"*FLIPPING THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM:*" EFFECTS OF GAMIFYING INSTRUCTION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY OF FILIPINO ESL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the effectiveness of gamifying instruction in the English language proficiency of Grade 8 Filipino ESL students in one University in Bicol, Philippines, that offers Junior High School. The quasi-experimental single pretest-posttest design was used in the study. The researcher-made test which underwent series of validation was given before and after the intervention period to determine the level of English proficiency and level of effectiveness of the games. Statistical treatment was done employing frequency count, T-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings revealed that there was significant difference between the pretest and posttest of the respondents using gamification. Thus, it can be inferred that the games helped in improving the level of English proficiency of the Grade 8 students. The statistical test results disclosed further that the effectiveness of the three games introduced to the students were significantly high. With these findings, it was recommended that language teachers should use gamification as supplementary instructional material in improving the English proficiency of the students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the fast-paced growth in the educational system, one thing has remained unchanged: the unending search for new approaches in pursuit of academic excellence. To strengthen the knowledge pillars required to ensure quality education, the various stakeholders must consider the overwhelming concerns affecting the learning process, particularly the digitalization of learning. Ocampo (2018) believed that teachers should first know their students' interests, motivation level, learning style, and strategies to remedy the situation. Teachers should use the appropriate language teaching materials, approaches, and methods. Students whose learning styles are addressed though active play and fun activities showed greater interest, work ethic, and determination during classroom discussion (Hall, 2017). Thus, in this case, using games is more effective than the traditional approach to teaching (Backlund & Hendrix, 2013)

However, teachers should not confuse games with teaching strategy because it should be highlighted alone, crippling its idea as a mere object of motivation. Therefore, teachers should utilize games as one of the fundamentals of teaching strategy—gamification. Gamification is making its mark in various fields, and its application to education could be an excellent way to address its multiple concerns. It could be instrumental in repairing students' fractured competencies (Light, 2012).

There has been a decline in English proficiency among Filipinos, one of the competencies set by DepEd, according to English for International Communication (TOEIC). To have a high chance of improving students' English proficiency, students should be placed at the center of the learning experience, allowing them to become active participants of the learning process (Armea et al., 2022).

Furthermore, an examination of research on the use of games in educational settings showed that educational games benefitted students' interaction and success in learning because games are more motivating than traditional instruction (Al-Azawi et al., 2016). Furthermore, using games in language arts was especially effective when used with clearly defined goals. Games can be used in lesson stages if they are appropriate and carefully chosen because they assist learners in recalling material pleasantly and entertainingly (Wichadee & Pattanapichet, 2018).

It was for these situations above that this study was conceptualized. This study primarily aimed to

determine whether gamifying English Language Learning (ELL) has something to do with enhancing the English proficiency of Grade 8 students.

2. OBJECTIVES

This study investigated the effects of gamification on the English language proficiency of grade 8 students. Specifically, it assessed the level of English proficiency of the respondents based on their gain score in pretest and posttest results; identified if there was a significant difference between pretest and posttest results; determined the level of effectiveness of gamifying the English language on the proficiency of the students using games as intervention, and identified if there was a significant difference in the level of effectiveness among types of games.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The quasi-experimental single pretest-posttest design was employed in the study. The games served as an intervention to improve the English proficiency of the respondents. The level of English proficiency was measured through a pretest before the conduct of the intervention. After the gamification, a posttest was administered to see if the respondents' English ability had improved. Moreover, the descriptive method was used to describe English proficiency levels along with vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension.

3.2 Research Locale and Respondents

This study was conducted at one university in Bicol, Philippines, that offers junior high school. The respondents were forty-four selected Grade 8 Filipino ESL Students. The researchers used purposive sampling and predetermined criteria in selecting the respondents. Moreover, the researchers opted to use the junior high school students to supplement the program offering of the laboratory high school in the said University to improve their English language proficiency.

