

Using Interactive Games in English Teaching: Enhancing Language Acquisition and Student Engagement

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Annotation. This article is devoted to the importance of using interactive games in teaching English. Utilizing these interactive games in English classes makes language learning more captivating, useful and meaningful. Interactive games have emerged as a powerful pedagogical tool in English language teaching (ELT). They foster a dynamic and engaging learning environment, promote language acquisition, and improve active student participation.

Key words: interactive games, technical tools, didactic games, playful grammar, dilemma, Taboo words (forbidden words), Pictionary (word game), efficiency, guide, result, experience.

Использование интерактивных игр в преподавании английского языка: улучшение усвоения языка и вовлеченности студентов

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Аннотация. Эта статья посвящена важности использования интерактивных игр в преподавании английского языка. Использование этих интерактивных игр на уроках английского языка делает изучение языка более увлекательным, полезным и значимым. Интерактивные игры стали мощным педагогическим инструментом в преподавании английского языка (ELT). Они способствуют созданию динамичной и увлекательной среды обучения, способствуют усвоению языка и повышают активность участия студентов.

Ключевые слова: интерактивные игры, технические инструменты, дидактические игры, игровая грамматика, дилемма, запретные слова (запрещенные слова), Pictionary (словесная игра), эффективность, руководство, результат, опыт.

Ingliz tilini o'qitishda interaktiv o'yinlardan foydalanish: tilni o'zlashtirish va talabalarning faolligini oshirish

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola ingliz tilini o'rgatishda interaktiv o'yinlardan foydalanishning muhimligiga bag'ishlangan. Ingliz tili darslarida ushbu interaktiv o'yinlardan foydalanish til o'rganishni yanada jozibali, foydali va mazmunli qiladi. Interaktiv o'yinlar ingliz tilini o'qitishda (ELT) muhim pedagogik vosita hisoblanadi. Ular dinamik va qiziqarli o'quv muhitini ta'minlaydi, tilni o'zlashtirishga yordam beradi va talabalarning faol ishtirokini yaxshilaydi.

Kalit soʻzlar: *interfaol oʻyinlar, texnik vositalar, didaktik oʻyinlar, oʻynoqi grammatika, dilemma, Tabu soʻzlari (taqiqlangan soʻzlar), Pictionary (soʻz oʻyini), samaradorlik, yoʻl-yoʻriq, natija, tajriba.*

Passive learning is frequently used in traditional English teaching methods, when pupils commit language structures, grammatical rules, and vocabulary to memory. However, these approaches might not adequately address different learning styles or engage students. A solution is the use of interactive games, which offer a multimodal experience that improves motivation, memory, and cognitive processing. Speaking, listening, reading, and writing are the four main language abilities that interactive games are especially good at fostering. They give students a fun and relevant way to practice language skills by mimicking real-life situations.

There are some engaging games that are used to teach Russian and English. When teaching children a language, it is important to use games that allow all students to participate equally and learn new material (for instance, new vocabulary can be memorized; if this process is repeated daily, the student vocabulary increases to a higher level). Particularly for younger pupils, it is improper to begin the class with grammar ideas because it soon bores them (Wang, 2021). Interest in education may wane as a result. With them, it's even necessary to begin the greeting process in an unusual way. For instance, the beginning of the lesson with an English song about greeting the teacher's arrival (primarily a motivational technique for elementary school pupils) works well. Students won't become distracted from one task during the session if the lesson proceeds in this manner. Even English classes are something they eagerly anticipate. Using interactive games in the English education process has various advantages:

1. Increased involvement of students. Playing interactive games adds interest and enjoyment to learning. They encourage kids to actively participate and engage with their peers by igniting their inner passion.

2. Better understanding and memory. Games frequently incorporate contextual learning and repetition, both of which improve memory retention. They enhance comprehension by contextualizing language presentation.

3. The improvement of communication and social skills. Students can practice real-world communication skills while playing multiplayer games that encourage cooperation, compromise, and teamwork.

4. Taking into account various learning preferences. All pupils can profit from the course thanks to interactive activities that can accommodate kinesthetic, visual, and auditory learners.

