

Teachers' and Students' Experiences in Using Kinesthetic Games to Practice Prepositions of Place

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Abstract

This study examines the experiences of English lecturers and nursing students utilizing kinesthetic games to learn prepositions of place in an English for nursing course in Medan, Indonesia. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, data were gathered via classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate three primary themes: lecturers' experiences in employing kinesthetic games, students' learning experiences, and the perceived advantages and challenges of the methodology. Both teachers and students said that kinesthetic games made the classroom more lively, interesting, and interactive. Activities that involved movement helped students understand spatial meanings better, made them more confident, and made them less anxious about grammar. The games also helped kids work together and remember things better. But there were some problems, such as not enough room in the classroom, not enough time to get ready, and more noise. In general, the study finds that kinesthetic games are a good way to teach prepositions of place in the Indonesian EFL nursing context. They have cognitive, emotional, and social benefits that help students learn grammar in a more meaningful way.

Keywords: kinesthetic learning, prepositions of place English for Nursing

INTRODUCTION

It can be hard to learn English as a second language, especially when it comes to grammar and vocabulary. These challenges are even more important for nursing students because knowing English is becoming more and more important in the healthcare field. Nursing students need to know how to read and understand medical instructions, clinical information, and global medical literature (Safitri et al., 2004). They also need to be able to talk to patients and healthcare professionals clearly. All of these things require a good understanding of English grammar and vocabulary (Garello et al., 2024). Prepositions of place like in, on, under, besides, between, and behind are important grammar topics for beginners because they talk about spatial relationships that happen a lot in healthcare communication, like putting equipment in the right place, positioning patients, or giving instructions for procedures. But a lot of nursing students have trouble using these prepositions correctly when they talk and write.

Conventional pedagogical approaches that predominantly depend on memorizing textbooks frequently do not fully engage nursing students or facilitate their comprehension of prepositions within significant, real-world contexts (Adhi et al., 2024). These limitations underscore the necessity for alternative, more interactive methodologies that can accommodate the varied learning preferences and

practical requirements of nursing students (Richard, 2001).

As a result of these problems, kinesthetic learning methods have become more popular in language teaching. Kinesthetic teaching is "the use of creative movement in the classroom to teach across the curriculum (Fikni et al., 2024). Letting the students get up and move around while they learn, which gets them physically involved in the process, increases oxygen flow to their brains, and leads to emotional and cognitive responses to the learning process (Simamora et al., 2025). Another writer said that kinesthetic learners are "people who learn best by doing things with their hands." These students like to interact with the physical world. Kinesthetic learners typically struggle to remain seated for extended periods, which adversely affects their concentration (Gilakjani & Branch, 2012). Kinesthetic games help students learn a language by making them move their bodies and interact with other students. These games help people understand and remember things better by linking movement with language concepts (Fikni et al., 2024). Commands like "put the ball under the chair" or "stand next to the door" turn abstract grammar rules into real-life situations that can be seen. This method not only gets students more involved, but it also helps students who learn best by moving around and doing things with their hands. This is especially important for nursing students who are used to learning in practical, task-based settings (Adhi et al., 2024).

Recent studies confirm that kinesthetic and embodied learning methodologies in English language classrooms are effective. (Diop, 2022) created a kinesthetic classroom game named Ghost House to help students practice prepositions of place. The game showed that when physical actions were added to language tasks, students were more interested, talked more, and felt surer of themselves. In a similar, (Farhan et al., n.d.) conducted an action research project utilizing the Interactive Preposition Game (IPG), which revealed that movement-oriented games enhanced students' comprehension of prepositions and elevated their motivation. A systematic review conducted by (Jusslin et al., 2022) determined that gesture, movement, and physical interaction are essential in reinforcing linguistic concepts and facilitating memory retention. Nevertheless, the authors observed that numerous studies fail to provide comprehensive accounts of how educators employ embodied strategies within actual classroom environments. Similarly (Nephawe, 2023) illustrated that embodied activities enhanced learners' proficiency in time prepositions, indicating the wider relevance of movement-based pedagogies.

Even though these results are promising, most of the studies that are out there look at how well kinesthetic or embodied strategies work to help people improve their grammar skills or get more involved. There are not many studies that look into how lecturers and students actually feel and think while playing kinesthetic games, such as how lecturers plan and run these activities and how students react to them emotionally and cognitively. Additionally, most of the studies were done outside of Indonesia, like in Senegal (Diop, 2022) , and South Africa (Nephawe, 2023). This means that there isn't enough research on how kinesthetic strategies work in Indonesian EFL classrooms, especially for nursing students who have their own language and professional needs.

