the interface.

Finally, Jenkins notes that successful serious games are social, rather than individual, and observes that for any game to be successful it must be fun. (cited in Johnson, 2009, p4)



## Chapter Four

### Research Methodology

#### 4.1–Research Design:

The research has used the quasi–experimental design to investigate the effectiveness of educational games in seventh grade students' vocabulary learning. The researcher also used the descriptive– analytical approach to investigate the attitudes of experimental group students towards learning vocabulary through the educational games.

Table(1): Experimental Design of Research

Group	Independent Variables		<b>Dependent Variables</b>
Control Group	<b>Method Variable</b>	<b>Gender Variable</b>	Vocabulary achievement
	Traditional Vocabulary learning	(Males/Females)	
Experimental Group	Learning through Educational Games		Attitudes

#### **4.2–Research Sample:**

The sample of the current research consisted of (131 ) students in the academic year (2012/2013). They were students in Jalal Farouq Al shareef for females and Badr Al deen Gzal for males. Two sections were chosen randomly from each school as experimental and control groups. The researcher taught the experimental group through Educational games ,while the classroom teachers taught the control group through traditional vocabulary instruction.

To insure the equivalence of the two groups, a pre–test was implemented on both of them. An independent sample T–Test was used to determine if there was any statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group students in the pre–test.

#### **4.3–Research Instruments:**

In order to examine the effectiveness of Educational Games in learning vocabulary, the researcher constructed the following tools:

–A group of Educational games:

##### ***1– "Charades:***

The learner will be able to learn vocabulary about food.

The vocabulary are:

(Pour , chop , stir , bake , heat )

Procedures:

First, the teacher models the vocabulary by acting it out. Then, he/she has one learner come forward and model it again, while the other learners are trying to guess it. The learner who guesses goes to the

board to write the vocabulary and the other learners help him by spelling its letters if there is any spelling mistakes. Finally, this learner models other vocabulary and so on". ([www.iteslj.org](http://www.iteslj.org))

### **2–" *Picture it:***

The learner will be able to learn the names of food.

The vocabulary are:

(apples , butter , rice , sugar , flour , cinnamon )

Procedures:

A learner draws something on the board. The other learners have to guess what it is. Whoever guesses correctly first gets to draw the next one". ([www.iteslj.org](http://www.iteslj.org))

### **3–" *Pass the Marker:***

The learner will be able to learn camping equipment.

The vocabulary are:

(batteries , compass , water , can opener , camping stove, fuel , matches , sunscreen , insect repellent , soap , torch )

The teacher divides the class into two teams. Then, he/she gives a marker to the first learner in the line. The teacher says a vocabulary, then each learner says the same word, and passes the marker down the line. The last learner comes to the board, writes it and his/her team help him/her spelling the letters of the word correctly. The teacher gives a point to whoever was faster. Then the learners are rotated. So, whoever

is the last one writes the vocabulary and comes to the front of the line.

In this way, everyone has the chance to write". ([www.iteslj.org](http://www.iteslj.org))

#### **4–"Syllable Says:**

The learner will be able to learn vocabulary of shops.

The vocabulary are:

(clothes shop , music shop , supermarket , traditional supermarket , sports shop , computer games shop , department store , book shop , shoe shop )

Procedures:

The teacher writes the parts of the vocabulary on cards. Then, he/she gives a card to each learner, he/she chooses the learners who have the cards which makes the vocabulary. The teacher reads aloud each part of the vocabulary, then he says to the chosen learners:

–When I say "go" you stand and read your part aloud, and come in front of your classmates and stand next to each other to let your classmates see the whole vocabulary on the cards you have.

After that, the teacher asks the other learners to read the whole vocabulary loudly at once". ([www.iteslj.org](http://www.iteslj.org))

### **5–"Sprite:**

Learners will be able to learn numbers from 20 to 1000.

The vocabulary are:

(26 twenty six , 37 thirty seven , 173 one hundred and thirty seven ,  
981 nine hundred and eighty one , 1000 one thousand )

Procedures:

The teacher divides the class into two teams, he/she says the number and one learner from each team races to the board to write the number. The teacher should make sure that the learner writes the number correctly and tells his team to help him/her by correcting the wrong letters. The first one to write and spell it correctly gets a point for his/her team". ([www.iteslj.org](http://www.iteslj.org))

### **6–"Post it:**

The learner will be able to learn directions.

The vocabulary are:

(take the first right , turn right , it's on the left , take the second left , go straight on , cross the road )

Procedures:

The teacher prepares some "post it" notes, he/she writes the vocabulary on them and on the board he puts matching pictures. The teacher divides the class into groups. When he/she says "go" , learners races to

the board to post the note on the corresponding picture. The whole picture will be a map that shows the directions correctly". ([www.iteslj.org](http://www.iteslj.org))

### **7-*"Make a word:***

The learner will be able to learn colors.

The vocabulary are:

(red , blue , yellow , black , orange , white , gray , pink , green)

The teacher prepares small colored pieces of plastic , leather or carton. He/she writes a letter on each piece. The teacher divides the learners into small groups, each group has pieces of the same color in front of it. The teacher says a color, the learners who have the pieces of the needed color tries to order the letters to have the color spelled correctly, the other learners keep repeating the vocabulary loudly until their classmates end ordering their pieces". ([www.iteslj.org](http://www.iteslj.org))

### **8-*"Order the clocks – what's the time ?***

The learner will be able to learn the time.

The vocabulary are:

(one o'clock , ten past one, quarter past one, half past one , quarter to two , ten to two , two o'clock )

The teacher posts pictures on the board, each picture has a drawn clock on it, on its back the time is written. Then, the teacher chooses a pair of learners to come forward to the board and order the pictures in a way the time should be consequent. After they finish, the teacher reads the

time on each picture aloud and the learners repeat after him/her. Finally, the teacher chooses another group, each learner of the group should write the time under his/her picture. If he/she can't do it, the teacher rotate the picture to show the learner how the time is written on its back. After that, the learner tries to write the time again until he finishes. The teacher repeats the game using other times and so on". ([www.iteslj.org](http://www.iteslj.org))

2- A test was applied twice to measure students' vocabulary achievement.

3- An attitude questionnaire to assess the experimental students' attitudes towards learning vocabulary through Educational games.

#### **4.4-Validity of the designed Educational games:**

A number of referees reviewed the designed Educational Games and gave some modifications; such as clarifying the procedures of implementing each game and omitting some games because they weren't suitable for the students' learning level.

#### **4.5-Reliability of the Activities:**

The researcher applied the activities on(15) seventh grade students other than the sample. The application lasted for two weeks. During that the researcher noticed the following:

- Most of the students enjoyed the educational games.
- The sessions took more time than was originally allotted.
- Some students were frustrated in dealing with too many unfamiliar vocabulary items.

