# The Perceptions of Teachers in Using Game-Based Strategy in Teaching English

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**Abstract:** This phenomenological study explored English teachers' perspectives on incorporating game-enhanced strategies into language instruction. This study used purposively sampling by which participants were chosen based on the set criterion which should be a high school English teacher employing games in teaching the lessons. The researchers had conducted in-depth one on one interview to the six participants and allowed them to narrate their relevant experiences and insights about this approach. Through interviews and thematic analysis, the findings revealed that educators view this approach as an effective approach for enhancing student motivation, engagement, and comprehension. Teachers highlighted the role of games in fostering active participation, collaboration, and enjoyment, ultimately making English lessons more interactive and student-centered. Despite recognizing challenges such as limited class time, large student populations, and inadequate resources, teachers expressed a strong willingness to integrate game-enhanced strategies into their instructional practices. The study underscores the need for professional development and institutional support to ensure the successful implementation of this approach in English education.

*Keywords:* *Game-Based Learning, English Instruction, Teacher Perception, Student Engagement, Classroom Strategy.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The methods used in education have changed dramatically over the years, with new developments consistently influencing the approach teachers take to teaching (CG, 2024). Moreover, in an age of information technology, English language teaching and learning tends to utilize from digital tools that might enhance the learners' outcomes. The digital-based learning opportunities which affect students' achievements by social interaction and support for the use of digital technologies for learning (Alhebshi & Halabi, 2020). Using online learning platforms, educational apps, and interactive tools creates a dynamic learning environment that is responsive to students' needs (Haleem et al., 2022). In the realm of English language teaching, these strategies create immersive and dynamic environments that encourage students to actively practice vocabulary, grammar, and communication skills in a meaningful and enjoyable manner.

Moreover, it was grounded in active learning principles, shifting students from passive recipients of knowledge to active participants in their educational journey. This approach encourages students to actively contribute to their own learning process and enables them to develop essential skills required for their academic and professional success (Siddiqi

et. al,2021). In addition to that, incorporating elements such as rewards, challenges, and storytelling, games facilitate problem-solving, creativity, and practical language application, as well as, it significantly enhances student engagement and retention compared to traditional teaching approaches, fostering deeper understanding and skill mastery (Smiderle et. al., 2020).

Despite its advantages, the successful implementation of game-based strategies depends on several critical factors, including teacher preparedness, curriculum integration, and technological accessibility. Educators must carefully design learning experiences that maintain pedagogical rigor while leveraging the benefits of game mechanics. This study seeks to investigate the role of this approach in English language instruction, examining its effectiveness in improving student outcomes and addressing potential challenges in its adoption. Through this research, valuable insights will be provided on best practices and strategies for optimizing this approach in English education.

In India, Singh and Jha (2020) found that limited technological resources and inconsistent internet connectivity were significant barriers to the effective use of gamification in English language teaching. The digital divide between urban and rural areas also exacerbates these challenges,

limiting students' access to this approach tools. Moreover, South African schools face similar barriers when it comes to integrating gamification into the curriculum. These include challenges related to the availability of digital resources, the cost of technology, and the lack of teacher preparedness to implement this approach effectively (Mthembu & Ngcobo, 2022). English language instruction had evolved significantly due to technological advances and changing student needs. Ghafar (2023) identifies several challenges that teachers face, including limited resources, difficulty in student engagement, and the pressure to integrate digital tools into traditional teaching environments. He emphasizes the importance of adopting creative and flexible instructional techniques, such as blended learning, to improve outcomes in English language classrooms. Demirbilek et al. (2022) stated that it was evident that technical difficulties and issues with digital games were identified as significant barriers to adopting gamification in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching. These challenges include problems with technology, internet access, and concerns about screen time and game addiction. Additionally, teachers reported difficulties such as irregularities, objections, and challenges during games, the creation of a negative competitive environment, extended game durations, and noisy classroom settings as obstacles to effective gamification implementation.

The use of game-enhanced strategies for teaching English in the Philippines faces multiple challenges, as highlighted by various research studies. These include issues such as limited access to technology, difficulties with classroom management, and technical problems that hinder effective implementation. For example, Sabornido et al. (2022) identified barriers like low student engagement, incomplete tasks, and attitude issues, stressing the importance of careful planning to address these challenges. Similarly, Tanudtanud (2023) found that digital this approach can improve English proficiency, but its success depends on proper infrastructure and supportive policies. Additionally, Sánchez-Mena and Martí-Parreño (2020) pointed out that poor internet connectivity and lack of digital devices often limit the effectiveness of gamified learning in classrooms. These studies highlight the need for better infrastructure, teacher training, and policy support to unlock the full potential of this approach in English education in the Philippines.

Meanwhile, the difficulties in integrating this approach in teaching English have been observed in both public and private schools in Davao City. Teachers have been facing several challenges integrating games in teaching English. It was undeniable the positive impacts of this strategy to the students, however some limitations hinder the complete success in teaching and learning process.