Teachers already have goals for the games they employ in the classroom. Furthermore, using games, educators can establish linguistic situations where language is employed in relevant and practical ways. Despite being frequently thought of as enjoyable and amusing, games contain a lot of educational value, especially when it comes to teaching and learning foreign languages. Hadfield sees a game as an activity that has objectives, rules, and entertaining components. It ought to be included in the syllabus as a significant component. The significance of using games in language instruction classes is demonstrated by this definition. It is thought that games can be used as a method to accomplish a variety of educational objectives in addition to being a fun activity. Students can create and maintain learning efforts with the aid of games. Additionally, they support children in interacting, communicating, and establishing context for language use. To put it another way, games provide a setting in which language learners can practice a language for practical reasons. All of the fundamental language abilities are covered in language class games, which also aid in the development of multiple talents. Additionally, they urge students to highlight the importance of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Games can help students have a more positive attitude about learning, which will improve their engagement, attendance, and attention span. Games are a valuable teaching tool in language classes because they help students retain information, make better decisions,

and understand general concepts. A good game in a language lesson can provide learners with entertainment as well as educational benefits and appropriateness, which can eventually increase students' enjoyment and participation. The Cambridge Dictionary defines interaction as a situation in which two or more individuals or objects converse with or respond to one another. In order to initiate a discussion or respond to others through body language or words, interaction requires the involvement of at least two people. According to Saffer, an interaction is a transaction that takes place between two entities, especially when conversers exchange information. It can occur in any setting that fits the requirements and preferences of communicators. Interaction is a component of classroom behavior and pedagogy in language instruction classes. There are four categories of interaction: medium, discussion partner, tool, and system. Each variety of these has unique characteristics and components. These can be appropriately adapted by teachers for the lesson. Games can be played in groups or in pairs, and pair or group work is the primary method of fostering cooperation. Thus, games give players a chance to improve their social skills. Asking for help from others and politely disagreeing with partners are two examples of skills that games can teach.

These abilities benefit students in their later years as well as in improving their ability to work together in a group. Because they will be following their teachers' instructions while participating in class activities, students are more engaged and feel more comfortable asking questions and talking with their partners about various issues and subjects. As a result, students naturally get the chance to collaborate and communicate with one another through the competition in the language games. Naturally, the instructor should plan all of this; this is the role of the pedagogue. As a result, a few game genres might be identified to add excitement to learning a foreign language. "Rolli games" can be utilized to increase the efficacy of language instruction in Russian and English. The fact that this game is situation-based gives it an advantage. This game is beneficial for developing mental skills in addition to science knowledge. In this game, kids choose subjects and write dialogues. Conversations in clothes stores and amongst passengers while a cab is stopped are two examples of situations where English is used both verbally and visually. We can employ group work strategies in this game, which include splitting pupils into groups and assigning them to various subjects. Competition also takes place in this situation. Competition is the standard. Encouragement of the group that completed the work successfully will raise the aspirations of the other students.

Furthermore, using didactic games to carry out English instruction in a meaningful way is acceptable. These results demonstrate that using games not only increases motivation for language acquisition but also produces an engaging learning environment. It is clear that games are a crucial component of language learning classrooms when it comes to fostering a relaxed atmosphere for both the instructor and the students. Games are especially beneficial when they serve an instructional rather than recreational goal. Depending on children's age and level of expertise, we can modify games to make them easier or more challenging. The aforementioned games aim to improve students' memory, mental capacity, speed, and intellect, as well as make it easier for them to retain new terms and, most importantly, meaningfully structure the lesson (López and Smith, 2022). Although the majority of the educational process is still conducted in a traditional manner today, it is still vital to plan for ongoing foreign language instruction at every level of the system, enhance teacher credentials, and use contemporary teaching and methodology resources. The provision has to be improved much more. The younger generation should become proficient in the languages they are studying through the introduction of new educational techniques with modern pedagogy and information-communication. Based on this, it is desirable for them to be able to speak languages freely. After all, everything is for our nation's growth and the bright future of our young people. It is clear that games are a crucial component of language learning classrooms when it comes to fostering a relaxed atmosphere for both the instructor and the students. Games are especially beneficial when they serve an instructional rather than recreational goal.

As we know, there are different types of interactive games for English teaching process:

1. Vocabulary Games. Examples: Crossword puzzles, word matching, and scrabble.
Objective: Enhance vocabulary acquisition and usage.
2. Role-Playing Games (RPGs). Examples: Simulated conversations and story-based scenarios.
Objective: Improve speaking and listening skills in authentic contexts.
3. Grammar Games. Examples: Sentence construction races, fill-in-the-blank challenges.
Objective: Reinforce grammatical structures and usage.
4. Digital Games. Examples: Apps like Duolingo, Kahoot, and Quizlet.
Objective: Utilize technology to engage learners and track progress.
5. Storytelling and Creative Writing Games. Examples: Collaborative story creation, word chain games.
Objective: Develop reading and writing skills.