Based on these observations, the researcher did the following:

- Giving more time to the implementation of each game.

-Reduced the number of unfamiliar vocabulary items that students were required to deal with in each game.

#### **4.6–The Test:**

The researcher designed a test to measure the vocabulary achievement. The test consisted of (47) items divided into 8 sections. The first section consisted of (5) items, the students were asked to read the text then decide if the following statements are True or False. The second section consisted of (7) items, the students were asked to look at the map then complete the email with the correct direction. The third section consisted of (5) items, the students were asked to look at the pictures then fill in the blanks correctly. The fourth section consisted of (6) items, the students were asked to write the numbers correctly. The fifth section consisted of (5) items, the students were asked to match the statements correctly. The sixth sections consisted of (5) items, the students were asked to match the statements correctly. The seventh section consisted of (6) items, the students were asked to write the missing letters correctly. The eighth section consisted of (5) items, the students were asked to fill in the blanks with the correct word between brackets.

#### **4.7–Test Validity:**

The face validity was measured by having the test evaluated by a number of specialized referees in the field of education and English teaching methodology. The referees reviewed the test and approved its suitability for seventh grade students. In order to make sure of the content validity, the test was carried out on (20) seventh grade students other than the research sample. The answers were corrected and the difficulty, the easiness and the discrimination of the



test were calculated. For calculating the discrimination validity, the researcher followed the following steps:

- Calculating the total degree for each student of the survey sample.
- Descending order of the degrees.
- Taking (20%) of the highest degrees and (20%) of the lowest ones.
- Calculating the difference between the means of the highest and lowest degrees of the students in the survey sample according to the following table taking into account the following hypotheses:
- The is no significant statistical difference between the means of the highest and lowest degrees of the survey sample.

Table (2) studying the difference between the highest and lowest degrees for the students of the survey group

	M	Std.deviation	T	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
<b>Lowest degrees</b>	21.5	2.88	-10.357-	6	0.00
<b>upper degrees</b>	37.25	0.95			

Table(2) shows that the value of (T) is (-10.638) and the Sig value is (0.00) which is lower than (0.05). So we reject the null hypotheses and accept the alternative one which says: There is a significant statistical difference between the means of the upper and lower degrees in the achievement test. This refers to the result that the test discriminates between the group who has the upper score and the other one who has the lower scores and that assess the discrimination validity.

-The internal validity: it represents the square root of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The researcher found the value of this coefficient = (0.755), so the self validity is (0.869), i.e. a high validity coefficient.

#### 4.8–Test Reliability:

To make sure of the test reliability, the researcher applied the same test twice on (20) students other than the sample. The first application was on ( 2/10/ 2012 ) , and the second application was two weeks later. The correlation coefficient of the two applications according to (Person) was (0.489) and this value indicates a good reliability.

In addition, the split half reliability was calculated. Spearman–Brown Coefficient was (0.863) and Guttman Split–Half Coefficient was (0.861) and this indicates a high reliability.

Table (4) Correlation between the test items

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>			
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Individual items</b>	Value	<b>0,607</b>
		N of Items	<b>20</b>
	<b>Dual items</b>	Value	<b>0,516</b>
		N of Items	<b>20</b>
	Total N of Items		
Correlation Between Forms			<b>0,760</b>
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		<b>0,863</b>
	Unequal Length		<b>0,863</b>
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			<b>0,861</b>

Table (5) Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of the Test

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0,755	40

Table(5) shows that the value of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is (0.755) which indicates a good reliability of the test.

#### 4.9–The Attitude Questionnaire:

For assessing the Validity of Attitude Questionnaire, the researcher followed these steps:

1–Content validity: a number of referees evaluated the questionnaire and gave some suggestions which were taken into consideration by the researcher; such as making the questionnaire only one part which is the learner instead of three: the learner, the teacher, the educational games.

2–Discrimination validity: for testing the discrimination validity of the questionnaire, the researcher put the following hypothesis:

–There is no significant statistical difference between the means of the highest and lower scores in the attitude questionnaire toward learning vocabulary through Educational Games for the survey sample.

Table(6): Studying the difference between the high and low scores in the attitude questionnaire toward learning vocabulary through Educational Games for the survey sample students

	M	Std.Deviation	T	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
High Scores	45.25	1.708	-10.358	6	0.00
Low Scores	55.50	1.000			

Table(6) shows that  $\text{sig}=(0.00)$  which is less than  $(0.05)$ . So, we reject the null hypotheses and accept the alternative one which says: There is a significant statistical difference between the high and low scores in the attitude questionnaire toward learning vocabulary through the Educational Games for the survey sample students. This indicates that the attitude questionnaire has discrimination Validity.

3-Internal Validity: it represents the square root of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, and the researcher found the value of this coefficient  $= (0.663)$ , so the internal validity is  $(0.814)$  which indicates high validity coefficient.

#### 4.10-Questionnaire Reliability:

The reliability of the questionnaire was tested in many ways:

1-The same questionnaire was applied twice on (20) seventh grade students other than the research sample. The first application was on (2/10/2012) and the second one was two weeks later. It was found that the Person correlation coefficient was  $(0.627)$  and the sig value was  $(0.003)$  which is less than  $(0.05)$ . This means the questionnaire has a very good reliability.

Table (7): Pearson Correlation Coefficient of the Questionnaire

		First Application	Second Application
First Application	Pearson Correlation	1	0.627**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.003
	N	20	20
Second Application	Pearson Correlation	0.627**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003	
	N	20	20

2–The split– half reliability: it was calculated by dividing the questionnaire into two parts, the first part contained the individual items while the other part contained the dual items. Then, the correlation between the degrees of the individual and dual items in the attitude questionnaire toward learning through Educational Games was calculated of was(0.543). Spearman–Brown Coefficient rate was (0.704), and Guttman split–half coefficient was (0.684) which indicates a good reliability according to the following table.

Table (8): Cronbach's Alpha

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>			
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Individual items</b>	Value	<b>0.091</b>
		N of Items	<b>10</b>
	<b>Dual items</b>	Value	<b>0.554</b>
		N of Items	<b>9</b>
	Total N of Items		<b>19</b>
Correlation Between Forms			<b>0.543</b>
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		<b>0.704</b>
	Unequal Length		<b>0.704</b>
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			<b>0.684</b>

3–Reliability of the questionnaire by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient:

Table(9): Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of the Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.663	19

Table(9) shows that Cronbach's Alpha coefficient =0.663 which indicates a good reliability.

**-Assessing the equality of groups:**

To assess the equality of achievement level of the students in the experimental and control groups, the researcher put some hypotheses and calculated Sig value and T-test.