While this approach was widely recognized for enhancing English instruction, several research gaps remain. Existing studies focus primarily on short-term benefits, with little exploration of its long-term effects on retention and proficiency. Its application in higher education and advanced English instruction was underdeveloped, and many teachers lack training and institutional support for effective integration. Technological accessibility also limits widespread adoption, particularly in under-resourced regions. Additionally, few comparative studies analyze the effectiveness of different game-enhanced strategies across various linguistic domains. Addressing these gaps through empirical research can provide valuable insights for optimizing this approach in English education.

➢ *Purpose of the Study*

This study aimed to explore the perceptions of English teachers in using game-enhanced strategy in their classes. This helped to unbox the challenges encountered in integration of this strategy and get new insights on how teachers managed to overcome the challenges without the quality of learning that students get. The results of this study could help teachers to identify the gaps and come up better teaching strategies to address the problem maximizing the use of technology in teaching.

➢ *Research Objectives*

This qualitative study aims to describe the perceptions of English teachers in using Game-Based strategy in both public and private schools. Specifically, it aims to:

- Explore the significant experiences and identify primary challenges encountered by the English teachers in using Game-based strategy;
- Describe the coping mechanisms of English teachers in using Game-based strategy; and
- Identify the new insights and motivations to deal the challenges in using Game-based strategy in teaching English.

➢ *Theoretical Lens*

This study is anchored on the lenses of Constructivist Theory and the ASSURE Model, both of which emphasize active learner engagement and tailored instructional design. Constructivist Theory, rooted in the work of Piaget (1973) and Vygotsky (1978), argues that learning is an active, social, and contextual process where learners construct knowledge through interaction with their environment and peers. This aligns well with game-based learning, as games provide interactive, immersive experiences that engage students in problem-solving and decision-making, thereby promoting deeper learning. Additionally, the concept of scaffolding, which is central to constructivism, is evident in the way games typically offer increasing levels of difficulty, allowing students to build on prior knowledge and advance at their own pace, receiving immediate feedback along the way.

The ASSURE Model, a systematic instructional design framework, complements this by providing a structured approach to incorporating technology and media into teaching. It guides educators to analyze learners' needs, state clear objectives, select appropriate materials, and ensure active participation. In the context of gamification, the ASSURE Model by Heinich et al. (1996) helps ensure that game-based activities are aligned with specific learning goals, such as vocabulary acquisition or grammar practice, and that the chosen games are engaging and accessible to all students. The model's emphasis on requiring learner participation is

particularly aligned with constructivist principles, as both stress the importance of student-driven learning.

Furthermore, the continuous evaluation and revision step in the ASSURE Model parallels constructivist feedback loops, where teachers assess student progress and adjust the learning experience accordingly. By combining both frameworks, educators can create a dynamic and learner-centered environment where students are not only motivated and engaged but also actively construct their own understanding of the English language.

## II. METHOD

➢ *Research Design.*

This qualitative research used a phenomenological approach. According to Muzari et al. (2022), qualitative research seeks to understand human experiences in their natural setting, emphasizing participants' perspectives and interpretations. This design is appropriate for examining the nuanced and multifaceted experiences of secondary school English teachers regarding the use of game-based strategies in teaching English. Specifically, an interpretive phenomenological approach was applied, which as, Erbas et al. (2025) notes, is intended to explore how individuals make sense of their personal experiences. This approach allowed for a deeper exploration of the meaning participants associate with their practices in teaching English using game-based methods.

The phenomenon in this study is the perceptions of teachers in using games in teaching English. This would provide deeper understanding of how games can effectively innovate the teaching practices of teachers despite the challenges encountered. The different motivations and insights of teachers used in overcoming hurdles in integration of games to the English classes can help address the long withstanding issues to the success of learning English in the Philippines.

➢ *Participants and Sampling.*

In qualitative research a variety of sampling techniques can be employed. This study used purposive sampling to identify the ideal participants whose experiences and insights can be useful in modification of the innovative teaching practices. Purposive sampling is commonly used in qualitative research to intentionally select participants who have specific knowledge or experience relevant to the research topic (Palinkas et al., 2015). The criteria of the selection of participants were: (1) An English teacher in public or private schools and (2) employing games and technology in teaching English lessons. The participants of this study met the above-mentioned criteria which ensured the relevance of their shared experiences and motivations. The participants were chosen based on the main concept of this study wherein it focused on the English teachers who have perceptions in using games in their classes. Thus, six participants were interviewed individually. The goal in phenomenology is to understand the **lived experiences** of individuals regarding a specific phenomenon. Since phenomenological research seeks deep, reflective

descriptions, a small number of participants is typically adequate to uncover the essence of the experience.