3.3 Research Instrument

A researchers-made test was used in the study. It has three main parts, namely grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension, which comprised 20 items each and was evaluated using the scale of 49-60 advanced proficient, 37-48 proficient, 25-36 approaching proficient, 13-24 developing

proficient, and 1-12 beginning proficient. The researchers-made test was submitted to the evaluators for content validation. The items were revised according to the suggestions given by the evaluators. The evaluators were college professors who were experts in language teaching and education. The questions on the test were lifted from books and the internet. It was made using a modified table of specifications to ensure equal proration of items in each parameter. The pretest was administered by the researchers two days before the actual study to measure the respondents' proficiency. The posttest was given after the intervention to determine the effect of gamification on the student's English proficiency.

3.4 Data Procedure and Analysis

To obtain a result, after the researchers-made test was validated, the researchers prepared letters that were approved by the research adviser, the coordinator of the Laboratory High School, and the dean of the College. The subject teachers of the respondents were also given letters for the researchers to gather their data and administer the pretest, followed by the demonstration teaching and posttest after that, to determine the effectiveness of gamification in enhancing the English Proficiency of Grade 8 students. Meanwhile, the statistical tool used in this study was Frequency Count, which was used to describe the level of English proficiency of the respondents based on their gain score in the pretest and posttest, as well as reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary, and to describe the level of effectiveness of gamifying English language on the proficiency of the students using game card, board game, and cup game. The T-test was used to assess the possible difference in students' English proficiency levels between the pretest and posttest results. The ANOVA was used to investigate any differences in the level of effectiveness between game types.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 English Language Proficiency

English language proficiency is an important aspect of learning that should be considered because it shapes the future of ESL learners and their careers (Rao, 2019). In this context, the researchers aimed to determine the respondents' language proficiency level along with reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary.

4.1.1 Reading Comprehension

Presented in Table 1 is the English proficiency level of the respondents based on their gain score in the pretest result on Reading Comprehension. Data disclosed that out of a 20-item test in reading comprehension in the first week, one (1) was in approaching proficient, 12 were developing proficient, and two (2) were beginning proficient; while in the second week, three (3) were proficient, nine (9) were approaching proficient, four (4) were developing proficient, and one (1) was beginning proficient; and for the third, two (2) were proficient, nine (9) were approaching proficient, and four (4) were developing proficient.

Table 1. Level of English Proficiency of Grade 8 Students Based on their Gain Score in Pretest along Reading Comprehension

Proficiency Level	Score	(1st week)	(2nd week)	(3rd week)
Advanced Proficient	17-20	0	0	0
Proficient	13-16	0	3	2
Approaching Proficient	9-12	1	9	9
Developing Proficient	5-8	12	2	4
Beginning Proficient	0-4	2	1	0

Based on these findings, data revealed that most of the respondents in the first week were under Developing Proficient, while in the second and the third week, respondents were under-approaching proficient in reading comprehension. The students who were under Approaching Proficient recognized words, yet they had difficulty in using this to deduce the correct main idea from reading passages. Further, they are likely challenged by texts in which issues are treated abstractly.

4.1.2 Grammar

Grammar is a set of rules to preserve and express our thought clearly. The proper understanding of grammar allows people to conceive and execute plans (Mart, 2013). Presented in Table 2 is the English proficiency level of the respondents based on their gain score in the pretest result on grammar. Data disclosed that out of the 20-item test in the first week, three (3) were in approaching proficient, nine (9) were developing proficient, and three (3) were beginning proficient. While in the second week, three (3) were proficient, seven (7) were approaching proficient, and five (5) were developing proficient. And for the third week, eight (8) were developing proficient, and seven (7) were beginning proficient.

Table 2. Level of English Proficiency of Grade 8 Students Based on their Gain Score in Pretest along Grammar

Proficiency Level	Score	(1st week)	(2nd week)	(3rd week)
Advanced Proficient	17-20	0	0	0
Proficient	13-16	0	3	0
Approaching Proficient	9-12	3	7	0
Developing Proficient	5-8	9	5	8
Beginning Proficient	0-4	3	0	7

From these findings, data revealed that the majority of the respondents in the first week were developing proficient, while in the second-week majority were approaching proficient, and in the third-week majority were developing in grammar. It can be implied that the learners' proficiency in grammar should be emphasized. In addition, students under Developing Proficient were not familiar with the rules of grammar since they have an average knowledge of grammar. Also, students may not fully understand detailed texts and speech situations or communicative contexts in which knowledge of language structures is essential to understand sequencing, time frame, and chronology.

