Dominoes Game

Aim of the Game

The aim of the game is to be the first player to play all of their dominoes successfully, by matching them correctly to either of the end dominoes in the chain.

Dominoes can be played to practise any target language that involves combining two items together. For example: adjacency pairs, verb patterns or dependent prepositions.

Pre Class Preparation

Create your dominoes by completing the dominoes with your target language. Always start with the right hand side of the first domino and continue with the left hand side of the second domino with the matching pair. Continue through the dominoes in this manner until you return to the first domino and complete it on the left hand side with the matching item for the last domino. In this way you will ensure that each item has a suitable matching partner.

Before class prepare a set of dominoes for each group of three learners by photocopying the handout and cutting up into 16 dominoes.

Procedure

Explain to the learners that they are going to play dominoes and elicit the rules from them as far as possible.

Explain that to match dominoes, learners have to match two dominoes together by combining a left side of a domino with a right side according to the context of your game. They must be able to think of a sentence including the target language on the domino in a suitable context to complete the match.

Do an example or two as a class.

Put the learners into groups of three and give each group a set of dominoes.

One learner deals out four dominoes to each player. The rest of the dominoes (the pack) are placed face down to one side of the playing area. Turn over the top domino from the pack and place it in the middle of the table. This is the starting domino.

The player to the left of the dealer begins. If they can combine one of the dominoes in their hand with the domino on the table they place it next to the side it matches with and makes their response using the relevant target language in a suitable context sentence. If their partners are happy the sentence is correct, the next learner takes their turn. If there is a doubt about the sentence, the teacher can be asked for a second opinion. If the learner makes an incorrect sentence, they take the domino back and their turn finishes.

If a player cannot use any of the dominoes they hold, they pick one up from the top of the pack. If they can use this domino, they are allowed to play it immediately in the normal way; if not, their turn finishes and the next player continues.

The first player to use all of their dominoes is the winner.

Variations

Groups that finish quickly can do one the following:

Start a new game.

Try and remember all of the sentences made during the game.

Tell a story using all of the target language items in the order they appear in the domino chain.

Make new sentences for each others' combinations.

Cut the dominoes in half and play pelmanism.

Give the learners a blank dominoes template and ask them to create a set of dominoes for another team to play with.

If you have a big group and don't have time to prepare many sets before class. Photocopy one set of dominoes blown up and play as a class, sticking the dominoes on the whiteboard.