➢ *Ethical Considerations.*

Ethical principles are foundational in ensuring that this study is conducted with integrity and respect for all participants involved. In line with Beauchamp and Childress (2019), participants were first informed about the purpose and scope of the study, as well as the procedures, potential risks, and benefits. They were assured that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any point without any negative consequences. The researchers also prioritized confidentiality and privacy throughout the research process. As emphasized by Beskow et al. (2016), participants' identities were protected using pseudonyms and secure data storage methods. To further protect their well-being, we took special care when addressing sensitive topics to minimize any potential psychological or emotional distress (Nuremberg Code, 1947). Respect for autonomy was observed by allowing participants the freedom to opt out of any portion of the study they were uncomfortable with, consistent with the ethical guidance of MacIntyre (1981). Transparency was also a key consideration—researchers were open about the study's findings and disclosed any potential conflicts of interest that could influence the research, following Resnik (2011).

Additionally, the researchers considered cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness by being respectful of participants' diverse cultural backgrounds and beliefs, aiming to avoid bias and harm as recommended by Kleinman and Benson (2006). Prior to data collection, informed consent was secured through a clearly written consent form, and to ensure accuracy, we implemented member checking, allowing participants to review and validate their responses. By adhering to these ethical principles, the researcher aimed to build trust with participants and ensure that their rights, dignity, and freedom were fully respected throughout the study.

➢ *Role of the Researcher.*

In this qualitative study, the researchers served as the primary instruments for data collection and interpretation. As part of our role, we conducted one-on-one interviews with each participant to elicit detailed accounts of their lived experiences, motivations, and insights regarding the use of game-based strategies in teaching English. As to ensured that interviews were recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed with care. Throughout this process, it maintained neutrality and transparency, taking active measures to minimize personal biases that might influence the integrity of the data. The researcher's engagement with the participants required sensitivity, reflexivity, and an awareness of the position as co-constructors of meaning within the research process.

➢ *Data Collection.*

Data collection commenced only after we had identified participants who met the inclusion criteria and had obtained their informed consent. Aligned with the phenomenological approach, the researcher sought to explore and understand the

participants lived experiences through unstructured, in-depth interviews. As suggested by Patton (2020), purposive sampling was employed to intentionally select individuals whose expertise and experiences were directly relevant to the focus of the study.

Participants were provided with the flexibility to choose the time and format of their interviews either in-person or via Facebook Messenger which is based on their convenience. Each interview was guided by a flexible set of open-ended questions, which allowed for an organic flow of conversation and the emergence of relevant themes. Interviews lasted approximately ten to thirty minutes and were audio-recorded with participant consent to ensure data accuracy. Ethical considerations were rigorously followed throughout; participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary, and they could opt out of any questions or withdraw from the study entirely at any time without penalty.

➢ *Data Analysis.*
The data collected from the interviews were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework for thematic analysis. This method allowed us to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns of meaning within the dataset. The process began with familiarization, during which we immersed ourselves in the data by reading transcripts multiple times. Initial codes were then generated to capture meaningful elements from participants' responses. Next, the researchers searched for themes by grouping related codes and identifying overarching patterns. These themes were reviewed, refined, and clearly defined to ensure they authentically reflected the participants' perspectives. We used illustrative quotes from the interviews to support each theme. Member checking was conducted by allowing participants to review their transcripts for accuracy, which contributed to the validity and reliability of the data.

Throughout the analysis, the researchers practiced bracketing to set aside any preconceived notions or biases, thereby ensuring that the resulting themes and interpretations were grounded in the participants' own words and experiences. This methodological rigor aimed to authentically capture the essence of their lived experiences with game-based strategies in English language teaching.

➢ *Rigor of the Study.*
Rigor in this qualitative research was established by ensuring the credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability of the findings, as proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). To establish credibility, the researcher conducted prolonged engagement with participants through in-depth interviews and employed member checking to validate the accuracy of our interpretations. Transferability was addressed by providing rich, thick descriptions of the context, participants, and findings, enabling readers to determine the applicability of the results to other contexts. To ensure dependability, it is documented each stage of the research process through detailed field notes, reflective memos, and an audit trail that captured methodological decisions and changes. Confirmability was achieved by maintaining objectivity throughout the research. We practiced reflexivity, as emphasized by Finlay (2002), through continuous self-evaluation of our roles and assumptions to minimize the influence of personal bias on data interpretation.