To fill these gaps, this study looks at how nursing students and lecturers in Medan, Indonesia, used kinesthetic games to practice English prepositions of place. This research seeks to ascertain the pedagogical advantages, obstacles, and perceptions related to the implementation of kinesthetic games through interviews and classroom observations. The results are anticipated to enhance the literature by delivering insights specifically relevant to the Indonesian EFL context and by presenting practical recommendations for English educators aiming to adopt more engaging and effective grammar instruction methods particularly for nursing students who

necessitate proficient English communication skills for their future professional endeavors.

METHODS

This study applied a qualitative descriptive design to investigate the experiences of English lecturers and nursing students in employing kinesthetic games for the acquisition of prepositions of place. A qualitative approach is suitable as it enables the researcher to obtain comprehensive insights into participants' perceptions, emotions, behaviors, and classroom experiences (Brown, 1994). Qualitative research aims to comprehend how individuals interpret their experiences within a particular context. This study took place in an English for nursing classroom where grammar instruction includes kinesthetic, movement-based learning activities (Li & Zhou, 2023)

The qualitative descriptive approach is selected as the study does not aim to test hypotheses or establish causal relationships (Nunan, 1991). Instead, it focuses on explaining how kinesthetic games are used, how students react to them, and what teachers see as the advantages and disadvantages of something of these activities. This design facilitates a naturalistic comprehension of classroom interactions and offers insights in authentic teaching and learning contexts (Hernandez & Vasan, 2020).

The research took place in a Nursing Department located in Medan, Indonesia. This object was chosen because English is a required subject, and it includes grammar lessons that are important for students who want to improve their clinical communication, nursing documentation, and professional interactions. The setting gives real chances to see how kinesthetic games activities that require movement, spatial awareness, and physical engagement to teach prepositions of place like in, on, under, next to, and between were used. Most of the time, English classes took place in lecture halls with open spaces that allow for movement-based activities, which makes them a good place to play kinesthetic games (Sultan, 2022)

This participant of this study included two English lecturers and around twenty nursing students taking an English for nursing course at Sekolah Tinggi Kesehatan Columbia Asia Medan, Indonesia. The participants were selected via purposive sampling, enabling the researcher to identify individuals capable of offering the most pertinent and insightful information regarding the utilization of kinesthetic games in the instruction of prepositions of place. The lecturers were included because they had experience teaching grammar in interactive ways and had either already used or said they would use kinesthetic learning strategies. The students were chosen from classes where these kinds of games had been played so they could talk about how they learned in a meaningful way. All participants willingly consented to participate in the study and were apprised of the research's objectives and methodologies.

This study used two research instruments namely classroom observations and semi-structured interviews to gather in-depth and contextual data about the use of kinesthetic games in grammar instruction. Observations were employed to document the organic teaching-learning process, encompassing the sequence of activities, instructional strategies, and student engagement levels. Semi-structured interviews allowed both students and teachers to talk

about how they feel about the activities, what they think about them, and how they rate them. The combination of these tools lets the researcher look at not only what happens during the lessons but also how both lectures and students involved understand their experiences.

To support and enrich the primary data sources, documentation is also collected. This includes lesson plans, activity sheets, pictures of what happened in class, videos of teaching sessions, and any other materials used to teach kinesthetic games. These papers help the researcher check their observations, learn about instructional design, and show how the games were played with pictures. Documentation also adds to the study's credibility by giving more information than just what people say.

There are several steps in the process of collecting data. Initially, the researcher acquires authorization from the institution and obtains informed consent from all participants. During this stage of preparation, rules for observing and interviewing are made to make sure that the study stays on track and focused.

In the next step, observers watch two or three teaching sessions in the classroom where kinesthetic games were used to teach prepositions of place. The researcher watched how the teachers start and run the activities, how the students react, and how the games help them practice grammar. Field notes and video recordings were used to keep track of the process in great detail. After the observations, semi-structured interviews were held with the lecturers and some of the students. These interviews gave participants a chance to think about their experiences and talk about what they liked, what helped them learn, and what problems they had.

The data collected from observations, interviews, and documentation undergo thematic analysis. This method lets the researcher find patterns and themes that show how participants felt about kinesthetic games. The analysis started with familiarization, which is when the researcher reads field notes, transcribes interview recordings, and looks over documents. Next, initial codes were made by marking important statements, actions, and observations that seem to be related to the research focus.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

This part presents the findings and the discussion of the research. The are presented separately.