For many years, scholars and educators have written extensively about the benefits of using games in language classes. Ersöz (2000) asserts that the use of games in English classes benefits students by providing useful and relevant contexts for language use, encouraging participation and teamwork among students because the emphasis is on the message rather than the structure, offering opportunities to practice language skills, and assisting students in continuing their efforts to learn the language.

"Ludwig Wittgenstein coined the philosophical term "language-game" to describe basic instances of language use and the activities that the language is woven into.

Wittgenstein argued that a word or even a sentence has meaning only as a result of the 'rule' of the 'game' being played" (Wittgenstein, 1953). Language itself is involved inside an activity to gain its meaning.

Games designed with the express purpose of educating players and imparting specialized knowledge are known as educational games. They are made to give people an easy-to-understand setting in which to learn about specific topics or help them develop their abilities. Games are being used in educational institutions more and more as a result of educators, parents, and society as a whole discovering their psychological benefits. In addition to providing entertainment and fun, games are a mutually beneficial instrument that may educate a variety of social skills, inspire motivation, increase self-esteem, and evoke a wide range of emotions. Many more games were built on the foundation of education, according to certain ethnographers.

The objectives of the games were to simulate human life, pass on knowledge to future generations, and prepare people for appropriate social behavior. Since the purpose of chess, a common motivational game, was to get men ready for combat, it may be seen as an excellent example of this (Surdyk, 2008). The famous essay "Upon the Aesthetic Education of Man" by Friedrich Schiller discusses play as a sophisticated force that inspires people to transcend their own conceptions and become ambassadors for civilized civilizations. According to him, "play is when humans are truly human." "Education through games has been practiced for many years. Here we're talking about chess which the gentle folk of the Middle Ages used for the purposes of acquiring strategies of war. Then, at the first half of the 19th century, kindergarten was initiated by Friedrich Frobel based on learning in children with simple educational toys.

By incorporating games into their ESL lessons, teachers will actively contribute to an environment conducive to a student's need for constant learning. Besides, games are very useful in teaching foreign languages because they provide such a degree of enjoyment to the learners.

Playing games will be a terrific way for kids to practice and will engage even the more shy ones. Kids will learn better when they feel like they are making progress. Games are an excellent way to get all of your pupils practicing their English language skills. Games create an atmosphere for meaningful and purposeful communication, as noted by Batteridge, Bucky, and Wright. This occurs as students attempt to comprehend the game they are playing. Through engaging in game play, students have multiple opportunities to practice not just their speaking abilities but all of them.

Students are thought to better internalize the English language when they are immersed in using the four English language skills (Batteridge D., 2005).

Games can be used to improve all of the fundamental language skills – speaking, writing, listening, and reading – as well as other IT, communication, and critical thinking abilities. Students have an opportunity to practice and revise those language skills when they are immersed in the games. Additionally, games can successfully promote language acquisition and inspire students. Thus, games can help students feel good about their performance, which could include their ability to communicate, their vocabulary, their collaboration, or their examination results. The outcomes of the games demonstrate how students' efforts are rewarded.

In other words, that winning and losing in a game reflects how well students apply what they have learned and known into the game and collaborate with other members using proper skills and strategies to face challenges and obtain games' targets. Teachers use these features of games to motivate their students to make efforts and complete their goals not only in learning a language but also in other subjects and fields. If teachers can elicit these features of games in teaching, it can increase clear progress in students' learning and perception.

When teaching a difficult subject, using games in the classroom is a terrific approach to get the students warmed up before the session begins or to give them a break during or after the lesson. There are several instructive games that English teachers can use into their lessons. These English as a Foreign Language (EFL) games can be used to assess a variety of English language competencies, including vocabulary, grammar, writing, listening, and more.

In conclusion, interactive games represent a versatile and impactful approach to teaching English. By fostering engagement, enhancing language skills, and catering to diverse learners, they address many challenges in traditional teaching methods. With thoughtful integration and planning, interactive games can transform the language learning experience, making it both effective and enjoyable.

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