In conclusion, in adhering to these principles, we aimed to conduct the study that is both ethically sound and methodologically robust, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness and scholarly value of the findings.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the results of the study that includes the presentation of the identified themes supported with quoted raw responses from the participants and related literatures that would further explain the findings of this study.
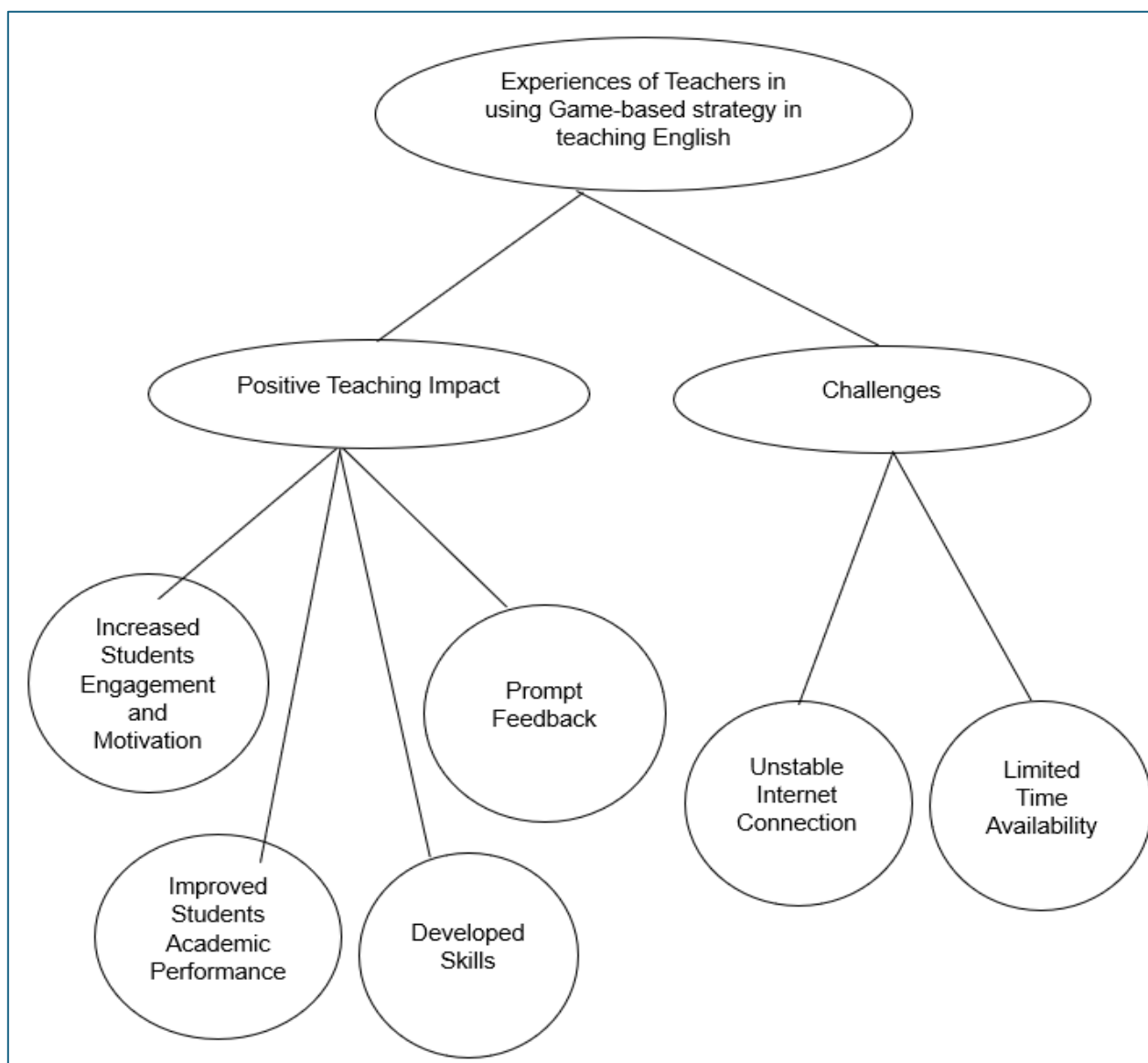
Fig 1. Experiences of Teachers in using Game-based Strategy in Teaching English

*A. Experiences of Teachers Using Game-Based Strategy in Teaching English*

English teachers have several relevant experiences in integrating games in English classes.  Most of those experiences are identified as positive based on their own observation in their respective classes. According to Sevy-Biloon (2021), integrating games into English lessons has been shown to improve motivation, engagement, and language development in a low-stress classroom setting.

*B. Positive Teaching Impact*

The positive impact of game-based strategy in teaching English is echoed in the feedback provided by the participants. They noted that their students showed increased enthusiasm and willingness to participate actively in class activities. This approach not only fosters collaboration and creativity but also builds a sense of community within the classroom. Furthermore, teachers observed that using games helped break down barriers for students who were typically shy or reserved, enabling them to communicate more freely and confidently in English.

➢ *Increased Students Engagement and Motivation.*

Teachers concluded that in general, the integration of games in teaching English have had significant impacts to students as they best learn when they experience it. They are more on stimulated to learn when they actively take part in the learning process through different games.

Teacher participant stated that:

*"...Game-based activities online are super fun and really engaging! The students really enjoy them too!" "...increases student engagement where yeah, it increases student engagement in four corners of classroom. The second one, it enhances also the motivation of students because the students nowadays they often feel more motivated when learning is structured as a form of game. (Interviewee 1, L4-L5, Interviewee 3, L8-L9, Interviewee 5, L11L14, and Interviewee 6, L20- L21).*

It highlights the positive effect of game-based activities to the students. It was observed that student's engagement and motivation in the class are enhanced as they enjoyed the learning process as what the participant shared, it was further elaborated by other participants about the explicit excitement employing the of the strategy.

