



# A Board Game-Based Learning Media: Food and Drink

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**Abstract:** This paper presents the development and use of the Food & Drink Board Game as an interactive educational media to support English language learning, particularly speaking skills, in elementary schools. The media was designed with familiar thematic content—food and beverages—to facilitate vocabulary acquisition and communicative competence. Equipped with visually engaging components and structured gameplay, the board game encourages learners to express preferences, ask and answer questions, and participate actively in dialogues. Observations show that the board game enhances students' motivation, fluency, and confidence in using English in meaningful contexts. By integrating cognitive, affective, and social aspects of learning, the board game offers a student-centered alternative to traditional methods. This media has been officially registered for intellectual property protection under the name Dita Novita Sari.

**Keywords:** Board Game, Game-Based Learning, Interactive Media, Food And Drink Theme, Elementary Education.

## Introduction

In recent years, English has increasingly solidified its position as a global lingua franca, making fluency in English a crucial skill for young learners in a globally connected world (Ngel, 2022). One major challenge in teaching English at the elementary level is engaging students in speaking activities in a joy and meaningful way. Traditional classroom instruction often falls short in creating interactive learning environments that effectively motivate students to practice speaking (Chen & Hwang, 2022; Mahdi, 2022).

In the field of English language education, especially at the elementary and junior levels, developing students' speaking skills remains a significant challenge. Many students struggle to express themselves in English due to limited vocabulary, lack of self-confidence, and insufficient opportunities to practice speaking in engaging contexts (Amin, 2020). To address these issues, there is a growing shift toward the adoption of interactive, learner-centered methods that promote both language acquisition and student motivation (Sharma, 2023).

One such approach is the use of educational board games, which blend learning objectives with gameplay elements to create an enjoyable and meaningful learning experience. One increasingly popular and effective strategy is the integration of educational board games. These games combine pedagogical goals with entertaining game mechanics, offering students a low-stress, meaningful environment for language learning (Liu et al., 2025). Game-based learning fosters collaboration, active participation, and vocabulary reinforcement, making it especially suitable for language skill development (Güngör

Deveci, 2024; Subekti & Rahayu, 2024). Board games naturally promote interaction, cooperation, and repetition—all of which are essential for language development. When aligned with thematic vocabulary such as “Food and Drink,” board games can become powerful tools to help learners not only memorize new words but also use them communicatively.

When designed around thematic content—such as “Food and Drink”—board games provide a familiar and relatable context for students. Vocabulary like rice, juice, apple, bread, and chicken is already part of student’s everyday life, making it easier for them to connect language to real-world experiences (Ulipah, 2025). Nevertheless, traditional methods such as vocabulary drills or passive memorization often fail to provide the authentic speaking practice needed for real communicative competence (Adem & Berkessa, 2022; Keo & Lan, 2024).

This study investigates the effectiveness of using a board game with a “Food and Drink” theme to improve English-speaking skills among elementary school students. The research aims to determine whether game-based learning can enhance students’ vocabulary retention, speaking fluency, and confidence in using English to describe food items, express preferences, and engage in basic conversations.

## Methodology

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the effectiveness of a board game as a learning medium in improving English-speaking skills among elementary school students. The “Food and Drink” board game was designed with thematic vocabulary, visual elements, and structured rules to encourage active participation. Participants were divided into small groups of 3–5 students, each provided with a game board, dice, and colored question cards. The learning process involved rolling the dice, moving across the board, and responding to prompts on the cards in English. Data collection was conducted through classroom observations, focusing on students’ vocabulary use, speaking fluency, and participation levels. Field notes were taken to capture students’ motivation, confidence, and interaction during gameplay. The analysis emphasized recurring patterns of language use and engagement, comparing students’ participation before and after the intervention. This methodology ensured that both cognitive (vocabulary acquisition) and affective (motivation, confidence) aspects of learning were evaluated, providing insights into the potential of board game-based media as an alternative, student-centered tool for English language learning.

## Results and Discussion

### Information of Food & Drink Board Game

Board games are board-based educational games designed with visual components and certain rules of play, which combine elements of entertainment and learning. In the context of English language learning, board games are used as a tool to create a learning environment that is interactive, fun, and motivates students to actively participate in language activities.

According to (Liu et al., 2025), the use of board games in English learning can improve students' speaking skills because of its communicative and collaborative nature. Board

games provide authentic language situations, where students need to interact, respond, and express ideas in English, both orally and in writing, according to the roles and challenges in the game.