**4.11–The Hypotheses:**

**4.11.1–First hypothesis: There is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students and the control group students in the pre-test.**

Table(10): Results of t-test for studying the equality of groups in the achievement level between the first experimental group and second experimental group

Groups	Sample	M	Std.Deviation	T	df	Sig	Result
Control group	65	4.65	2.168	-0.168	129	0.86	Not significant
Experimental group	66	4.71	2.326				

Table (10) shows that t-test is (-0.168) and Sig is (0.86) which is more than (0.05). So, we accept the null hypothesis.

**4.11.2–Second hypothesis: There is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental group males and the control group males in the pre–test.**

Table(11): results of t–test for studying the equality of groups in the test between the males of the experimental group and the males of the control group.

Groups	N	M	Std.Deviation	T	df	Sig	Decision
Males of the control group	34	4.21	2.213	-1.459	64	0.150	Not significant
Males of the experimental group	32	4.97	2.024				

Table(11) shows that t–test is (-1.459) and Sig is (0.150) which is more than (0.05). So, we accept the null hypothesis which says:

**4.11.3–Third hypothesis:**

**The is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental group females and the control group females in the pre–test.**

Table(12): results of t–test for studying the equality in the achievement level between the mean scores of the experimental group females and the control group females in the pre–test.

groups	sample	M	Std.Deviation	T	df	Sig	Decision
Control group females	31	5.13	2.045	1.13	63	0.262	Not significant
Experimental group females	34	4.47	2.585				

Table(12) shows that T value is (1.13) with a significant level (0.262) which is more than (0.05). So, we accept the Zero hypotheses which says: There is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental group females and the control group females in the pre-test. This emphasizes the equality between the females in both groups.



## Chapter Five

### The results of the study

#### 5.1– showing and discussing the results of the study:

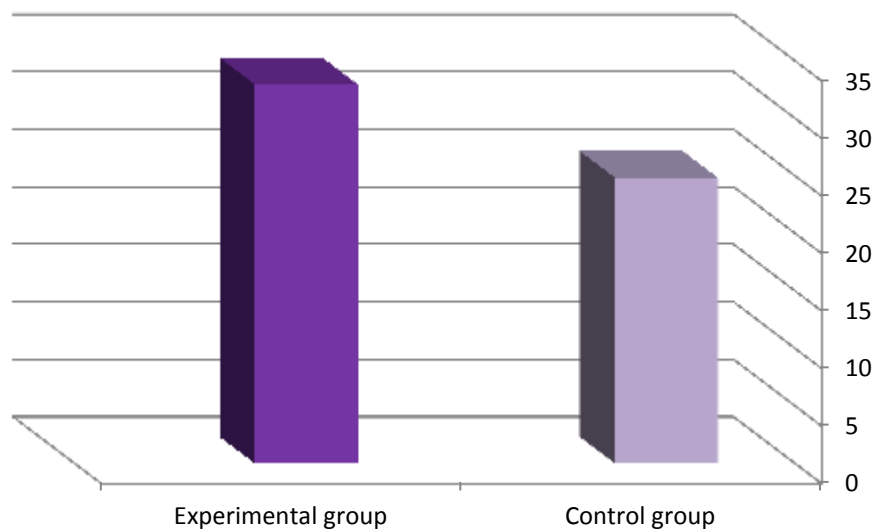
The researcher tested the study hypotheses using t–test for independent groups (Independent– Samples T–test) and at the significant level (0.05), and the results were as follows:

5.1.1–The results of testing hypotheses related to the achievement test:

##### –The first basic hypothesis:

**There is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students and the control group students in the post–test.**

Groups	S	M	Std.Deviation	T	df	Sig	Decision
Control group	65	24.846	5.066	-9.186	129	0.00	Significant
Experimental group	66	32.954	5.045				

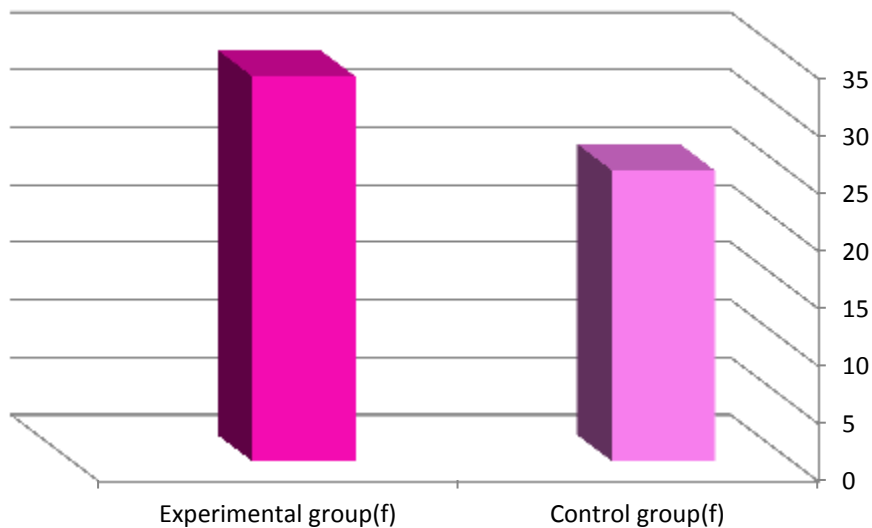


Plan(1): Difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control group in the post– test

We derive the following sub-hypotheses from the first basic hypothesis :

1-There is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental group females and the control group females in the post-test.

groups	S	M	Std.deviation	T	df	Sig	Decision
F of C group	31	25.2903	5.35533	-6.883-	63	0.00	significant
F of E group	34	33.4706	4.20126				



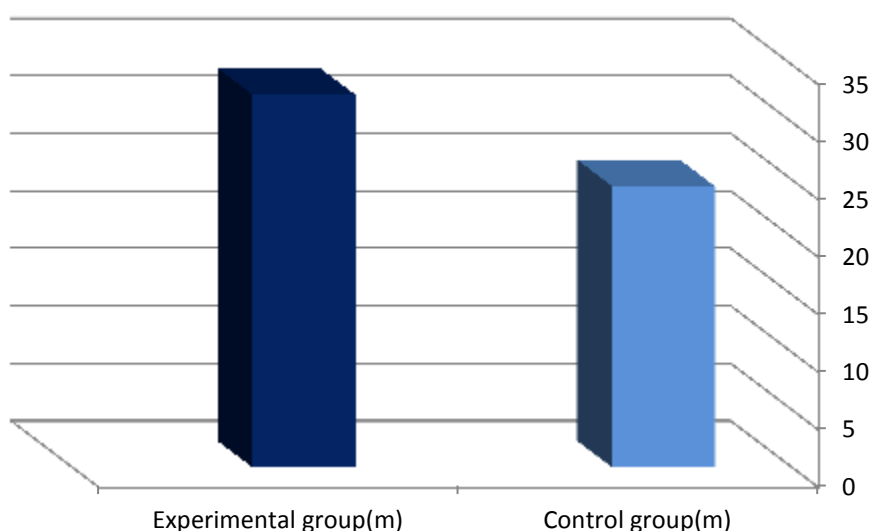
Plan(2): Difference between the mean scores of the females of the experimental group and the females of the control group in the pre-test.