4.1.3 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one aspect of understanding English better. It plays a vital role in comprehension and reading. Readers cannot understand text without knowing the meaning of unfamiliar words (Baumann, 2014). Presented in Table 3 is the English proficiency level of the respondents based on their gained score in the pretest result on Reading Comprehension. Data disclosed that out of the 20-item test in the first week, one (1) was

proficient, seven (7) were in approaching proficient, and seven (7) were developing proficient. While in the second week, one (1) was advanced proficient, nine (9) were proficient, four (4) were approaching proficient, and one (1) was developing proficient. And in the third week, six (6) were proficient, seven (7) were approaching proficient, and two (2) were developing.

Table 3. Level of English Proficiency of Grade 8 Students Based on their Gain Score in Pretest along Vocabulary

Proficiency Level	Score	(1st week)	(2nd week)	(3rd week)
Advanced Proficient	17-20	0	1	0
Proficient	13-16	1	9	6
Approaching Proficient	9-12	7	4	7
Developing Proficient	5-8	7	1	2
Beginning Proficient	0-4	0	0	0

These findings revealed that most of the respondents in the first and third weeks were proficient, while in the second week, the respondents were proficient in vocabulary. It can be implied that they could comprehend the given questions. However, they could not communicate and understand more sophisticated academic language, and students may not fully understand texts and speech situations that were obscure to them.

Table 4. Summary of the Level of English Proficiency of Grade 8 Students Based on their Gain Score in Pretest along Reading Comprehension, Grammar, and Vocabulary

Proficiency Level	Score	(1st week)	(2nd week)	(3rd week)
Advanced Proficient	49-60	0	0	0
Proficient	37-48	0	5	0
Approaching Proficient	25-36	0	9	11
Developing Proficient	13-24	15	1	4
Beginning Proficient	0-12	0	0	0

Presented in Table 4 is the summary of the English proficiency level of the respondents based on their gain score in the pretest and reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary based on the result of the researcher-made test. Data disclosed that in the first week, out of a 60-item test along reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary, 15 respondents were developing proficient. While in the second week, five (5) were proficient, night (9) were approaching proficient, and one (1) was developing. In the third week, 11 were approaching proficient, and four (4) were developing proficient.

From these findings, data revealed that most of the respondents in the first week were developing proficient in language along reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary; in the second and third weeks, most of the students were under approaching proficient. Students under Approaching Proficient were the students whose scores were within the intervals of 25-36. At this level, students recognize synonyms, antonyms, and affixes of words, yet they have difficulty using this to divulge the meaning of unfamiliar words. They have an average knowledge of grammar, and even

if they can deduce the correct main idea from reading passages, they are likely challenged by texts in which issues are treated abstractly. Meanwhile, students under Developing Proficient were the students whose scores were within the intervals of 13-24 in the English proficiency test. Students at this level rely heavily on contextual clues as a strategy for understanding a text. Students at this level may not fully comprehend detailed texts and speech situations or communicative contexts where knowledge of language structures is required to comprehend sequencing, time frame, and chronology.

4. 2 Gamification

Games have always been a way to feel at ease every time and since they bring a positive vibe, their features can be used to modify an aspect of behavior. Thus, its application can be used in the field of education. To raise the quality of education and respond to the needs of 21st century, teachers must use new teaching strategies, just like games, instead of conventional or traditional methods. Hence, games are used in this research to improve the English language competence of the students.

4.2.1 Reading Comprehension

Presented in Table 5 is the level of language proficiency and Reading Comprehension of the Grade-8 students based on the result of the researcher-made test.

