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Game Technique Applications in Teaching Arabic Words as a Foreign Language to Children

Zeynep Arkan[1]

[1] Arabic Interpreting Department, The University of Ankara Hacı bayram Veli, Ankara, Turkey

Correspondence: Zeynep Arkan, Arabic Interpreting Department, The University of Ankara Hacı bayram Veli, Ankara, Turkey. Tel: 090 506 10 99 810. E-mail: zeynep.arkan@hbv.edu.tr

Abstract
In this study, games were prepared that will contribute to improving the vocabulary of children learning Arabic. Considering the target audience, it is known that game techniques and word teaching offer a fun and lively course environment and increase the motivation of the student. In this study, qualitative research methods were used. Document analysis technique was used in the collection of data. The findings were analyzed by the method of exponence analysis and a systematic framework was established for the study. The analysis of the documents according to the gains in the 2-8th grade Arabic curriculum prepared by the Ministry of National Education was carried out by a linguist and it was aimed to increase the reliability of the study. Three language experts were consulted for the scope validity of the games associated with the achievements and the games were rearranged in line with the incoming feedback. A total of 13 games were presented at this stage. Care has been taken to ensure that game designs are available to the entire class. In addition, it is important that the games are able to strengthen both oral and written communication. At the end of the study, it was proposed that games that can be played in open spaces such as outdoors and using technological devices can be designed in the form of dual or group work for children learning Arabic.

Keywords: Foreign Language, Second Language, Arabic, Vocabulary Teaching, Game Techniques

1. Introduction

Language is a system with its own rules that communicate people's feelings and thoughts and allow them to get in agreement with each other. Words are also the basic building blocks of this system, namely language, both in the mother tongue and in the foreign language. It is not possible to think of language without words. Word learning is a process that can continue from the moment the individual first begins to learn the language to death. The individual can learn new words at every stage of his life (Dagbasi, 2019) There are many definitions of what the word means in language. The Turkish Language Association defined the word as "meaningful sound unity of sound and word." According to Gulensoy (2010), the word; among people who speak the same language, consisting of one or more syllable sound groups, in the mind, when used alone, corresponding to a certain concept; it is the unit of language that establishes a relationship between concrete or abstract concepts that reflect a certain

emotion and thought. Kantemir (1997) defines the word as a collection of meaningful voices or sounds that play an active role in the sentence setup.

People need words to understand both what is written and what is said, and to convey their feelings and thoughts to others. For this reason, there is a direct link between the effective use of comprehension and telling skills and the richness of vocabulary (Karatay, 2007). Apaydin states that the process of learning words in a foreign language is not an immediate action, but is reinforced by a continuous and conscious repetition (2007).

The first thing to do to improve the vocabulary of students is to determine what to teach. Which words to teach is a priority. Other stages of vocabulary teaching can be carried out more healthily if a comprehensive evaluation of word selection and correct decisions are made. While the presence of spoken words in daily life is quite large, the presence of words taught through textbooks in schools is quite limited. Therefore, by prioritizing more important and useful words for students in vocabulary teaching, a significant contribution can be made to the students' vocabulary. This indicates that the words to be given to the students in the course should be selected with great care by a certain system and purpose (Tağa, 2016).

One of the most important aspects of word teaching is to actively and passively divide the words to be taught to students into two groups. Active words are the words that the student uses when writing and speaking. Passive words are words that the student understands while reading and listening, but does not use them in his speech and writing. Separating words actively and passively significantly affects word teaching. Once meaning is given for active words, pronunciation and writing studies must also be carried out. In passive words, the meaning of the word is given, no pronunciation and writing work is carried out. However, when making this distinction, the teacher or the authors of the curriculum have the task of determining which word is active and which word is passive. This determination can be made according to the objectives of the course and program (al-Huli, 2018).