This finding is further explained by Nadeem et al. (2023) on how digital game-based learning (DGBL) affects students' motivation and engagement. By comparing interactive game-based quizzes with traditional online tools, the study found that DGBL significantly improves student interest and participation in learning. Features like leaderboards helped boost performance for some students, though not all responded positively. Interestingly, female students tended to enjoy the game-based approach more but were less inclined toward competitive elements. Overall, the study highlights the potential of digital games to create a more engaging and enjoyable learning experience. Moreover, integrating games into web-based programming assessments can significantly boost students' motivation and engagement (Jusas et al., 2023).

➤ *Improved Academic Performance.*
As the students were motivated and engaged with the learning process, evidently the academic performance was shown improving. Positive learning outcomes suggest that students not only learned new things, but also how to use them in real life. Teachers said that their students' understanding, memory, and ability to think critically improved when they tried new things like learning through games. This result shows that students can learn more and do better in school when they are taught in fun ways. Moreover, it is easier to meet the learning goals making sure that the approach used to teach is in keeping with those aims.

Teacher participants shared their observations from their own classes that:

"…*"The game-based strategy really helped to improve the students in terms of their academic performance."* (Interviewee 3, L13-L15);

"...*this type of strategy practices significant or improved academic achievement of the student."* (Interviewee 5, L15-L16)

"… *That the students are learning well because I employed different strategies."* (Interviewee 6, L139-L140)

These statements explicitly show the domino effect of being actively engaged and motivated in the classes.

According to Olayvar (2023), the use of game-based learning in English instruction led to significant improvements in students' academic performance, with the "training learning component" showing the greatest positive effect. Further, the study conducted by Liu et al. (2023) revealed that integrating game-based learning strategies significantly enhances students' academic performance, fostering improved cognitive skills and emotional

engagement in learning activities. Wang et al. (2022) found that incorporating digital game-based learning into STEM education significantly boosts students' academic performance, with positive effects across different educational stages and subjects.

➤ *Developed Skills.*
Different teaching methods, including interactive games, can help students learn important skills like how to communicate, work as a team, solve problems, and think critically. Teachers said that these tactics provide active learning environments where students may use and improve their cognitive and social abilities in real-life situations. Because of this, these sorts of teaching methods help students gain skills that will help them do well in school and in life. This goes along with the basic purpose of education, which is to help people learn and adapt throughout their lives.

It means as students engaged in the innovative way of learning, different skills are also developed.

"… *they enhance their critical thinking skills")* and
"...*also, it enhances all the problem-solving skills of the students where this strategy requires the strategic thinking of the students, and it improves the ability of the students to analyze and solve problems that is anchored on the learning competency."* ((Interviewee 1 – L8, Interviewee 5, L39-L42).

The games made students to think creatively and critically as they are the center of the learning process as what one teacher emphasized,

"...*students are more into games instead of the teacher centered."* (Interviewee 6, L33-L34).

Similarly, Nursetyo et al. (2024) conducted a bibliometric analysis of game-based learning (GBL) research, revealing that GBL is increasingly recognized for enhancing 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. Their study indicates a growing trend of educators developing GBL strategies to meet the demands of the digital age. In addition, Pacheco-Velázquez et al. (2024) conducted a study examining the impact of game-based learning (GBL) on the development of self-directed learning (SDL) skills in undergraduate logistics education. Their findings indicate that the use of the Logistics Education Simulator (LOST) significantly enhanced students' SDL abilities, including self-management, openness to learning opportunities, initiative, independence, and a positive self-concept as effective learners.

This finding also like Filament Games (2025) emphasis on game-based learning which effectively cultivates essential 21st-century skills—critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity—by immersing students in interactive experiences that mirror real-world challenges. Through games, learners engage in problem-solving, teamwork, and creative expression, fostering deeper understanding and skill development. Hence, Adipat et al. (2021) discuss the role of game-based learning in enhancing 21st-century skills, emphasizing its effectiveness in fostering

critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication among students.

➢ *Prompt Feedback.*

Evaluation and feedback are essential to learning since they quantify advancement and provide strategies for enhancement. Accurate assessments can provide teachers with significant insights about their students' comprehension. Providing students with prompt and constructive feedback enables them to recognize their strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, Hafiza and Pratolo (2022) discovered that role-playing, simulations, and memory games enhance vocabulary, grammar, and student involvement.

Similarly, Susaniari and Santosa (2024) stated that game-based tactics diminish anxiety and enhance enthusiasm, fostering a more collaborative and engaging teaching environment. According to Olayvar (2023), game-based activities enhanced student performance when organized and aligned with learning objectives. In addition, Da-Oh et al. (2023) emphasized that games enhanced secondary students' grammatical proficiency, indicating that game-based learning may be advantageous.