Table 5. Level of English Proficiency of Grade 8 Students Based on their Gain Score in Posttest along Reading Comprehension

Proficiency Level	Score	(1st week)	(2nd week)	(3rd week)
Advanced Proficient	17-20	0	0	0
Proficient	13-16	0	1	6
Approaching Proficient	9-12	8	11	5
Developing Proficient	5-8	7	2	4
Beginning Proficient	0-4	0	1	0

Data disclosed that out of the 20-item test in the reading comprehension in the card game, eight (8) were approaching proficient, and seven (7) were developing proficient. In contrast, in the cup game, one (1) was proficient, 11 were approaching proficient, two (2) were developing proficient, and one (1) was beginning proficient; and for the board game, six (6) were proficient, five (5) were approaching proficient, and four (4) were developing proficient.

These findings revealed that in the three interventions, respondents were Approaching Proficient. The students who were under Approaching Proficient recognized words, yet they had difficulty in using this to deduce the correct main idea from reading passages. Further, they are likely challenged by texts in which issues are treated abstractly.

4.2.2 Grammar

Presented in Table 6 is the English proficiency level of the respondents in grammar based on the result of the researcher-made test. Data disclosed that out of the 20-item test in grammar, in the card game, eight (8) were in approaching proficient, six (6) were developing proficient, and one (1) was beginning to become proficient. While in the cup game, 10 were proficient, four (4) were approaching proficient, and one (1) was developing proficient. And for the board game, 13 were developing proficient, and two (2) were beginning proficient.

Table 6. Level of English Proficiency of Grade 8 Students Based on their Gain Score in Posttest along Grammar

Proficiency Level	Score	(1st week)	(2nd week)	(3rd week)
Advanced Proficient	17-20	0	0	0
Proficient	13-16	0	10	0
Approaching Proficient	9-12	8	4	0
Developing Proficient	5-8	6	1	13
Beginning Proficient	0-4	1	0	2

Data from these findings revealed that most of the card game respondents were developing proficient. Students under this category were unfamiliar with grammar rules since they had average knowledge of grammar. While in the cup game majority were Proficient. Students under this category know grammar conventions, can use them both in written and spoken discourse and can deduce the correct main idea from reading passages. In the board game, the majority were developing grammar. Furthermore, students may not fully comprehend detailed texts and speech situations or communicative contexts where knowledge of language structures is required to understand sequencing, time frame, and chronology.

4.2.3 Vocabulary

Presented in Table 7 is the English proficiency level of the respondents in vocabulary based on the result of the researcher-made test. Data disclosed that out of the 20-item test in the card game, five (5) were proficient, nine (9) were in approaching proficient, and one (1) was developing proficient. While in the cup game, five (5) were advanced proficient, five (5) were proficient, and five (5) were approaching proficient. And for the board game, one (1) were proficient, eleven (11) were approaching proficient, two (2) were developing, and one (1) was beginning proficient.

Table 7. Level of English Proficiency of Grade 8 Students Based on their Gain Score in Posttest along Vocabulary

Proficiency Level	Score	(1st week)	(2nd week)	(3rd week)
Advanced Proficient	17-20	0	5	0
Proficient	13-16	5	5	1
Approaching Proficient	9-12	9	5	11
Developing Proficient	5-8	1	0	2
Beginning Proficient	0-4	0	0	1

Data from these findings revealed that most card and board games respondents were approaching proficient, while in cup games, the respondents were proficient in vocabulary. It can be implied that they could comprehend the given questions. However, they could not communicate and understand with more sophisticated academic vocabulary, and students may not fully understand texts and speech situations that were obscure to them. Meanwhile, presented in Table 8 is the summary of the English proficiency level of the respondents along with reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary based on the result of the researcher-made test. Data disclosed that in the card game, 15 respondents were developing proficient; in the cup game, five (5) were proficient, nine (9) were approaching proficient, and one (1) was developing; and in the board game, 11 were approaching proficient, and four (4) were developing proficient.