It should be noted that the problems in vocabulary teaching will affect the other language skills of the students, individual differences of the students should be taken into account, the words to be taught for each class and age group should be meticulously planned, taking into account the number of words, difficulty degrees, active-passive situations, functional or comprehensive, and methods and techniques suitable for vocabulary teaching should be selected (Dagbasi, 2019). In their research, The Oiler and others (2012) have already listed the methods and techniques used by teachers in word teaching as follows: using the dictionary, using the word in a sentence, matching words, matching words, teaching puzzles, teaching with games, reading different types of text, drama, finding meaning from sentences, using visuals, creating stories from words, using illustrated dictionaries. As you can see, word teaching with the game is listed in the middle.

According to Dagbasi (2019), the number of words to be taught during each course hour during the academic year is important. Trying to teach a large number of words is actually teaching a small number of words; trying to teach a small number of words can also lead to unnecessary repetitions, loss of time and energy. Although the Arabic curriculum is based on helix, this spiral cannot be achieved because textbooks are not usually written in a series, because the fifth-grade Arabic textbook author and the sixth-grade textbook author may think differently in many respects, especially active-passive word selection.

Demirel (2004) emphasizes that between fifteen and twenty new words can be taught in a forty-fifty-minute course, but that this number can be up to thirty according to the nature and interest of the student group, and then it is too optimistic to expect so many words to be pronounced correctly by students, the word to be used appropriately in a sentence, and to know what the meaning of the word is. Altun (2017), who argues that the most important element of foreign language teaching is word teaching, states that having a lot of common Arabic-Turkish words is an advantage in Arabic teaching and makes the following recommendations for the process of successful word teaching:

1- Using the advantage of Turkish-Arabic interaction, common words in two languages can be included in textbooks.
2- In Turkish, some verses, hadiths, prayers, words in Arabic abandonment can be taught to students for use in daily life.

3- Students should keep a word notebook, the student should write the words he/she has learned here. The words that are written can be repeated until they become repetitions.
4- The words to be taught to students can be selected from words that will meet their daily needs and help to express their own thoughts and feelings.
5- Words should be remarkable, intriguing, up-to-date to cover different areas; jokes, cartoons, poems, stories and plays.

In his work titled "How to Learn Arabic," Aydın stated that word teaching can be done by showing real objects, gestures and, using previously learned words, with the help of converse meanings, with the help of photographs, pictures, posters, drawings made on the board, etc., but did not mention the game and the game technique at all.

1.1. Game Technique in Foreign Language Teaching

Many different methods and techniques have been applied in foreign language teaching from the past to the present. Since it is aimed to teach the foreign language in the best way, it has been tried to reach the techniques that will both increase permanence and provide a pleasant learning process. However, it should be noted that foreign language teaching includes many factors such as learning age, purpose, learning environment and process, quality of teacher, teaching material. However, in addition to these factors, the method applied in foreign language teaching is very, very important. Especially when there are active, long-term students like children who have difficulty getting their attention, who like to have fun. According to Özcan and Daghbasi (2015), the game technique is one of the most ideal teaching techniques that can be used in foreign language teaching, especially when it comes to children.

The game, which is one of the teaching techniques with the group, should take part in in-class activities as it will strengthen both oral and written communication in children in foreign language teaching. Because the game is a technique that adds excitement, energy to in-class work, sometimes reinforces feelings of competition and sometimes togetherness. Purushotma (2005) stated that games can increase motivation. According to him, games can even be addictive. In Candemir (1989), the game technique is an important tool that overcomes all psychological obstacles and directs pronunciation and vocabulary teaching towards correct, easy, comprehension by opening all information channels.

According to Demirel (2004); games should be simple, easy and really interesting enough to allow all students to understand and participate comfortably. Therefore, the selected games should have the flexibility to adapt to different levels and abilities of the students. The rules of the game should be able to allow everyone in the class to participate and the game must have a specific purpose.