2-There is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of males in both the experimental group and the control group in the post-test.

Table(13): studying the difference between the males of the experimental and control groups

Groups	Sample	M	Std.Deviation	T	df	Sig	Decision
Experimental group males	34	24.441	4.812	-6.068	64	0.00	Not significant
Control group males	32	32.406	5.830				

Table(13) shows that t-test value is (6.068) at a significant level (0.00) which is more than 0.05, and this negates the hypothesis. So, there is a significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental group males and the control group males in the post-test in favor of the experimental group, and this emphasizes the effectiveness of Educational Games compared to the traditional method because the Educational games found an effective learning environment, the students were encouraged to work cooperatively and competitively. In addition, it's expected that the teacher used the educational games successfully.



Plan(3): Difference between the mean scores of the males of the experimental group and the control group in the post-test.

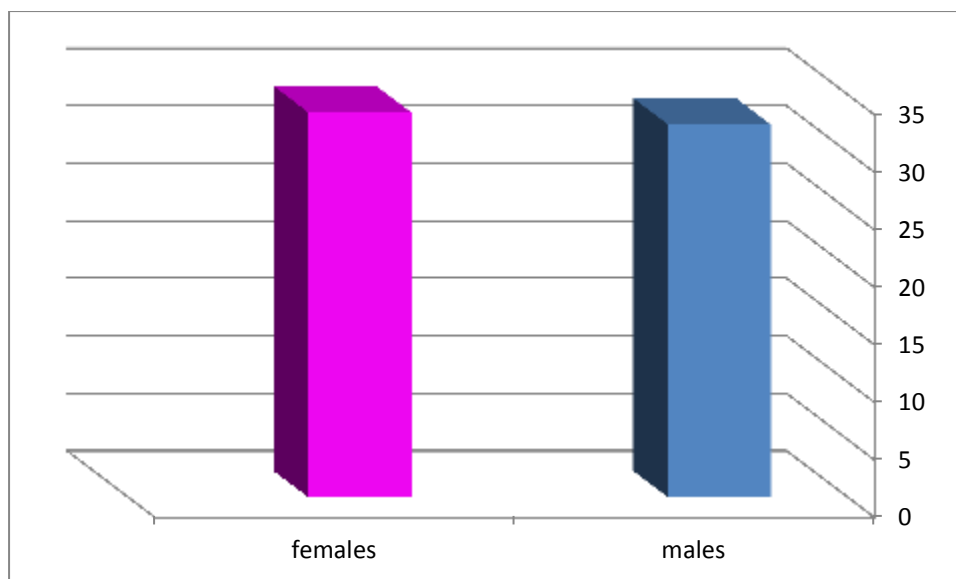
**–There is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental group males and the experimental group females in the post –test.**

Table(14): Difference between the mean scores of the experimental group males and the experimental group females in the post–test.

Groups	Sample	M	Std.Deviation	T	df	Sig	Decision
Experimental group males	32	32.406	5.830	0.855	64	0.396	Not significant
Experimental group females	34	33.470	4.201				

Table(14) shows that t–test is (0.855) at a significant level (0.396) which is more than (0.05) and this emphasizes the hypothesis which says:

There is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the experimental group males and the experimental group females in the post –test. This due to the equality between the experimental group males and females in the social level, i.e. they were all from the city. In addition, they almost had the same thinking characteristics, and they learned in the same method, i.e. the educational games.



Plan(4): Difference between the mean scores of the experimental group males and the experimental group females in the post-test.

## 5.2–Studying the Effectiveness of Educational Games:

### 5.2.1–Acheivement effectiveness:

**\*Calculating Effect Size:** the researcher used Cohen's index which is represented in the following equation :

Effect size = (the mean scores of the experimental group – the mean scores of the control group)/ Std.Deviation of the control group

The effect size is considered significant if it was more than (0.5)

Table (15): value of effect size for the two experimental groups

Group	Mean scores in the post test	Mean scores of the control group	Std.Deviation of the control group	Effect size
Experimental	32.95	24.85	5.06	1.6
Experimental group males	32.41	24.44	4.81	1.66
Experimental group females	33.47	25.29	5.35	1.5

Table(15) shows that the effect size for the experimental group students is (1.6), the effect size for the experimental group males is (1.66), and the effect size for the experimental group females is (1.5). These values are more than (0.5) which emphasizes the big effect of learning through educational games.

**\*Calculating the Rate of Return:**

The researcher used rate of return law represented by Black's law:

$$\text{Rate of return} = \frac{M2-M1}{TS-M1} + \frac{M2 - M1}{TS}$$

M1 : mean of the group in the pre-test.

M2 : mean of the group in the post-test.

TS : the total score of the test.

According to Black's Law, the rate of return shouldn't be less than (1.2) to say that the learning effectiveness is acceptable.

Table(16): comparing the rates of return for the experimental and control group students

Group	Mean scores of the pre-test	Mean scores of the post test	Rate of Return
Experimental group	4.71	32.95	1.5
Experimental group males	4.97	32.41	1.47
Experimental group females	4.47	33.47	1.54
Control group	4.646	24.85	1.07
Experimental group females	5.13	25.29	1.08
Experimental group males	4.21	24.44	1.06
Total Score	40		

Table(16) shows that the rate of return for the experimental group students is (1.5) which is more than (1.2) and this indicates that learning through Educational games is effective. The table also shows that the experimental group students exceeded their mates in the control group because the rate of return for the control group is (1.07) which is less than the (1.2). This indicates that learning through the traditional methods is less effective than learning through Educational games. The table also shows that rate of return for the males of the experimental group is (1.47) while it is (1.06) for the control group males, and this indicates that the males of the experimental group exceeded the males of the control group. In addition, the rate of return for the experimental group females is (1.54), while it is (1.08) for the control group females which indicates that the experimental group females exceeded the control group females.

#### **–Effectiveness of Mastering:**

The researcher identified the effectiveness of mastering by achieving (75%) or more. In the test designed by the researcher, she identified the effectiveness of mastering by (30) marks.

