

# Exploring Benefits and Challenges of the Use of Games Involving Movement During Foreign Language Lessons. Insights from A Multimodal Case Study

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## **Abstract**

Frequently Foreign Language (FL) teachers still suggest that good classroom management skills are manifested only if students in class sit silently and motionless (Smith and King, 2018). This leads to classrooms where most of the time students are expected to sit immobile on their seats (Havery and Kenyon, 2013) and sometimes even end up being unfairly scolded if they dare to move during the lesson (Bauernfeind, 2016). While nowadays, games are more frequently accepted within FL learning contexts (Hwang, 2018), one still encounters situations where even during such games, teachers expect their students to be as static as possible. Emerging research (such as by Cole et al., 2021) on the other hand indicates that spaces and activities that encourage movement within the classroom stimulate student attention and lead to more effective and motivating learning contexts. In this light, this paper intends to contribute to the field of FL learning and teaching by asking one pertinent research question: What are the benefits and challenges of games involving movement within the FL secondary classroom? This question will be answered through insights obtained from qualitative data collected from two German as a Foreign Language classrooms in Malta. This data includes the outcomes obtained from classroom observations and teacher and student interviews. Data was later analysed using a social semiotic multimodal framework (Cremona, 2017) as well as thematic analysis (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, as its main results the paper will present the challenges and benefits experienced by teachers and students while using these games involving movement. Later, based on these results, the paper as its main conclusion will present a set of games involving movement (i.e. 10 in all) through which those working within FL learning contexts are encouraged to gradually initiate the creation of similar active non-static Foreign Language learning contexts.

**Keywords:** foreign language teaching and learning, games, movement, multimodality, secondary education