When planning how long we will devote to a game event, it should not set strict limits, but time should be kept flexible when clearly specifying goals. During the game process, it is up to the teacher to monitor whether the learning goals have been achieved, where to intervene, where to ask quality questions and where to end the game. These activities planned for learners can sometimes be kept short and replaced with another game event to make gains on learning goals (Özcan, Dagbasi, 2015).

1.2. Literature Reviews

In the studies carried out in the literature, especially the studies on Turkish word teaching targeted game techniques were observed. Gürdal and Arslan (2011) examined the method of teaching Turkish to foreigners with their game and puzzle activities in their studies. In another study, Argıt (2019), she compared the fourth and seventh-grade students in terms of game techniques and word teaching. Another work that stands out in this context was carried out by Işık and Semerci (2016). Within the scope of the research, the impact of educational games in English teaching to first grade 3 students was discussed. Another study encountered in the field article within the framework of this subject was put forward by Elia et al. (2017) and provided information about the "Language Park" held in the Department of Italian Language and Literature at Istanbul University. This virtual platform was established on the Istanbul University Virtual Campus, where Italian language learning games are featured. In

their work titled "Word Teaching with Games," Dagbasi and Özcan (2021) discussed the technique of games in word teaching through English and Arabic examples.

Another study on game techniques and word teaching belongs to Bakhsh (2016). Within the scope of the study, the subject of teaching words with games to young students in Saudi Arabia was examined. In addition, Rahman and Angraeni (2020) focused on empowering students with a role-playing game for an advanced vocabulary. In another study, Huyen and Nga (2003) discussed the use of game techniques and the learning of words. Finally, Florence and Alvin (2006) studied the use of online wordplay as course material for the development of English vocabulary in both teaching and learning.

1.3. Purpose of the Research

As a result of Turkish interaction with Arabs, Arabic has always been in the Turkish Education System, first as a religious language and then as a foreign language. Today, approximately one million and three thousand students are taught Arabic in more than 4,000 secondary schools and high schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education. Almost half of these students are child students.

The aim of this study is to show the game technique in Arabic word teaching to children through applications and to make foreign language teaching permanent and enjoyable. These applications were prepared by the Ministry of National Education taking into account the gains in the 2-8th grades Arabic curriculum.

The questions of the study are:

1- Can game techniques be used to teach Arabic words to children?
2- What are the applications that can be an example of using this technique?

2. Method of This Research

2.1. Research Pattern

In this study, qualitative research methods were used. According to Baltacı, qualitative research (2009) is an interpretive process aimed at solving a problem that has been identified. In this process, qualitative data such as observation, interview and documentation analysis are used and these data are analyzed in accordance with the interpretive paradigm (Baltacı, 2019). The basis of this research is also based on the interpretive paradigm. The main thing in the interpretive paradigm is; it is the interpretation of behavior or any product put forward by people taking into account all kinds of conditions. In this context, the reason why this study is patterned with the qualitative research method is that the focus is on word teaching in the process of teaching Arabic to children who are target audiences and document analysis technique has been used in this process. In addition, the process steps that constitute the process of exemplary application in word teaching in the study reflect the interpretive paradigm**.**

2.2. Data Collection Techniques

Document analysis was used as a data collection technique in the research. Document analysis is a process based on the research, evaluation and interpretation of many technology-based and printed materials (Bowen, 2009). The documents of this study are given in the Primary Arabic Course (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Classes) Curriculum (2016) gains and studies on word teaching with games in foreign language teaching. In the research, the document analysis technique was carried out according to the following stages (Merriam, 2009):

1- **Finding the appropriate documents:** At this stage, the field has been scanned. Scans through Google Scholar are limited to the use of games in foreign language teaching. As a result of the screening, direct related studies for the purpose of the research are determined. (Argıt, 2019; Bakhsh, 2016; Dagbasi and Ozcan, 2021; Elia et al., 2017; Florence and Alvin in 2006; Gürdal and Arslan, 2011; Huyen and Nga, 2003; Light and Samarkand, 2016; Rahman and Angraeni, 2020).
2- **Check the authenticity of the documents:** The specified studies have been checked individually. With its data and findings, it was determined that the entire study was original. The databases where the

journals in which the studies are already published are also a reliable source of confidence that they are original.