It serves as a response to students' actions, aiming to clarify, communicate, and promote growth by bridging the gap between current knowledge and intended learning outcomes. Providing feedback promptly helps students enhance their knowledge by correcting mistakes, reinforcing skills, and clearing up misconceptions. The more frequently teachers offer feedback, the better the students tend to perform. Teachers shared the importance of immediate feedback on learning progress of the students.

*"I think it's the immediate feedback—because it automatically gives corrections, the kids can learn right away without any delay.". (Interviewee 1, L12-L13)*

*"...It provides instant feedback because during the game, students immediately known if they're correct or not.." (Interviewee 3, L21-L23)*

*"Games also give instant feedback, so they know if they're correct or not. It makes learning fun and meaningful for them." (Interviewee4, L17-L18)*

*"...as a teacher using Game-Based strategy it gives me immediate feedback to student learning outcomes" (Interviewee 5, L37-39)*

When feedback is given immediately during or after a lesson, students are more likely to reflect, engage in discussions, and adjust their actions accordingly. This timely feedback supports learning by guiding students on how to improve through practice. It is considered an effective teaching strategy that motivates students to strive for academic success (Ajogbeje et al., 2023). It is also emphasized by Breitwieser et al. (2022) that the positive impact of prompts on learning can vary, but repeated exposure tends to enhance their effectiveness.

➢ *Challenges*

Many obstacles make teaching difficult. Problems with internet and time constraints. Teachers indicated that inconsistent internet connections hurt lessons, especially when they used technologies like virtual collaboration and online gaming. Lack of time to plan and have fun made it challenging to teach a lot and at the proper pace. These issues highlight the importance of infrastructure and time management in educational endeavors.

➢ *Unstable Internet Connection.*

This has been an ongoing issue in the Philippines with internet connectivity. Teachers shared how this internet issues affect the success of the digital games integrated.

*"Since it's online and we're in a remote area, the signal sometimes cuts out, so that's definitely one of the challenges." (Interviewee 1, L16-L17)*

*"...And sometimes there's a delay because of technical errors.." (Interviewee 2, L20- L21)*

*"...the technological limitations of the students because not all of my students they have the access to the necessary devices or mobile phones or even stable internet connection for this or particular or certain Game Based learning." (Interviewee 5, L51-54)*

*"...First is the internet connection because most of my games, they are online. So, when the connection is slow, the game doesn't work very well or smoothly. ..." (Interviewee 6, L45- L47)*

These constraints act as barriers to national growth, especially in the face of increasing demands from the use of Internet (Azcarraga & Peña, 2019). While urban areas typically benefit from fast and reliable internet access, rural regions continue to struggle with unstable connections—an issue observed globally (IEEE Standards Association, 2021). Inconsistent connectivity causes delays and heightened stress, particularly among students, ultimately hindering their academic performance. As such, ensuring stable internet access is essential for enabling smooth and equitable access to educational resources (Akmad & Abatayo, 2024).

➢ *Limited Time Availability.*

With technical issues and different learning styles and paces of students, allotted time in specific subject is not enough as the games consumed so much time from preparation to implementation.

Teachers shared their thoughts about this challenge encountered.

*"...challenge is the time." Interviewee 3, L29*

*"The preparation is time consuming..." – Interviewee 4, L21*

*"…I consider also the time management issues because using this strategy, using this Game-Based strategy, you have to allocate specific time slots for a particular Game-Based strategy."* - Interviewee 5, L59- L61

*"Exactly! The time really isn't enough—students tend to take longer to react, so the time given isn't fully maximized, especially when using game-based activities."."* - Interviewee 6, L52-L54

*"…"I was really having a hard time organizing them during the game, so we ended up running out of time.."* – Interviewee 6, L61-L63

Hidayat et al. (2023) highlights that time constraints in primary education can pose a challenge to incorporating games into classroom instruction, as these activities often require more time than what is available in a typical lesson. This can limit their effectiveness as teaching strategies. Similarly, Bakhsh et al. (2022) points out that digital game-based learning (DGBL) is sometimes viewed as time-consuming by students, teachers, and staff. This perception is often linked to the extra time needed for setting up, managing, and resolving technical issues related to digital games. Moreover, the process of integrating DGBL into the curriculum and evaluating its impact can further increase the workload for educators.