Table 8. Summary of the Level of English Proficiency of Grade 8 Students Based on their Gain Score in Posttest

Proficiency Level	Score	(1st week)	(2nd week)	(3rd week)
Advanced Proficient	49-60	0	0	0
Proficient	37-48	0	7	0
Approaching Proficient	25-36	12	8	13
Developing Proficient	13-24	3	0	2
Beginning Proficient	0-12	0	0	0

Data from these findings revealed that most of the card, cup, and board game respondents were Approaching Proficient in language along with reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary. Students under Approaching Proficient scored within the intervals of 25-36 in the English proficiency test. Students under this category are described as having basic knowledge of cognizing synonyms, antonyms, and affixes of words. Yet, they have difficulty using this to divulge the meaning of unfamiliar words. They have an average knowledge of grammar, and even if they can deduce the correct main idea from reading passages, texts that treat issues abstractly are likely to challenge them

4.3   Significant Difference between Pretest and Posttest Results

Table 9 presents the significant difference between the pretest and posttest results of the respondents using gamification.

Table 9. Significant Difference between Pretest and Posttest Results of the Students using Games

Games	t_c	Level of Significance	t_t	Decision	Interpretation
Card Game	8.228	0.05	±2.145	Reject H_o	Significantly Different
Cup Game	5.068				
Board Game	6.145				

Since the computed values 8.228, 5.068, and 6.145 were greater than the tabular t value of 2.145 at 0.05% significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest of the respondents using gamification.

Based on the result, it can be inferred that the three games helped in improving the English proficiency level of the respondents. It further supported the idea that students will perform better if gamification is incorporated into teaching English to learners. This finding parallels Modafferi et al. (2016), who emphasizes the importance of game-

based learning in supporting a multimodal learning environment and various learning strategies.

Furthermore, Flores (2015) emphasized that games can improve teaching, practice, and reinforcement of a foreign language; aid in the creation of a constructive classroom environment conducive to learning, and assist students in drawing their meanings based on their learning experiences by allowing them to rectify their mistakes and improve on previous knowledge. Lastly, Mubaslat (2012) argued that games are more helpful among several strategies used to enhance students' proficiency,

such as visual aids, CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning), drama, and role-play to promote students' language proficiency.

4.4   Level of Effectiveness of Gamification

The effectiveness of the games was determined by the student's progress in the three parameters of the researcher-created test. Presented in Table 10 is the card game's effectiveness level based on the respondents' gained score in the pretest and posttest.

Table 10. Level of effectiveness of gamifying English language on the proficiency of the students using the card game

Student No.	Pre	Post	Gain Score	Interpretation
1	24	34	10	Effective
2	21	26	5	Moderately Effective
3	23	29	6	Moderately Effective
4	22	23	1	Less Effective
5	23	34	11	Effective
6	22	28	6	Moderately Effective
7	22	32	10	Effective
8	22	29	7	Moderately Effective
9	21	29	8	Moderately Effective
10	21	27	6	Moderately Effective
11	20	27	7	Moderately Effective
12	19	19	0	Not Effective
13	17	27	10	Effective
14	17	24	7	Moderately Effective
15	16	27	11	Effective
Ave. Gain Score	7	Moderately Effective		

Data disclosed that using card games, 5 students have a 10-11 gain score, 8 students have a 5-8 gain score, 1 student has a 1 gain score, and 1 student has a 0 gain score. The average gain score of the respondents in the pretest and posttest using card games was 7.

Therefore, using card games was moderately effective. It implied that card games could provide average reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary knowledge. It even challenged them and stirred their interest. It further implied that card games could be of help in improving the proficiency level of the students. It might not provide a higher level of achievement, but it still enhanced the respondents' proficiency level.

The findings were in accordance with the study of Abeysekera and Dawson (2015), Who claimed that incorporating innovative games could boost enthusiasm and reinforce previously presented information. Games also supplement positive and interactive alternative method of teaching as they strongly support team learning and active peer-to-peer instruction. Moreover, Oden Buckley and Doyle (2016) said that games strengthen students' engagement and interest in the lesson and allow the teachers to be creative during instruction.