3- **Creating a systematic system for coding and cataloging:** Elementary Arabic Lesson (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Classes) Based on curriculum (2016) achievements. Thus, a more systematic coding process was tried to be offered.
4- **Data analysis:** The data is analyzed with the descriptive analysis technique. Information about this stage is presented in detail in the next topic.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data are analyzed with the descriptive analysis technique. Descriptive analysis, one of the techniques of collecting data in qualitative research, is based on analyzing the data obtained in the research according to the previously determined themes (Özdemir, 2010). In this research, analysis with descriptive analysis technique was carried out according to certain stages (Yıldırım and Simsek, 2013). In the first stage, elementary Arabic Lesson (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Classrooms) Curriculum (2016) gains have been presented as analysis themes. Thus, a systematic framework was established to be used in the analysis of the data obtained as a result of document analysis. It then associates the program gains related to the data obtained as a result of document analysis. At this stage, it is noted that a logical relationship can be established between the program gains and the games contained in the data obtained as a result of the document analysis. In the final stage, the games are organized to reflect the program gains and defined to reflect the gain. Finally, some activities in the classrooms were also taken into account in the creation of the games.

In order to increase the reliability of the research, the analysis of the documents according to the gains was carried out by another field specialist. The coding consistency between researcher and field specialist is 90% (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In addition, the opinions of 3 field experts have been consulted for the scope validity of the games associated with the achievements. In line with the feedback from field experts, the games have been revised in relation to the gains. After that, six Arabic teachers' opinions were consulted for the applicability dimension. With feedback from teachers, some additions were made to the games in terms of program gains. In the final stage, the pilot application of the games was made for the dimension of clarity. The teaching process associated with the games developed for 10 students learning Arabic was carried out. During the games, the points that were not understood were noted by the researcher and the final version of the games was given by taking the opinions of the students about the points they did not understand about the games. A total of 13 games have been proposed in its final form.

3. Findings and Comments

It was noted that the games created here were compatible with the gains in the 2-8th grade Arabic curriculum prepared by the Ministry of National Education. Word games suitable for the level and age of child students are presented. In addition to this, games are designed from previously implemented in-class activities.

Sample Games:

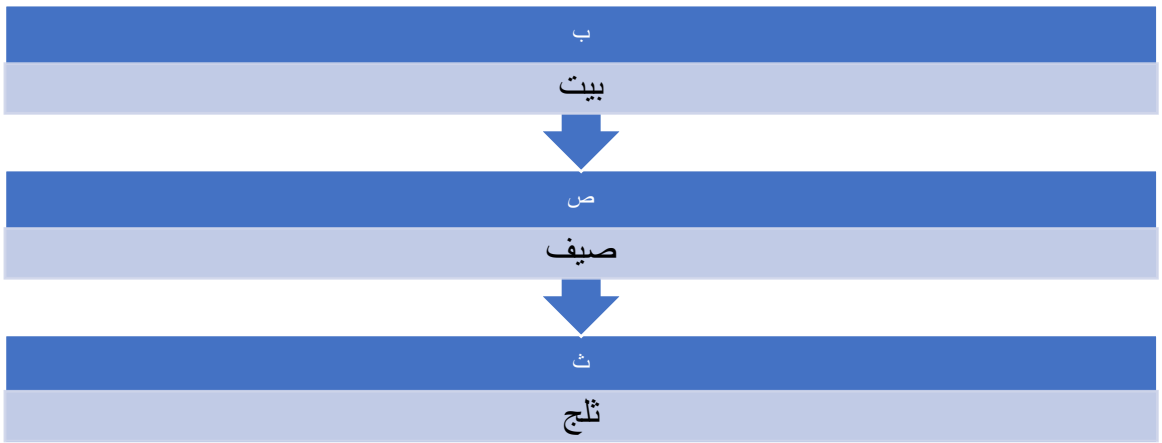
Game 1:
The teacher writes a word in the middle of the board. He or she asks students to write the words related to this word. Students write the relevant words on the branches.

