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INONAT TIME TRAVEL ADVENTURE

Ong Elly, Muhammad Khairul Ahmad*, Muhd Syahir Abdul Rani, Nazirul Mubin Mohd Noor & Mohamad Safwat Ashahri Mohd Salim

Universiti Teknologi MARA Perak Branch, Tapah Campus*

khairulahmad@uitm.edu.my*

ABSTRACT

Learning English prepositions of time using a tenses-themed board game is fun and exciting. The use of a board game promotes involvement and evaluation in learning English prepositions of time through challenges, incentives, and collaboration. Students often face difficulties in utilizing prepositions of time across various tenses. Past studies show that board games promote students' mastery of English grammar, especially prepositions of time, hence increasing the fun and context-dependent importance of language application. The "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure" board game was created to facilitate students' mastery of prepositions of time through repetition, immersive environments, and engaging, motivational, and memorable activities on past, present, and future tenses. A survey was administered to 53 third-semester diploma students selected for the study before and after a two-week grammar class to assess the effectiveness of a board game in assisting students' learning of prepositions of time. The results show that the "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure" significantly enhanced students' capacity to independently comprehend the designated grammar topic. The board game can be economically made and used, so it ought to be acknowledged as a helpful tool for individuals learning the English language. It is recommended that there should be an investigation of the impact of board games designed for the long-term mastery of prepositions of time, together with the performance of students from various faculties and cohorts.

Keywords: *Preposition of time, Board game, Simple tenses, Gamification*

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, gamification elements such as board games have turned dull lessons into playful exchanges in language classrooms. New forms are memorable when rote drills are replaced with card draws, dice rolls, and point badges. These hands-on activities are especially good for tricky grammar

points, such as the time prepositions ‘at,’ ‘on,’ and ‘in,’ as well as for the basic tenses present, past, and future.

Gamification, defined as the use of game-style badges, levels, and challenges outside games (Deterding et al., 2015), is a sturdy tool for raising energy and focus in any classroom. The dice game “Rolling InOnAt” lets students form sentences on the spot and raises test scores, which also involves laughter (Ong et al., 2025). Other studies show that star charts, scoreboards, and bonus marks encourage shy learners to tackle drills they once avoided (Lo & Hew, 2017; Rahardja et al., 2019). These prompts camouflage practice in friendly competition as they ease boredom and give grammar a fun new face.

Compared to digital games, playing physical games brings people physically together in the same room, requires players to take turns, which pushes everyone to converse in the target language. The face-to-face interaction also makes it easier for learners to recognise mistakes and correct them on the spot, boosting both accuracy and confidence. A game designed to practice time prepositions with a card that says, ‘Advance if your birthday is in July’ or ‘Step back if you never study on weekends’ forces players to use ‘on,’ ‘in,’ and ‘at’ accurately, where they would in everyday conversation.

Studies that examine learning interventions built around board games report marked gains in both content knowledge and social interaction skills among participants (Noda et al., 2019). When researchers compared these game-based lessons with traditional worksheets for English tenses instruction, learners who played the games found the sessions far more enjoyable than the latter’s demanding, dull, and repetitive exposure. The use of tense emerges naturally within a rich, unfolding context because game rounds repeat similar actions and decisions. The games also weave in time-related prepositions, as players routinely consider schedules, events, and order, making the format apt for teaching language content linked to time.

Gamification in language learning accords with constructive learning theories, which emphasise active learning for knowledge acquisition. The players preoccupy themselves with the game’s rules and linguistic structures through practice and social interaction. This corresponds with the usage-based theory of language acquisition, which asserts that grammar is internalised through contextual application rather than explicit instruction. Games such as “Rolling InOnAt” promote contextualised learning of prepositions of time through meaningful language drill practice (Ong et al., 2025). Board games that facilitate the use of prepositions of time, such as ‘The meeting starts at 8 a.m. today’ or ‘He prefers to study in the morning’ encourage learners to use targeted grammar components.

Some researchers warn against excessive gamification without pedagogical coherence, even though there is increasing endorsement for gamified grammar training. Despite motivation enhancement, the efficacy of gamification is contingent upon meticulous alignment with educational goals. The success of tools like “Step Into Vocabulary” (S.I.V.) further underscores the importance of designing gamified tools that are immersive and purposeful (Salim et al., 2025). Games should be crafted with linguistic objectives to guarantee learners stay focused while achieving quantifiable educational results. A game centred on prepositions of time should offer numerous opportunities to practise prepositions ‘at,’ ‘on,’ and ‘in’ in diverse environments to improve comprehension.