Meanwhile, Presented in Table 11 is the cup game's effectiveness level based on the respondents' scores in the pretest and posttest.

Table 11. Level of effectiveness of gamifying English language on the proficiency of the students using cup games

Student No.	Pre	Post	Gain Score	Interpretation
1	37	40	3	Less Effective
2	43	44	1	Less Effective
3	38	47	9	Effective
4	35	37	2	Less Effective

5	40	47	7	Moderately Effective
6	29	30	1	Less Effective
7	40	43	3	Less Effective
8	30	35	5	Moderately Effective
9	34	35	1	Less Effective
10	32	36	4	Less Effective
11	33	36	3	Less Effective
12	25	35	10	Effective
13	28	37	9	Effective
14	33	35	2	Less Effective
15	24	36	12	Effective
Ave. Gain Score	5	Moderately Effective		

Data disclosed that using card games, 4 students had 10-12 gain scores, 2 students had 5-7 gain scores, and 9 students scored 1-4 gain scores. The average gain score of the respondents in the pretest and posttest using the cup game was 5.

The results implied that the cup game could provide average reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary knowledge. It even challenged them and stirred their interest. However, it did not reach a higher achievement result. It also implied that it could help realize the mission of increasing the students' proficiency level in terms of the English language.

The finding was in parallel with the study of Waluyo (2020), who stated that nearly 70% of students learn best actively and visually. As a result, there were numerous potential benefits to active learning through games in the classroom. It was also supported by Vusić et al. (2018) that game-based instruction develops a multi-faceted learning and offers various forms of learning strategies that boost active participation. Hence, teachers need to maximize the use of games to ensure that there will be enough time and motivation to improve the students' achievements, which can increase the student's proficiency.

Meanwhile, presented in Table 12 is the card game's effectiveness level based on the respondents' gained score in the pretest and posttest.

Table 12. Level of effectiveness of gamifying English language on the proficiency of the students using Board games

Student No.	**Pre**	**Post**	**Gain Score**	**Interpretation**
1	26	28	2	Less Effective
2	29	32	3	Less Effective
3	27	29	2	Less Effective
4	31	33	2	Less Effective
5	28	30	2	Less Effective
6	25	27	2	Less Effective
7	30	32	2	Less Effective
8	30	35	5	Moderately Effective
9	25	31	6	Moderately Effective
10	28	28	0	Not Effective
11	24	28	4	Less Effective
12	22	22	0	Not Effective
13	25	27	2	Less Effective
14	18	21	3	Less Effective
15	22	26	4	Less Effective
Ave. Gain Score	3	Less Effective		

Data disclosed that using board games, 2 students have 5-6 gain scores, 11 students have 2-4 gain scores, and 2 students have 0 gain scores. The average gain score of the respondents in the pretest and posttest was 3. Therefore, using cardboard was less effective.

It implied that it could also be a way of improving students' proficiency levels. However, we should also take several considerations, such as their interest. The findings were consistent with Chun et al. (2016)'s study, which revealed that teachers should first consider the level of the game to match the students' language level. Teachers should select a game that responds to either the students' needs or content. Furthermore, teachers should consider

the background of the learners in choosing the types of games that will be given to the students.

4.5 Significant Difference in the Level of Effectiveness among Games

Table 13 shows the significant difference between the level of effectiveness among types of games. Data disclosed that the computed t-value of 8.07 was greater than the tabular value of 4.07 at a 0.05% significance level. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. From these findings, it can be inferred that the effectiveness of the three games introduced to the students was significantly introduced.

Table 13. Significant difference in the level of effectiveness among games

Source of Variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	fc	ft	Decision	Interpretation
between group	2	145.2	72.6	8.07	4.07	Reject	Significantly Different
within group	42	378					
Total	44	523.2					

The data disclosed that the increase in the respondent's level of proficiency varies from the different types of instructional material used in teaching. The findings proved that each game has good benefits in achieving better.