C. *Coping Mechanism of the Teachers to the Challenges Encountered in Using Game-Based Strategy Teaching English*

➢ *Solution-Focused Coping as a Mechanism*

The result has come up two categories which summarize the coping strategies used by the teachers in addressing the challenges. These coping strategies are focused on the solutions at hand which are the differentiated instructions and efficient time used as shown in the figure 2 below.
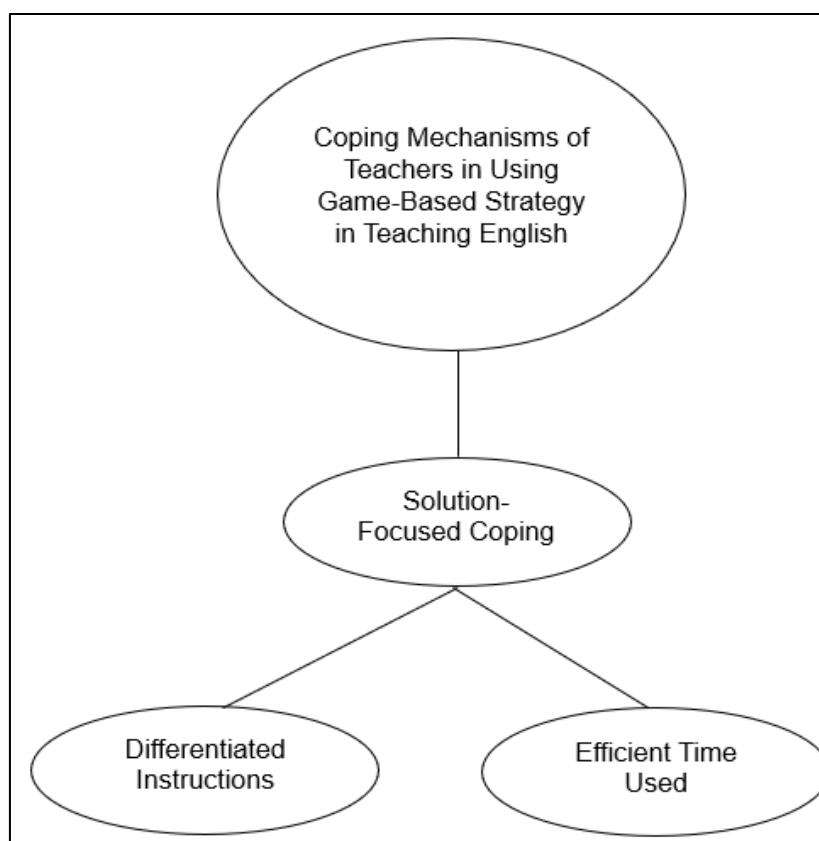


Fig 2. Themes on Coping Mechanism of English Teachers in Using Game-Based Strategy in Teaching English

➢ *Differentiated Instructions.*

The teacher participants shared that they had to come up different teaching techniques to cater the diverse needs of the students. This includes the appropriate activities and assessments given based on their cognitive capabilities and interests. In using games in teaching English, it should be also relevant to the students' needs and capabilities.

*"As much as possible, I really inform my students ahead of time about what we will be doing so they can prepare and also load their signal early to have a strong connection."* (Interviewee 1, L19-L21)

*"…"…inform them ahead of time. Make sure they are already equipped with what to do, how to navigate, and guide them most of the time."* (Interviewee 2, L23-L25)

*"I tried to know the strength and weaknesses of the students, and tried to address their struggles."* (Interviewee 4, L26-L27)

*"... use the balance instructional approach"* (Interviewee 5, L67)

*"There's no division based on their ability. That is why I need to select a particular game that, regardless of their ability or learning style, everyone can use it, enjoy, and besides enjoying, they also learn."* (Interviewee 5, L99- L102)

*"...I always reminded them na if they don't behave, we would not finish the game."* (Interviewee 6, L78-L79)

*"...Aside from using a microphone, yes, I do use a microphone. Aside from that, during the game I became stricter. I was stricter with them so the game could finish faster."* (Interviewee 6, L86-L88)

*"I show authority."* (Interviewee 6, L90)

This finding was further explained by Kamran et al. (2024) that incorporating gamified elements into classroom instruction led to noticeable improvements in student engagement and behavior. Teachers observed that strategies like point systems and interactive activities helped sustain students' focus and created a livelier and motivating learning atmosphere. Similarly, Sailer and Homner (2020) noted that visible rewards such as badges, awards, cumulative points, and competitive scoring serve as effective incentives, encouraging students to exhibit the desired behaviors within an academic setting.

➤ *Efficient Time Used.*

For teachers, it is another way in ensuring that they would hit the goal in using the Game-Based strategy. Time can be always a challenge for teachers with all the paperwork and preparation needed, still it can be managed. Teachers shared how they managed their time using this strategy that does not compromise the quality of learning of the students.

*"... The time management. So, it is needed to reflect and adjust the strategy little by little to manage our time effectively."* (Interviewee 3, L32-L34)

*"I will continue the game on the next session, on the next schedule for them, for all the students have the opportunity, to accommodate their learning."* (Interviewee 5, L88-L90)

*"For me, in Junior High school we have games every Friday, so by Thursday I announce to them that we have game tomorrow."* (Interviewee 6, L74-L75)

Gamification can be defined as the application of game mechanics and principles in non-game contexts, such as the formal teaching and learning process. This approach aims to enhance learning effectiveness and make it more relevant to real-world experiences (Burlian et al., 2019). Due to its innovative and creative nature, gamification has gained recognition as a valuable method in education (Hernández-Prados et al., 2021). In the context of education, students' learning interest refers to their natural attraction to a subject,

making it easier for them to engage with and understand the material. When students have a genuine interest in a topic, learning becomes both enjoyable and more accessible. High levels of interest are key to the success of teaching and learning, particularly in language subjects (Triarisanti, 2019). Therefore, it is essential to explore how gamification influences students' learning interest in ESL.