Game 2:

The teacher reflects pictures of fruits and vegetables on the board. He or she writes their Arabic counterparts on their sides. He or she asks the students to say the Arabic equivalent of the fruit and vegetables he points to. Students should say it quickly at the given time.

Game 3:

The teacher divides the students. Matches each student with the other student. A student sings a letter. His partner says a word that begins with that letter.



Game 4:

The class is divided into the appropriate number of groups. The teacher writes a word on the board. Each group then sings a new word that begins with the last letter of that word, respectively. The group that says the most words within the specified time wins the game.

بنت - ترك - كلب – برد – دين – نار – راكب – بيت -تفاح – حب – برق – قرد – دخل - ليمون

Game 5:

The teacher writes some words on the right side of the board. He also writes the opposite meanings of these words on the left side of the board. Students take turns matching these words. The teacher writes contrasting words again.

طويل	**صغير**
كبير	**قصير**
حلو	**بارد**
حار	**مر**

Game 6:

The teacher writes the letters in the alphabet on the cards one by one and distributes them to groups/students in the class. Wins the game, completing the letters according to their place in the alphabet as quickly as they can. It will be especially useful to play when teaching letters.

ا	ب	ت	ث	ج	ح	خ
د	ذ	ر	ز	س	ش	ص
ض	ط	ظ	ع	غ	ف	ق
ك	ل	م	ن	هـ	و	ي

Game 7:

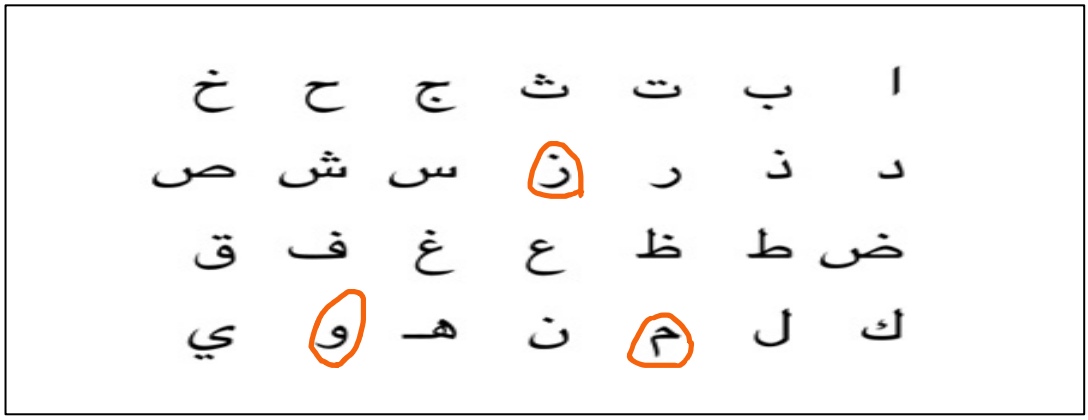
The teacher says he or she will mis-speak some words and asks the students to correct them.

كتوب	كتاب
كلش	كلب
جلميذ	تلميذ
غبق	طبق

Game 8:

The teacher writes the alphabet on the board and rounds three letters out of it. He or she asks students to derive words in these letters.

موز:



Game 9:
The teacher reflects colors on the board. It points to a color and asks students to sing it quickly in Arabic.

Game 10:
The teacher numbers a group of students from 1 to 10. He writes numbers 1-10 on the board. The student who has received the number indicated by these numbers sings in Arabic. Another group of students is then numbered.