It justified the contention of Wichadee and Pattanapichet (2018) who said that to provide permanent and effective strategies in the lesson, teachers should first know their students' interests, motivation levels, learning styles, and strategies and should utilize the appropriate materials, approaches, and methods in language teaching. Table 14 presents the significant difference between the level of effectiveness among types of games.

Table 14. Significant difference in the level of effectiveness among types of games using t-test

t_c	Df	Level of Significance	t_t	Decision	Interpretation	t_c
Card Game vs. Cup Game	1.73	28	0.05	±2.048	Accept	Not Significant
Cup Game vs. Board Game	-2.12				Reject	Significantly Different
Card Game vs. Board Game	-4.63				Reject	Significantly Different

It can be gleaned from the table that in the first pair of games, the computed t value of 1.73 was less than the tabular value of 2.048 at a 0.05% significance level, and the null hypothesis between the card game and cup game was accepted. Therefore, it was interpreted as not significantly different. The findings proved that among the types of games, since these two were the easiest to play, they created the tendency to lose the purpose of the intervention. It was because the students focused on finishing and winning the game, thereby losing its real objective. Meanwhile, in the second pair, the computed t value of 2.12 was greater than the tabular value of 2.48 at a 0.05% significance level. The null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there it was interpreted as significantly different. The findings proved that although each game can improve the student's proficiency since each has its unique characteristics, teachers also need to know beforehand and consider the students' preferences. It was parallel to the study of Hwang et al. (2012), who said that teachers should first consider the appropriateness of game to address the students' language level. They should choose the game that responds to the students' styles of learning and addresses their cognitive levels.

In the third pair of games, the computed t-value of 4.63 was greater than the tabular value of 2.048 at a 0.05% significance. The null hypothesis between the type of games was rejected. Therefore, it was interpreted as significantly different. The findings proved that aspects such as the features and elements of games needed to be considered. The reward part of the game helped the student stir their interest and motivated them to get the correct answers.

This finding aligned with the study of Hsu (2017), who pointed out that educational games were effective tools to meet students' thinking, feeling, and belonging needs, thus creating positive holistic experiences. Moreover, the rewards obtained for each level can provide constant motivation and develop learners' skills simultaneously.

5. CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that most Filipino ESL Grade 8 students were Approaching Proficient in language along with reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary. Students under Approaching Proficient scored within the intervals of 25-36 in the English proficiency test. Students under this category are described as having basic knowledge of cognizing synonyms, antonyms, and affixes of words. Yet, they have difficulty using this to divulge the meaning of unfamiliar words. They have an average knowledge of grammar, and even if they can deduce the correct main idea from reading passages, they are likely challenged by texts in which issues are treated abstractly. Thus, it can be inferred that in most of the three interventions' respondents were Approaching Proficient and reading comprehension. The students who were under Approaching Proficient recognized words, yet they had difficulty in using this to deduce the correct main idea from reading passages. Further, they are likely challenged by texts in which issues are treated abstractly. Moreover, the statistical results revealed that the three games helped improve the level of proficiency of the students since there was an increase in the gain score during the posttest.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Since there were different results among the different types of games, the teacher should first assess their students' preferences. The teacher may incorporate other instructional material, such as social media or other educational platforms. These activities have a focal point in enhancing the intellectual aspects of the learners so that they can simultaneously enjoy learning. English teachers may integrate another intervention as long as they are guided by their learning objectives making the teacher aware of the necessary instructional platform.

Although most games have a better achievement effect on the students' proficiency, English teachers should still strive to seek more strategies to provide effective and efficient teaching and learning process. They can also modify and create their intervention that will respond to the needs of the ESL learners. Teachers consider the types of games to suit the students' language level. Likewise, knowing the learners' background is crucial to crafting the kinds of games given to the learners. Teachers can maximize the use of various technologies to answer the call of digitalization. Hence, for a meaningful teaching-learning process, the teacher should look for approaches that will address the necessities of every learner, such as the use of gamification and its features to create another system and teaching strategies.

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