'Food and Drink' is one of the important themes in the English curriculum for elementary school students. This theme is very relevant to students' daily lives, making it easy to understand and relate to their personal experiences. In this material, students learn about: 1) Vocabulary: names of food and drinks such as rice, chicken, vegetables, bread, milk, juice, etc. 2) Expressions and phrases: expressions related to food, such as: What do you usually eat for breakfast? Do you like spicy food? What is your favourite drink? 3) Simple grammar: use of simple present tense to describe eating habits or food preferences, such as I usually eat bread and eggs for breakfast. 4) Dialogue and conversation: constructing conversations about ordering food, discussing healthy food, and expressing opinions about food.

According to (Ulipah, 2025), the Food and Drink theme is very effective for building students' communication skills because it is close to the context of daily life, allowing students to use language naturally and meaningfully. Combining board games with the Food and Drink theme allows students to practice English communicatively while playing. For example, students will roll the dice, advance to a certain box, and pick up a card that asks them to answer a question. This approach involves both cognitive (vocabulary recall) and affective (motivation and confidence) aspects of speaking. Students will feel more comfortable speaking as the learning atmosphere is non-stressful and fun.

## Application in Learning Process

### Game Stages

- Preparation:
  - Students are divided into small groups (3-5 people per group).
  - Each group gets a game board, dice, and a set of coloured question cards.
- Rules of Play:
  - Players take turns rolling the dice and move forward according to the number they get.
  - If it stops on a particular coloured square (red, yellow, or blue), players pick up a card of that colour.
  - Players read the question aloud and answer in English.
  - Friends in the group can provide feedback or additional questions.
- Finish:
  - The game ends when one player reaches 'FINISH'.
  - The teacher can give extra points for the most active and communicative student.
- Media Pros
  - Visuals are engaging and contextualised: Pictures of familiar foods/drinks make it easy for students to understand the context.
  - Integrates speaking, vocabulary, and social interaction.
  - Suitable for all learning types: visual, kinesthetic, interpersonal.

- Increases learning motivation: game-based and light-hearted competition.

### **Heading number two**

- Speaking: Expressing opinions, preferences, describing food.
- Vocabulary: Naming food and drink, describing tastes, identifying healthy/unhealthy options.
- Grammar: Present simple, modal verbs (can), and question formation.

### **Heading number two**

The result of using board game-based learning media with Food and Drink theme showed a significant improvement in elementary school students' speaking ability in English. Based on observation and learning activity results, students became more active in expressing opinions, asking questions, and answering questions using vocabulary relevant to the theme of food and drink. The use of interactive game boards and attractive visuals encouraged student participation, created a fun and non-stressful learning atmosphere, and increased students' confidence in speaking English.

This Board Games effectively combines cognitive (vocabulary acquisition), affective (motivation and confidence) and social (group interaction) elements. Activities such as rolling the dice, coming forward on the board, and answering questions based on the cards reinforce thematic learning in a fun and communicative way.

This finding is in line with some previous research results:

1. Vinde Rambe stated that game-based learning can improve students' speaking skills because games encourage real and spontaneous interactions between learners (Vinde Rambe, 2022).
2. Ningsih & Widhiatama asserted that board games as learning media help create a more collaborative and communicative learning atmosphere, and increase students' courage to speak in a foreign language (Ningsih & Widhiatama, 2023).
3. Kurniawan et al in their research found that the Food and Drink theme is very effective in vocabulary learning because it is close to students' daily lives and makes it easier for them to associate language with real experiences (Kurniawan et al., 2024).
4. Sari et al. through classroom action research also proved that the use of board games can improve students' vocabulary acquisition and speaking skills gradually through repetition and contextual practice (Dewi et al., 2017).
5. In addition, highlighted the importance of motivation in language learning, and that game-based learning contributes greatly in maintaining students' enthusiasm and interest in learning during the learning process (Adipat et al., 2021; Ahmed et al., 2022).

Thus, the use of board games in the context of learning English with the theme of Food and Drink not only provides an interesting learning experience, but is also relevant to modern pedagogical approaches that focus on student activeness and engagement. This suggests that innovative learning media such as board games can be an effective solution to improve speaking skills in foreign language learning, particularly at the elementary school level.

## Conclusion

This study shows that the use of board game-based learning media with the theme of Food and Drink can significantly improve the speaking skills of elementary school students in learning English. The board game creates a fun, interactive and collaborative learning environment, which supports the development of cognitive (vocabulary and language structure), affective (motivation and confidence) and social (interaction between students) aspects. Thus, the Food and Drink themed board game proved to be an effective learning medium and relevant to modern pedagogical approaches that emphasise student-centred learning. Future research can compare the effectiveness of board games with other learning methods, such as role play, storytelling, or interactive digital media, to see which method is most optimal in improving students' speaking skills. To adapt to the times, conventional board games can be developed into digital board games or interactive applications so that they can be accessed more widely and attract digital native students. It is also worth investigating more deeply how board games affect students' affective aspects, such as anxiety in speaking English or increased intrinsic motivation in learning a foreign language.

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