*D. Reflections and Insights of Teachers in Using Game-Based Strategy in Teaching English*

➤ *Reflections*

The teachers truly have evolved and improved their teaching practices based on the experiences they have and the challenges they encountered. Those helped them to reconsider their current teaching practices for innovation with the help of technology. They shared their knowledge gained and reflective thinking about incorporating games in teaching English specifically in high school level.

➤ *Strengthened Classroom Dynamics.*

Better time planning and classroom management integrating game-based strategy can surprisingly streamline lesson planning and classroom management as emphasized by the teacher participants.

*"...teacher should set clear goals and feedback every session…"* (Interviewee 2, L47-L48)

*"...The first thing is probably integrating technology. It can be enhanced by using educational apps or interactive online games."* (Interviewee 3, L68-L70)

*"Include your students in crafting your games."* (Interviewee 4, L47)

*"...it really motivates me that I have to use this, I have to use this technology in four corners of classroom this kind learning environment to the students and aside from that it motivates me that somehow it makes my work easier as an English teacher."* (Interviewee 5, L155-L158)

*"...The teacher should be prepared beforehand, not just on the day when nothing has been discussed yet. Preparation needs to happen well in advance."* (Interviewee 6, L173-L175)

As it has been shown in the study conducted by, Dichev & Dicheva (2023), while this study primarily investigates the impact of gamification on teacher professional development, some of its findings offer insights into how game-based approaches can indirectly influence time planning and classroom management.

For instance, a study by Utami et al. (2020) examined the implementation of GBL in an English extracurricular program. The teachers involved planned to incorporate seven different games over a semester, each targeting specific language skills such as speaking, listening, and writing. This careful planning ensured that each game aligned with learning objectives and contributed to a cohesive curriculum. The

structured nature of the games helped maintain classroom order and facilitated smooth transitions between activities.

Meanwhile, while initial setup might require some effort, well-designed games often come with inherent structures and rules, providing a framework that simplifies lesson flow. They highlighted the importance of taking into consideration the appropriateness of the chosen games for the specific learning objectives and student diverse needs.

*"...using game-based activities helps the kids relate better and makes learning smooth-sailing". (Interviewee 2, L48-L49)*

*"...you need to manage your time for you to uhm use the 1-hour session to finish the particular topic using the Game-Based strategy." (Interviewee 5, L240-L242)*

*"In choosing the game, they must, the teacher must always remember what type of learners. Like if it's in Junior High School, give them easy game. If it is higher level, give them more challenging games to encourage critical thinking." (Interviewee 6, L183-L186)*

Furthermore, teachers need to evaluate the developmental suitability of games, considering students' age, cognitive abilities, and prior knowledge to maximize engagement and minimize frustration. Thoughtful consideration of accessibility and inclusivity is also crucial to ensure all learners can participate meaningfully. Ultimately, the appropriateness of games in education hinges on their ability to enhance learning in a relevant, engaging, and equitable manner.

As it has been mentioned by Karakoyun (2025), in his study which investigated primary school teachers' views on the design and implementation of digital educational games. A significant portion of the findings highlighted teachers' concerns and considerations regarding the appropriateness of games for their lessons and students. They also stressed the need to evaluate the age-appropriateness of games, considering factors such as the complexity of rules, cognitive demands, and the potential for engagement or frustration among their students.

The importance of considering the learning styles and individual needs of their students when selecting games, aiming for inclusivity and accessibility. The study revealed that teachers actively seek games that are not only engaging and fun but also pedagogically sound and suitable for their specific teaching contexts and student populations. They carefully evaluate games based on their educational value, alignment with learning goals, and their capacity to cater to diverse learners.

## IV. IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The results of this study have important implications for classroom practice, particularly in the context of Philippine education. The integration of games in education significantly enhances student motivation, engagement, and comprehension, highlighting its effectiveness as a learner-centered approach. Educators in resource-limited settings are encouraged to explore affordable, culturally relevant, and contextually appropriate game-based approaches that align with curricular goals and student interests.

The study highlights the importance of teacher adaptation and creativity, as educators successfully navigated challenges such as large class sizes, limited resources, and insufficient technological access. Professional development programs must include training on instructional innovation and adaptable pedagogies, allowing educators to design and implement interactive and engaging learning experiences using available resources.

Given the positive outcomes of this study, comparative studies of public and private schools could clarify the influence of institutional resources and student demographics on the effectiveness of game-based learning. Teacher-led action research that records the creation, implementation, and evaluation of English games in genuine classroom settings provides a comprehensive analysis of pedagogical dynamics and obstacles. Analyzing the various effects of games on linguistic areas—such as grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and oral fluency—could improve teaching methodologies. Moreover, integrating digital games and emerging technologies into English instruction—especially in hybrid or remote learning environments—may promote educational innovations following the pandemic.

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