For measuring the effectiveness of mastering for learning through the educational games and comparing it with the traditional method, the researcher calculated the percentage of mastering the experimental and control groups according to the marks which the students in both groups got in the post- test.

The following table shows the distribution of the students on the identified mastering level and their percentage.

Table(17): Experimental and control groups students' mastering level and percentage

Group	Total number	Number of students who got 75% or more	Percentage
Experimental group	66	51	77.27%
Experimental group males	32	25	78.13%
Experimental group females	34	26	76.47%
Control group	65	15	23.08%
Control group males	34	7	20.59%
Control group females	31	8	25.81%

The table shows that (77.27 % ) of the first experimental group got 75% or more in the achievement test, and (78.13%) of the first experimental group males got (75%) in the achievement test, and (76.47%) of the first experimental group females got (75%) or more. These results emphasize the effectiveness of the educational games because the experimental group students could reach the identified mastering level. On the other hand, we notice from the table that a few number (20.59%) of the control group students could reach the identified mastering level. So, we can say that learning through the traditional method didn't enable the control group students from reaching the identified mastering level.

### **5.3–Results of testing hypotheses through the questionnaire:**

#### **1–The standard of judging the experimental group students' attitudes:**

For identifying the students' attitude toward learning through the educational games, the researcher calculated the mean scores of the



tool which was consisted of 19 items , and divided into three estimation degrees:

(agree, neutral, disagree). The "agree" attitude was given 3 degrees, the "natural" attitude was given 2 degrees, and the "disagree" attitude was given 1 degree. So, we can calculate the positive and negative mean scores of the questionnaire as shown in the following table.

Table(18): the hypothetical mean of the attitude tool toward learning through educational games

The positive hypothetical mean	The negative hypothetical mean
39-57	19-38

Table (19) standard of judging students attitudes in the tri-scale

Estimation	Mean
Disagree	From 1 to 1.66
Natural	From 1.67 to 2.33
Agree	From 2.34 to 3

Table(19) shows that the positive attitude ranges between (2.34 -3)

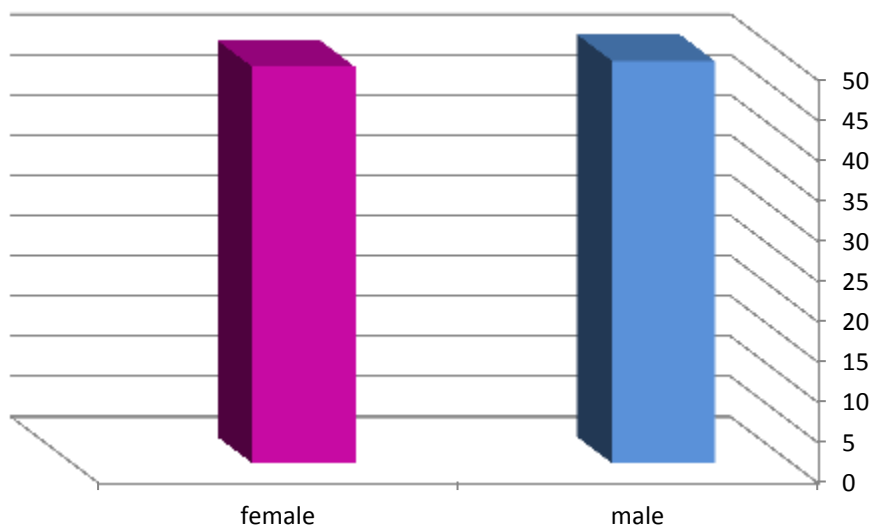
### The hypothesis:

**There is no significant statistical difference between the experimental group males' attitudes and the experimental group females' attitudes toward learning vocabulary through educational games due to their mean scores in the attitude scale.**

Table(20): results of T test related to studying the difference between the mean score of the males and females in the experimental group in the attitude scale.

Experimental group	N	Mean	Std.Deviaton	T	df	sig	Decision
males	32	49.97	4.162	0.679	64	0.498	Not significant
females	34	49.24	4.586				

Table(20) shows that t-test of the attitude scale toward learning vocabulary through educational games is (0.679) and sig (0.498) which is more than (0.05). So, we accept the hypothesis. In addition, by comparing the mean scores for the males (49.97) and the females (49.24), we find that these two values are between the range of the positive attitude of the scale (39–57) which indicates that the students of the experimental group had positive attitudes toward learning vocabulary through educational games.



Plan(5): Difference between the mean scores of the female and males of the experimental in the attitude questionnaire toward learning through educational games

#### **5.4–Discussing the results:**

In this study, the experimental group students outscored the control group students in both the immediate and deferred post-test. The researcher justifies that by the fact that the experimental group students were active participants in the learning process compared to their passive peers in the control group. The experimental group students

were largely enjoying their involvement in pair and work group work activities. Consequently, the experimental group students' engagement with the material resulted in a better learning of vocabulary. Moreover, the educational games were presented in a simple way whereby students were moving from a game to another one smoothly and actively taking into account the good instructions which every game was provided with.

In addition, the experimental group students results in the achievement test indicates a better vocabulary retention due to the fact that in the educational games method the students exerted more effort in learning vocabulary than the control group students who got the meanings readily and easily offered to them by the teacher.

As far as the gender variable is concerned, the research indicates no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of males and females neither in the immediate nor in the deferred post-test. The researcher justifies this result by the fact that both male and female students used the same games and were exposed to the same learning environment .

### **5.5–Suggestions of the Study:**

In the light of the results of the study, the researcher suggest the following:

- 1--Making a good use of technology and the Internet to make Educational games that suit all the Educational environments.
- 2--Conducting training courses for the English language teachers to help them in making the Educational Games which suit their students' learning levels.
- 3--Providing schools with the necessary materials and sources for making the Educational Games.

4–Applying the Educational Games as a teaching method on other subjects.

5–Conducting other studies to identify the effectiveness of the Educational games in learning English vocabulary on other grades and stages such as the secondary stage.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix 1: Pre-test and post-test

#### *The aims of the test:*

- Learning the vocabulary of time.
- Learning the vocabulary of directions.
- Learning the vocabulary of colors.
- Learning the vocabulary of numbers.
- Learning the vocabulary of camping equipment.
- Learning the vocabulary of shops.
- Learning the vocabulary of food.

#### *The behavioral objectives:*

Learners will be able to:

- 1- a-choose the correct time.
  - b-differentiate between am and pm.
  - c-write the time.
- 2- a-talk about directions.
  - b-describe an address.

3- write colours.

4-write numbers from 20-1000.

5- identify equipments of camping.

6- match the kinds of shops with their objects.

7-a-write the names of food.

b-write the steps of making food.