Findings

This part presents the findings derived from classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The thematic analysis produced three major themes corresponding to the research questions :(a) lecturers' experiences in implementing kinesthetic games, (b) students' learning experiences, and (c) the benefits and challenges perceived by lectures and students. Each part is discussed separately below:

a. Lecturers' experiences in implementing kinesthetic games

The lecturers described their experience as positive, dynamic, and more engaging compared to conventional grammar instruction. Both lecturers reported that kinesthetic games enabled them to create an interactive classroom atmosphere where students could physically

demonstrate prepositions such as in, on, under, behind, between, and next to. Kinesthetic learning theory backs up what the lecturers say about their experience being positive, dynamic, and more interesting than traditional grammar lessons. This theory says that adding physical movement to learn makes students more focused, engaged, and motivated (Safitri et al., 2004). From the interview, the researchers generated the lectures into three types:

1. Increased Classroom Energy and Interaction

The lecturers said that the games changed the students' energy levels right away. During the observations, students were seen standing, moving around the room, putting things in order, or following the teacher's directions on where to stand. The lecturers said: "When I say 'stand behind the chair,' they do it right away. The lesson comes to life with the movement. It's not the same as just writing the rules on the board.

This indicates that kinesthetic activities promoted more organic teacher-student interactions, with educators transitioning from lecturers to facilitators overseeing physical tasks.

2. Easier Demonstration of Spatial Meanings

Lecturers said that it is easier to teach prepositions of place when they are shown in action instead of being explained in a general way.

"Students often get confused when I only talk. But as soon as they move under the table or between two chairs, they get it."

This was confirmed by observations: students understood things better when they were told to move around. There were fewer misunderstandings, and teachers had to spend less time fixing grammar mistakes.

3. Alignment with Nursing Students' Learning Style

Lecturers thought that kinesthetic strategies worked best for nursing students because their field is hands-on. One teacher said "Nursing students are used to doing things with their hands. They adjust quickly when the English lesson also includes movement.

This shows that kinesthetic learning and the hands-on, practical nature of nursing education go well together.

- b. students' learning experiences

1. Enhanced Comprehension Through Movement

Students always said that doing things with their bodies helped them understand what they meant better. A student said:

"If I only read the prepositions in the book, I forget. But I really remember what it means when I stand between my friends.

Observations corroborated this: students articulated prepositions vocally while executing the actions, signifying the amalgamation of motor and verbal memory.

- Increased Confidence and Reduced Anxiety

Students were more willing to participate because the classroom became more fun than serious. A few said:

"I'm usually too shy to answer grammar questions, but I feel at ease

in the game."

"It feels like playing, not like taking a test."

This emotional safety made even shy students want to join in on the activities, which helped ease their grammar anxiety.

2. Positive Peer Interaction

During the games, the students worked together and helped each other get into the right positions. People often laughed, gave verbal cues, and made supportive comments. A student said:

"We help one another." If someone is wrong, we tell them what the right thing is.

Working together like this made the group stronger and made it easier for everyone to learn.

c. the benefits and challenges perceived by both groups

1. Stronger Memory Retention

Moving around helped students remember prepositions better. Lecturers saw fewer mistakes being made over and over again, and students said that the learning felt "stickier." This is in line with the theory of embodied cognition, which says that physical action is important for reinforcing abstract ideas.

2. Higher Student Engagement

The classroom got busier, louder, and more collaborative, which was a good thing. Students stayed focused and interested, and teachers noticed that students were less bored.

3. Immediate Feedback and Correction

It was easy to see mistakes because prepositions were visually obvious. For example, when a student said "next to" instead of "between," their classmates quickly corrected them.

Challenges

a. Limited Classroom Space

The most common complaint was not enough space to move around. One teacher said: "It's hard to move around if the class is too full." This sometimes made teachers change or make activities easier.

b. Time Constraints

It took longer to organize materials, get things ready, split students into groups, and give instructions than it did to give regular lectures. Some games needed extra setup or moving furniture around.

c. Classroom Noise and Distraction

Students said that the class could get loud during games, which made it hard to hear what the teacher was saying. A student said, "It's too loud sometimes, and I can't hear clearly."

This meant that teachers had to handle changes well to keep students' attention.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that kinesthetic games provide significant pedagogical benefits for teaching prepositions of place to nursing students in the Indonesian EFL context. In general, both students and teachers said they had good experiences, and their views are in line with what other studies have found about embodied and movement-based learning. Using kinesthetic

activities in the classroom made the learning environment more active, so students were more likely to participate than just listen. This change fits with (Diop, 2022) finding that moving around can make students more interested in learning and less passive in the classroom. During the observations, students quickly followed directions like "stand behind the chair" or "move between your friends." This showed how adding movement made learning more immediate and interactive.