Game 11:
The teacher writes some phrases on the board. He or she asks students to write the word that describes this phrase on the board.

نكتب به
ندرس فيها
نشاهده
نلعب بها
نجلس عليه
نأكل بها

قلم
مدرسة
تلفاز
كرة
كرسي
ملعقة

Game 12:
The teacher writes on the board the opposite meaningful words that he or she wants to teach in previous lessons. Then all the students stand up. The teacher says the word, selects a student and asks the student to say the opposite of the word. The student who gives the correct answer sits in his place; the one who can't keep standing. This game can also be played with synonyms or words of the same genre.

قريب	**بعيد**
سريع	**بطيء**
تحت	**فوق**
كبير	**صغير**
مبكرا	**متأخرا**
قليل	**كثير**

Game 13:
Words related to the subject are hidden in the puzzle. Students are not told what words to find. Instead, images are given, and students find words hidden from them.

ب	**ط**	**ي**	**خ**	**ق**	**ل**	**ت**	**ف**	**ا**	**ح**
خ	ء	ر	ذ	ى	ح	خ	ك	ء	**ت**
غ	ث	و	ف	ر	و	ل	ة	لا	**و**
د	ك	ذ	ل	ب	ر	ت	ق	ا	**ل**
ك	م	ث	ر	ى	ش	ك	ر	ز	**و**
ل	غ	ص	ب	ى	ل	ي	م	و	**ن**
ط	ن	غ	ى	ن	ص	ف	ث	ئ	**ف**
ب	ن	ش	ع	ن	ب	ظ	غ	ب	**ذ**

4. Results and Recommendations:

Research in the literature reveal the importance of play in teaching children a foreign language. It is thought that games with good planning, carefully selected words, predetermined time and rules explained especially contribute to the teaching of words. The applied game techniques, which allow repetition and active use of words, are considered as an auxiliary factor that stands out for the course, student and teacher.

It is stated that the application of play techniques in teaching foreign language to children adds vitality to the lesson and increases the desire for the lesson by providing a cheerful lesson environment. In addition, it is thought that playing games provides support in overcoming the obstacles encountered in the teaching of a language with different sounds, intonations and alphabets, such as Arabic. It has been observed that different games interfere with the boring course environment.

Arabic teachers, whose target audience is children and who apply games in their lessons, can help develop their students' thinking and comprehension skills. In a language with different language structures, such as Arabic, the process of teaching words is monotonous, so with games they can make students willing to learn. In this context, it is also important that they consider that the games and their content are appropriate for the level and interest of the audience. They are aware of the importance of games in the development of children. In addition, they can

easily teach words such as concrete, synonymous, active/passive, which are difficult to teach. It can be said that children who learn Arabic with games in the classroom are interested and highly motivated towards the lesson. It is observed that the games increase children's self-confidence and improve their ability to read, speak, write and listen.

It is evaluated that games without a penal and reward system, which are suitable for the level of students, allow everyone to participate, whose time has been defined and whose rules have been explained, provide support for Arabic teaching. In this context, the lesson is well planned and the words to be used in the game are selected depending on various variables. In this way, the development of vocabulary in a language with many differences, such as Arabic, is supported. Words are easier to learn and permanent. Finally, it is seen that playing games supports children who have difficulty attending the course and helps to express themselves.

The plays created and selected in this study are prepared to be compatible with the achievements in the 2-8th grade Arabic curriculum prepared by the Ministry of National Education. However, this does not mean that the prepared word games are suitable only for Turkish students. It can also be easily applied to children who are different from native Arabic.

Those who will work in this field can design a single game that lasts a long time that the whole class can participate in. In addition, they can target games that will allow for binary or group work. In addition, games aimed at vocabulary can be designed with the support of technological tools. With the help of computers, smart boards and similar devices, different and interesting games can be created. In addition, some games can be planned in a lively manner in open spaces and gardens in accordance with the interest of the target audience.

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