**Total degree: 40**

**Seventh grade**

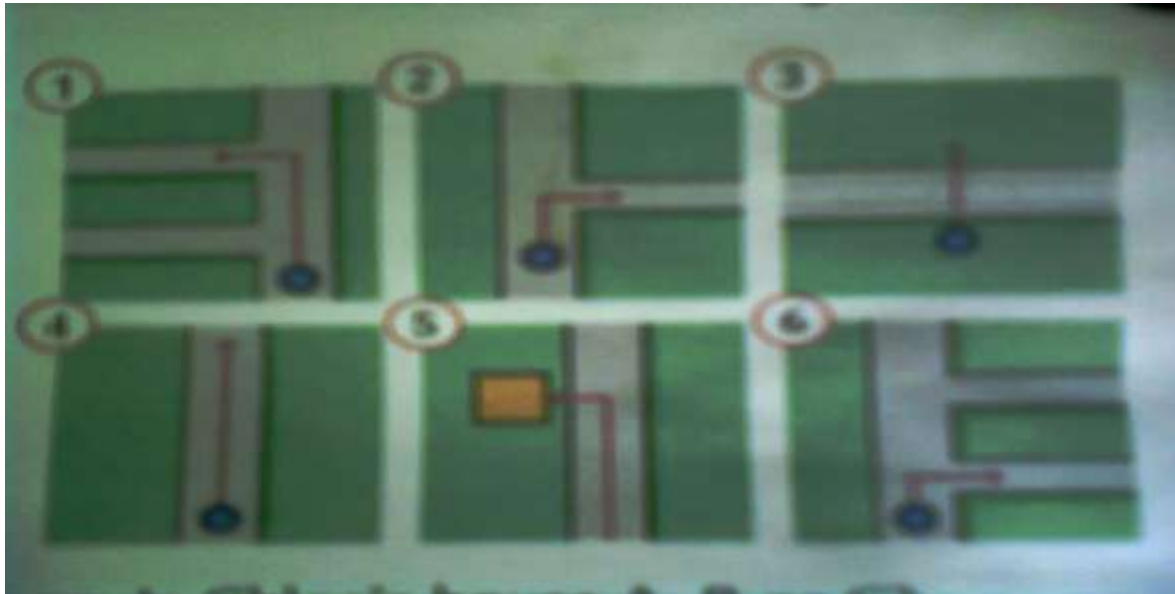
**I– Read the following text and choose (T) or (F) for the statements below: (5 marks)**

Ali gets up at half past six. He never remembers to set the alarm clock. He gets washed and gets dressed. His clothes are always difficult to find. Then, he and his family have breakfast together. He leaves home at seven, but he is often late. He gets the bus to school at five past seven. He usually runs for the bus. School starts at half past seven. He has lessons until one o'clock. Then he goes home. He and his family eat a big lunch at two pm. In the evening he does his homework and watch T.V. He always goes to bed at ten o'clock.

- 1– Ali gets up at 6.30pm.
  - 2– He gets the bus to school at 7.05am.
  - 3– School starts at 8.00 pm.
  - 4– He has lessons until 2.00pm.
  - 5– He always goes to bed at 10.00pm.
-

II- Look at the following map and then complete the e-mail correctly to help Faten go to Asma's home. You can use the following words: (7marks)

(go straight on, turn right, cross the road, take the second left, take the first right , It's on the left)



Hi Faten,

I'm glad you can go to my birthday party. It's easy to get to my house from the station. Come out of the station. ....1..... and ....2..... Go down Spring Road. ....3..... Norton Road. ....4..... . ....5..... . This is the West Avenue. Go straight on and ....6..... . This is my road. I live at number 55. ....7..... . Call me if you have any problems.

See you on Sunday.

Asma

---

**III– Write the colors correctly, you are given the first letter : (5 marks)**

1– Ahmad's book is r.....

2– Samira's bag is b.....

3– Huda's book is w.....

4– The mobile phone is y.....

5– The school bus is g.....

---

**IV– Write the numbers correctly: (3 marks)**

26.....

37.....

981.....

173.....

500.....

1000.....

---

**V– Ahmad and his friend are going camping next week. Which of the following words do they need as camping equipment? (4 marks)**

1–compass , 2– bed , 3– water , 4– soap ,5–camping stove , 6– refrigerator , 7– map , 8–matches , 9–suncream 10–icecream

11–can opener , 12– T.V

---

**VI- Match the following correctly: (5 marks)**

- |                                     |                       |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1- You can buy a T-Shirt from       | a- shoe shop          |
| 2- You can buy a CD from            | b- supermarket        |
| 3- You can buy boots from           | c- clothes shop       |
| 4- You can buy a chocolate bar from | d- sports shop        |
| 5- You can buy a dress from         | f- computer game shop |
- 

**VII- Look at the following picture and write the missing letters, you are given the first letter of each wor: (6 marks)**

- |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1- c..... | 2- a..... | 3- f..... |
| 4- s..... | 5- b..... | 6- r..... |





**VII– Put the correct words in the blanks: (5 marks)**

( stir , chop , bake , heat , pour )

1-..... the cucumber.

2-..... the milk.

3-..... the water on the flour.

4-..... the cake.

5-..... the oven and then put the cake in it.

## The Correct Answers

### First question:

1-T

2-T

3-F

4-F

5-T

---

### Second question:

1-take the second left

2-take the first right

3-cross the road

4-go straight on

5-turn right

6-take the first right

7-it's on the left

---

### Third question:

1-red

2-blue

3-white

4-yellow

5-green

---

### Fourth question:

twenty -six

thirty- seven

nine hundred and eighty one

one hundred and seventy three

five- hundred

one thousand

---

**Fifth question:**

1-compass

2-water

3-soap

4-camping stove

5-map

6-matches

7-suncream

8-can opener

---

**Sixth question:**

1-d

2-e

3-a

4-b

5-c

---

**Seventh question:**

1-cinnamon

2-apple

3-flour

4-sugar

5-butter

6-rice

**Eighth question:**

1-chop

2-stir

3-pour

4-bake

5-heat

<b>Pre test</b>				
	<b>Experimental group</b>		<b>Control group</b>	
<b>Number</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>males</b>	<b>males</b>	<b>females</b>
1	6	4	3	4
2	3	8	5	8
3	1	4	2	4
4	7	3	4	3
5	4	6	7	6
6	2	4	6	4
7	4	9	6	9
8	6	7	2	7
9	3	5	3	5
10	1	3	6	3
11	8	3	9	3
12	6	2	6	2
13	4	4	3	4
14	2	6	4	8
15	2	2	6	6
16	1	8	2	7
17	5	6	2	4
18	8	7	2	8
19	4	4	4	5
20	6	8	7	6
21	2	5	1	3
22	4	6	3	2
23	10	3	5	4
24	8	2	2	3