The students' assertions that movement facilitated a clearer comprehension of prepositions align with the tenets of embodied cognition (Tranquillo, 2018). The body is very important for helping learners understand abstract language concepts better (Diop, 2022). A lot of the time, students said that they remembered prepositions better when they were told to put themselves "under the table" or "between two chairs." This means that kinesthetic games not only made learning more fun, but they also helped people understand and remember things better. Their experiences corroborate Farhan's (2023) findings that movement-based activities augment learner motivation and render grammar instruction more engaging.

The study emphasizes significant emotional benefits in addition to cognitive advantages. A lot of students said they felt less anxious and surer of themselves when they did kinesthetic activities. A number of people said that the games were "fun," "relaxing," and "not like a test." This change in the emotional atmosphere fits well with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which says that less anxiety and more comfort can help people learn a language better. The relaxed classroom atmosphere reported in this study indicates that kinesthetic games mitigate the fear of making mistakes, a factor that frequently hinders students during conventional grammar instruction. Interestingly, the practical nature of nursing as a field seems to work well with this way of teaching. Nursing students are used to doing things, showing how to do things, and learning by doing, so they may have found kinesthetic learning comfortable and natural because they are used to doing things. This observation aligns with Hernandez's (2020) findings that students in medical fields often favor tactile and experiential learning modalities.

The fact that the kinesthetic games required people to work together also made for good learning experiences (Richards, 2019). Students often corrected each other's answers, gave each other advice, and worked together to get things done well. This kind of help from peers is in line with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which says that social interaction is important for building knowledge. The laughter, group coordination, and shared problem-solving seen during the activities show that kinesthetic games make it easier for students to learn together than traditional grammar lessons. This social aspect not only made the learning environment more fun, but it also helped students learn more by having their peers help them.

The study found a lot of useful things, but it also found some problems that could be fixed. One problem that participants often brought up was that there wasn't enough room in the classroom. Because kinesthetic games need students to move around freely, small or crowded classrooms sometimes made some activities less effective (Nolfi, 2020). This worry is similar to Nephawe's (2023) findings, which also show that space problems are a common problem

when trying to use movement-based grammar lessons. Because of physical limits, teachers had to change or make some activities easier. It was also hard to work with limited time. Kinesthetic games need more planning than regular lessons (Lengel, 2010). For example, you need to set up the classroom furniture, get the right objects, and give clear directions. It can be hard to fit these extra steps into the busy schedule of college courses. Students also said that noise was a problem, saying that activities that required movement often made the room lively and loud. This energy was mostly good, but it sometimes made it hard to hear the teacher's instructions clearly.

But these problems don't make kinesthetic games any less effective overall. Instead, they remind us that learning through movement needs careful planning and management in the classroom. Teachers might have to change their plans to fit the space they have, give themselves more time to set up, and make sure everyone knows the rules to keep everyone focused and avoid distractions. Kinesthetic learning can be very helpful, even with these limitations, if it is used wisely.

The results of this study support the idea that kinesthetic games are a great way to teach grammar, especially to nursing students who naturally prefer active, hands-on learning. The study adds to the small amount of research done in the Indonesian EFL context by giving useful information about nursing education, where practical skills and physical activity are very important. The favorable feedback from both lecturers and students indicates that kinesthetic games can function as a viable alternative to conventional grammar instruction, enhancing comprehension, increasing motivation, and facilitating more significant learning experiences. The results show that kinesthetic strategies could improve EFL grammar teaching and should be used more often in schools that value active, student-centered learning

CONCLUSION

This research investigated the utilization of kinesthetic activities by English lecturers and nursing students to acquire prepositions of place in an English for nursing course. The results show that kinesthetic games make the learning environment more active, interesting, and fun, which helps people understand and participate better. Lecturers discovered that kinesthetic games were useful tools that got students more involved, helped them understand spatial concepts, and fit the way nursing students learn best. This method changed the lecturer's role from teacher to facilitator, which helped cut down on repeated grammar mistakes.

Students also said they had good learning experiences. Moving around helped them understand and remember prepositions better, and it made grammar tasks seem less scary. Kinesthetic activities in the classroom helped students work together, feel less anxious, and get more support from their peers. Kinesthetic games had clear benefits, but there were also problems like not enough space, longer preparation time, and more noise. These problems show that careful planning, flexible arrangements, and clear instructions are all necessary to make the most of them.

This study provides significant insights into kinesthetic learning within Indonesian EFL nursing education. The results endorse kinesthetic games as a

valuable adjunct to grammar instruction and advocate for their sustained implementation to bolster students' confidence, motivation, and comprehension.

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