

USING ONLINE EDUCATIONAL GAMES IN TEACHING ESP STUDENTS

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Abstract: The purpose of this work is to enhance awareness of teaching a language through online educational games, as well as to explore effective ways to implement these educational games. In the evolving landscape of language education, the integration of technology has transformed how English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is taught and learned. ESP focuses on providing learners—such as medical professionals, engineers, and business executives—with specialized language skills tailored to their professional and academic needs. Traditional teaching methods often struggle to engage students in acquiring domain-specific vocabulary and contextual communication skills. Online educational games offer an innovative solution by immersing learners in interactive, real-world simulations that enhance both engagement and practical competence. Gamification plays a crucial role in ESP instruction by incorporating game-based elements such as points, levels, and rewards to sustain motivation and active learning. Artificial intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) further personalize and enhance learning experiences, allowing students to practice language in realistic, risk-free environments. Platforms like Kahoot, Quizizz, and Quizlet provide engaging, student-centered learning opportunities through interactive quizzes, flashcards, and gamified assessments. These tools support vocabulary acquisition, grammar practice, and communicative skills while offering immediate feedback and analytics to track progress.

Keywords: *online educational games, gamification, AI in language learning, active learning, student engagement, blended learning, immediate feedback, spaced repetition, constructivist learning, multimodal learning*

In the evolving landscape of language education, the integration of technology has revolutionized how English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is taught and learned. ESP, which tailors language instruction to the professional, academic, or vocational needs of learners—such as medical professionals, engineers, or business executives—demands a focus on specialized vocabulary, contextual communication, and real-world application. Traditional methods, however, often struggle to engage learners in mastering these niche skills. Enter online educational games: dynamic, interactive tools that bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical competence while addressing the diverse needs of today’s digitally native students.

As globalization and digital transformation reshape industries, the demand for context-specific language proficiency grows. Online games not only align with this shift but also cater to flexible, self-paced learning, making them a powerful addition to modern ESP pedagogy. This approach not only equips learners with practical language skills but also prepares them to thrive in their specialized fields, proving that play and purpose can coexist in education. The President of the

Republic of Uzbekistan, Sh.M.Mirziyoev, we should create the necessary conditions for the youth to acquire deep knowledge and modern professions and train a highly qualified workforce, young specialists capable of taking on responsibility for the future and further development of the country. [1, 43] In addition, our President states that in the system of education we attach a great importance to teaching students not merely liberal arts and vocational skills, but also required learning of foreign languages.

Online educational games offer a unique platform for ESP instruction by immersing learners in simulated environments that mirror their target domains. For instance, a virtual hospital scenario can help medical students practice patient interactions, while business negotiation games can hone language skills for corporate professionals. These games foster active participation, immediate feedback, and adaptive learning pathways, enabling students to experiment with language in risk-free settings. Moreover, gamification elements—such as points, levels, and rewards—enhance motivation and sustain engagement, critical factors in adult education. [4, 57]

The use of online educational games in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a timely and relevant approach, reflecting broader trends in education, technology, and workplace demands. The global shift toward digital learning, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has made online tools and platforms indispensable in education. ESP students, often working professionals or university students, increasingly seek flexible, accessible, and engaging ways to learn. Online educational games fit this need perfectly, offering interactive, self-paced learning experiences that can be accessed anytime, anywhere. This aligns with the growing preference for blended and hybrid learning models. As industries become more specialized and interconnected, the demand for context-specific language skills has surged. ESP students require targeted instruction that prepares them for real-world scenarios in fields like healthcare, engineering, business, and IT. [6, 98] Online games designed for ESP can simulate these scenarios, allowing learners to practice language in context—for example, a nurse practicing patient communication or an engineer discussing technical specifications. This practical, immersive approach is highly relevant in today’s job market. The use of online educational games in teaching ESP is both current and forward-looking, addressing the needs of modern learners while leveraging advancements in technology. As industries continue to evolve and demand specialized language skills, this approach offers a practical, engaging, and effective way to prepare students for real-world communication. By overcoming existing challenges and embracing innovation, educators can harness the full potential of online games to transform ESP instruction. [2, 63]

The subject refers to the active participants or entities involved in the process of teaching and learning. Teachers are the primary subjects responsible for planning, implementing, and facilitating the use of online educational games in ESP instruction. They select appropriate games, integrate them into the curriculum, and guide students in using these tools effectively. Teachers also monitor progress, provide feedback, and adapt the games to meet specific learning objectives. [6, 78]

ESP students are the central subjects of the learning process. They actively engage with the online games to develop their language skills in specific professional or academic contexts. These learners often include professionals, university students, or individuals seeking to improve their English for career-specific purposes. While not directly involved in the classroom, game developers play a crucial role in creating educational games tailored to ESP needs. They ensure the games are relevant, interactive, and aligned with language learning goals. [5, 28]

The primary object is to enhance students’ English language proficiency within their specific professional or academic fields. This includes mastering specialized vocabulary, grammar, and

communication strategies relevant to their area of expertise. The object is to equip students with the ability to use English effectively in real-world scenarios, such as negotiating in business, presenting research, or interacting with patients. Online games simulate these scenarios, providing a safe space for practice. [7, 145] Another object is to make learning more engaging and motivating through gamification. By incorporating elements like points, levels, and rewards, the learning process becomes more enjoyable and less intimidating. The use of online games also aims to foster independent learning. Students can practice at their own pace, revisit challenging areas, and track their progress, promoting self-directed learning.

In conclusion, online educational games have become an effective and innovative tool in teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The integration of technology into language education not only increases student engagement and motivation but also helps learners develop practical communication skills relevant to their professional fields. Gamification, supported by artificial intelligence and emerging technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality, creates interactive and personalized learning environments that encourage active participation and improve learning outcomes. Moreover, platforms like Kahoot!, Quizizz, and Quizlet provide valuable opportunities for vocabulary development, grammar practice, and immediate feedback. Therefore, the implementation of online educational games in ESP instruction can significantly enhance the effectiveness of language learning and better prepare students for real-world professional communication. Future research should continue exploring advanced digital tools and strategies to maximize the educational potential of gamified learning environments.

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