25	2	4	1	4
26	3	3	5	9
27	2	4	1	6
28	7	9	5	5
29	4	6	8	4
30	9	5	3	5
31	2	4	6	8
32	3	5	4	
33	4		8	
34	9		2	

<b>Post test</b>				
	<b>Experimental group</b>		<b>Control group</b>	
<b>Number</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>males</b>
1	38	38	15	15
2	37	31	24	28
3	34	35	29	30
4	35	33	31	22
5	38	38	33	25
6	37	26	20	23
7	38	22	22	24
8	28	38	21	24
9	33	34	17	22
10	32	21	29	26
11	35	40	27	22
12	37	23	32	30
13	31	37	33	20
14	28	24	16	35
15	31	25	20	18
16	26	33	28	22
17	39	18	31	17
18	32	36	28	30
19	40	31	30	29
20	37	30	22	28
21	37	37	19	22
22	29	31	24	20
23	28	38	25	19
24	38	36	32	27
25	24	34	23	24
26	30	34	30	28

27	33	39	29	30
28	33	34	28	24
29	37	36	27	31
30	29	36	20	22
31	29	37	19	30
32	31	32		23
33	38			15
34	36			26



## Appendix 2: The vocabulary

### Vocabulary numbers 20 - 1,000

26 twenty-six   37 thirty-seven   173 one hundred and seventy-three  
981 nine hundred and eighty-one   1,000 one thousand

## Vocabulary camping equipment

batteries

a compass

water

a can opener

a camping stove

fuel

matches

a map

sun cream

insect repellent

soap

a torch



## Vocabulary and Speaking shops

clothes shop music shop supermarket traditional market sports shop  
computer games shop department store bookshop shoe shop

## Vocabulary food

to pour to chop to stir to bake to heat

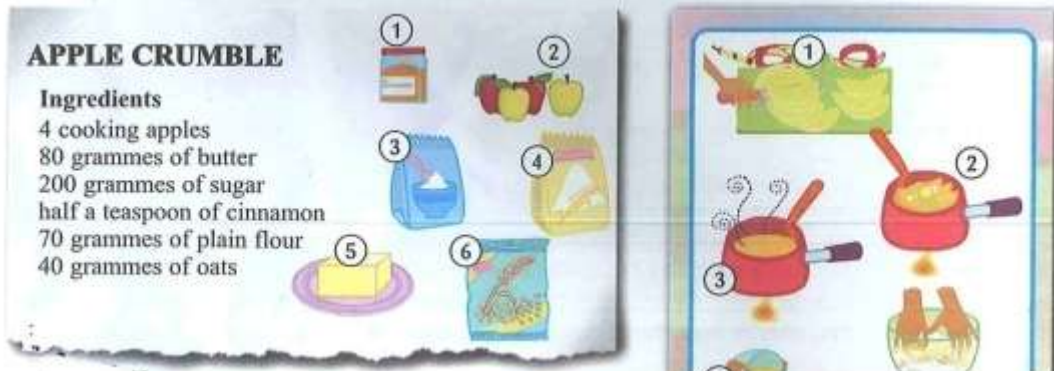


Look at the pictures and write the names of the ingredients.

1 cinnamon

**APPLE CRUMBLE**

**Ingredients**  
4 cooking apples  
80 grammes of butter  
200 grammes of sugar  
half a teaspoon of cinnamon  
70 grammes of plain flour  
40 grammes of oats



## A day in Ali's life

1



In the morning, I get up at half past six. I never remember to set the alarm clock!

2



I get washed and get dressed. My clothes are always difficult to find. Then we all have breakfast together. We have eggs, olives, labneh, bread and tea.

3

I usually pack my school bag in the morning, five minutes before I leave the house. I always forget something; my pen, or sometimes my homework! Mum doesn't like this!



4



I leave home at seven, but I'm often late. I get the bus to school at five past seven. I usually run for the bus! My friend Hassan waits for me at the bus stop.

5

School starts at half past seven. I have lessons until one o'clock. In the break I sometimes have a snack. I often forget to pack it! On Wednesday we play football. But I don't always remember my football boots.



6



Then I go home. We eat a big lunch at 2.00 pm! In the afternoon, my friends play basketball and I sometimes play with them. But I often help my parents in their shop.

7

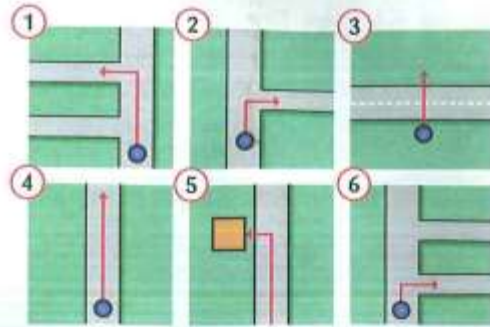


In the evening I do my homework and watch TV. Some nights I watch my favourite programme and I don't finish my homework! I always go to bed at ten o'clock.

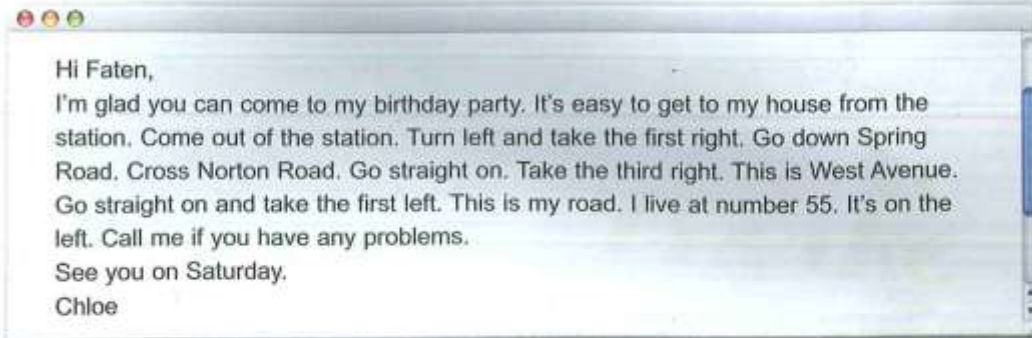
## Vocabulary directions

Match the phrases with the pictures.

- a take the first right
- b turn right
- c it's on the left
- d take the second left
- e go straight on
- f cross the road



Read the e-mail and follow the route on the map. Is Chloe's house A, B or C?



Work in pairs. Look at the map and describe the positions of places.

The café is opposite the supermarket.