METHODOLOGY

This is a two-week study to examine the students' comprehension of the prepositions of time 'in,' 'on,' and 'at', with two separate classes occurring weekly in classrooms teaching English. The diploma students in the third semester were instructed to complete a pre-test questionnaire focusing on the preposition of time prior to the commencement of the courses. Subsequently, participants were administered a post-test form to assess their comprehension of the subject matter after they engaged with "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure."

The game accommodates two to four players, with all counters commencing at START. The Dice Roll Rules are employed by a player by rolling the dice to advance his or her counter on the board game. The player responds to one inquiry taken from Question Cards when his or her counter lands on a red circle. Prior to validating the responses from the Question Cards, the player provides his or her answers after reading from the Question Cards. The player will next advance their counter on the board game based on the reward or penalty indicated on the Question Cards. If the question is answered correctly, the counter will go two boxes forward. The counter will revert to one box if the response is incorrect. The subsequent player is now to roll the dice. The game concludes when any counter reaches END.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first section of the questionnaire had a question on the perception of the participants on whether the game "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure" helped them to learn prepositions. There were 53 participants in this study. For this question, a large majority (96.1%) of the participants gave a positive response, and only 3.9% responded negatively. This indicates that most of the participants in this study perceived the game "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure" as being effective as a tool for teaching prepositions.

In the second section, 27 questions received positive feedback from the respondents regarding their experiences while playing the game "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure". A 5-point Likert scale was employed where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. This study found that participants agreed they were happy when playing the game "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure". This is interpreted from the high mean for questions asking about the students' feelings (I felt happy, $M = 4.37$, $SD = 0.662$, I enjoyed it, $M = 4.31$, $SD = 0.735$, and I thought it was fun, $M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.723$).

The study also found the participants agreed that the game "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure" was engaging and interesting (I was interested in the game's story, $M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.775$, I found it impressive, $M = 4.02$, $SD = 0.787$ and I was deeply concentrated in the game, $M = 4.02$, $SD = 0.860$).

Next, in the third section, participants' perceptions of negative feedback are presented. In this section, 23 questions with negative feedback when playing the game "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure" were collected, and the respondents answered using a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The findings revealed that the participants rejected all negative emotions while

playing the games. There were 10 statements with a mean below than 2.00 (I found it a waste of time, $M = 1.35$, $SD = 0.716$, I felt regret, $M = 1.59$, $SD = 0.829$, I felt ashamed, $M = 1.59$, $SD = 0.804$, I felt bad, $M = 1.61$, $SD = 0.723$, I felt irritable, $M = 1.67$, $SD = 0.887$, I felt annoyed, $M = 1.71$, $SD = 1.006$, It gave me a bad mood, $M = 1.71$, $SD = 0.965$, I felt pressured, $M = 1.76$, $SD = 0.907$, I felt bored, $M = 1.82$, $SD = 0.974$ and I felt frustrated $M=1.86$, $SD=1.000$).

In summary, the findings of this study reveal that the participants' learning outcomes and feedback on experience were dominated by positive perceptions. The participants' experience while playing the game "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure" was perceived as effective, enjoyable, and engaging. Negative responses were reported to be very low among the participants.

CONCLUSION

The learners quickly became absorbed in "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure" and believed it as a practical tool to master grammar. The board game merged fun with study in a way language classes often struggle to do by putting up the tricky prepositions of time in a light-hearted play. Their enthusiastic feedback shows that the activity built a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere where repetition, conversation, and real-world context helped the students genuinely experience the grammar rules rather than just memorising it.

Interview feedback indicates that playing the board game eased the unpleasant feelings usually linked to grammar lessons - boredom, frustration, and performance pressure. Instead, learners reported high enjoyment, sharp focus, and steady engagement, evidence that low-tech classroom games can succeed in places where digital tools are scarce. Affordable and user-friendly, "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure" fits easily into diverse classrooms and lightens the teachers' load. Since the game focuses on prepositions of time, it could readily be adapted to other structures and even to pronunciation or vocabulary.

Long-term studies are needed to see how well the game boosts grammar retention over weeks or months and whether it works for mixed faculties, learners at different proficiencies, or classes that meet online or in hybrid formats. A digital version of this board game would broaden accessibility to allow researchers to study gameplay data alongside test scores. In short, "InOnAt Time Travel Adventure" offers a fresh, learner-centred way to teach grammar and matches the active, flexible goals set by today's education theories.

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