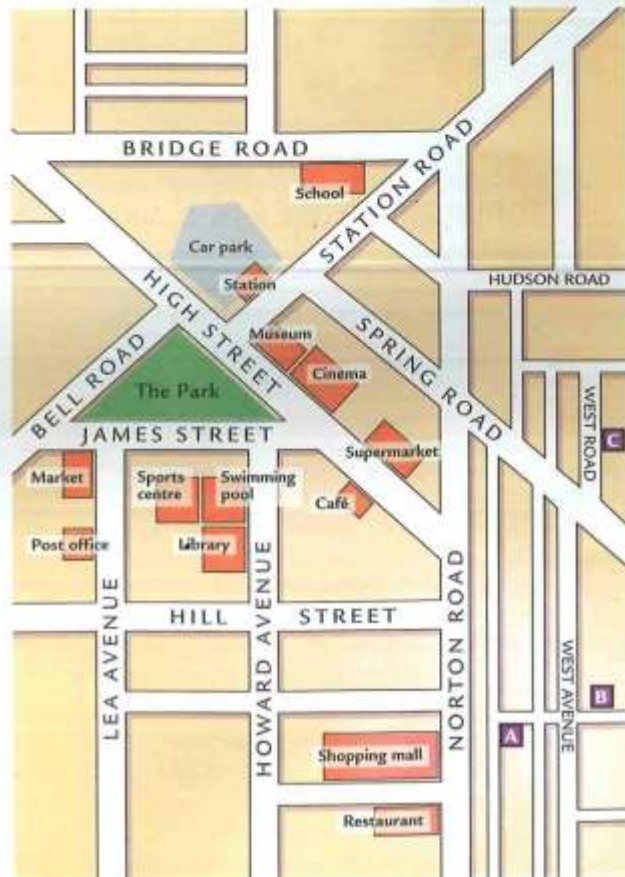
The sports centre is behind the swimming pool.

The post office is next to the market.

**Giving directions** Work in pairs. You are at the library. Ask and give directions.

A: Excuse me, how do I get to the post office?

B: Go down this road and ...



## Vocabulary colours

	Your name:	Partner's name:
Ahmed's book		
Samira's bag		
Huda's book		
the mobile phone		
the school bus		
Yousef's bag		

### Appendix 3: The Questionnaire

	Learner	Yes	No
1	Educational games makes me remember vocabulary for a longer time		
2	Educational games makes me learn more vocabulary		
3	Educational games makes my mistakes less		
4	Educational games makes my pronunciation better		
5	Educational games makes writing vocabulary better		
6	Educational games makes the meaning clearer		
7	Educational games makes me learn vocabulary without a dictionary		
8	Educational games makes me learn vocabulary without translating them into my language		
9	Educational games makes me an active Participant		
10	Educational games makes me cooperate with your partners		
11	Educational games makes me enthusiastic		
12	Educational games makes me creative		
13	Educational games makes me positive		
14	Educational games makes me happy		
15	I see Educational Games causes a lot of noise		
16	I think Educational Games wastes time		
17	I find Educational Games is difficult		
18	I feel Educational Games is boring		
19	I prefer learning vocabulary through the traditional methods		

 **THANKS** 



**Difference between the mean scores of the males and females'  
attitudes in the experimental group toward learning vocabulary  
through Educational Games**

		Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Educational games makes me remember vocabulary for a longer time	2.94	0.298
2	Educational games makes me learn more vocabulary	2.77	0.576
3	Educational games makes my mistakes less	2.79	0.541
4	Educational games makes my pronunciation better	2.86	0.493
5	Educational games makes writing vocabulary better	2.68	0.612
6	Educational games makes the meaning clearer	2.71	0.602
7	Educational games makes me learn vocabulary without a dictionary	2.65	0.690
8	Educational games makes me learn vocabulary without translating them into my language	2.56	0.747
9	Educational games makes me an active Participant	2.68	0.636
10	Educational games makes you cooperate with my partners	2.67	0.664
11	Educational games makes me enthusiastic	2.32	0.862
12	Educational games makes	2.83	0.514

	me creative		
13	Educational games makes me positive	2.67	0.709
14	Educational games makes me happy	2.50	0.770
15	I think Educational Games causes a lot of noise	2.08	0.900
16	I think Educational Games wastes time	2.02	0.936
17	I find Educational Games is difficult	2.76	0.583
18	I feel Educational Games is boring	2.80	0.533
19	I prefer learning vocabulary through the traditional methods	2.30	0.841
	Total	2.61	0.229

## Appendix: 4

### Names of the Referees

	Name of Referee	Specialization	Place
1	Pro. Ali Saud Hassan	ELT Methodology	Faculty of Education
2	Dr. Sena'a Aljeshi	ELT Methodology	
3	Dr. Sahar Abd Al-hameed	ELT Methodology	
4	Dr. Souad Marouf	ELT Methodology	
5	Dr. Hala Suleiman	ELT Methodology	
6	Dr. Fawaz Al-Abdullah	Teaching Techniques	
7	Dr. Majed Al-Refae	Teaching Techniques	
8	Ms. Rasha Bayazid	First Supervisor of English	Ministry of Education
9	Ms. Lina Diab	First Supervisor of English	
10	Mr. Basel Sadek	First Supervisor of English	
11	Ms. Hanan Al-Ali	English Language Supervisor	Damascus Educational Zone

## ملخص باللغة العربية

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة فاعلية الألعاب التعليمية في تعلم مفردات اللغة الإنكليزية. اتبعت الباحثة المنهجين شبه التجريبي و الوصفي التحليلي. تكونت العينة من (131) طالبا و طالبة من طلبة الصف السابع من مدرستي: جلال فاروق الشريف للإناث و بدر الدين غزال للذكور، خلال العام الدراسي 2012/2013. استخدمت الباحثة الأدوات الآتية:

-مجموعة من الألعاب التعليمية.

-اختبار قبلي و بعدي.

-استبانة.

استخدمت الباحثة برنامج (SPSS) (17.0) لتحليل البيانات، و اختبار (T-test) لاختبار صحة الفرضيات عند مستوى الدلالة (0.05).

أظهرت نتائج الدراسة تفوق المجموعة التجريبية على المجموعة الضابطة في الاختبار البعدي، بالإضافة إلى ذلك كان اتجاه المجموعة التجريبية نحو تعلم مفردات اللغة الإنكليزية بواسطة الألعاب التعليمية إيجابيا.



جامعة دمشق  
كلية التربية  
قسم المناهج وطرائق التدريس

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دراسة أعدت لنيل درجة الماجستير في طرائق التدريس

إعداد الطالبة  
أسماء العمار

إشراف  
د. سيناء الخطيب الجشي  
المدرسة في قسم المناهج و طرائق التدريس

2014 – 2015 م  
دمشق: 1435 – 1436 هـ