



THE IMPACT OF USING GAMES ON COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE  
TEACHING

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**Abstract:** Games are often used as short warm-up activities or when there is some time left at the end of a lesson. Different types of games ought to be at the heart of teaching foreign language as they increase motivation by providing a plausible incentive to use the target language. They can be used to give practice in all language skills and be used to practice many types of communication. For many, especially the youngest learners, language learning will not be the key motivational factor thus including games are critical to engage the learners attention and make the lesson more effective.

**Keywords:** game-oriented context, target language, learning process, acquisition of inputs, effectiveness, entertaining, communicative competence, increase motivation, cooperative learning

**Annotatsiya:** O'yinlar ko'pincha qisqa isinish mashg'ulotlari sifatida yoki dars yakunida ozgina vaqt qolganida qo'llaniladi. Turli xil o'yinlar chet tilini o'qitish jarayonining asosida bo'lishi lozim, chunki ular o'quvchilarni maqsad tilidan foydalanishga undovchi ishonchli rag'bat orqali motivatsiyani oshiradi. O'yinlar barcha til ko'nikmalarini mashq qilish va turli xil muloqot turlarini rivojlantirishda qo'llanilishi mumkin. Ko'pchilik, ayniqsa yosh o'quvchilar uchun, til o'rganishning o'zi asosiy motivatsion omil bo'la olmaydi, shuning uchun o'yinlardan foydalanish o'quvchilarning diqqatini jalb qilish va darsni samarali qilishda muhim ahamiyatga ega.

**Kalit so'zlar:** o'yin asosidagi kontekst, maqsad til, o'rganish jarayoni, kiruvchi ma'lumotlarni o'zlashtirish, samaradorlik, ko'ngilocharlik, kommunikativ kompetensiya, motivatsiyani oshirish, hamkorlikda o'rganish.

**Аннотация:** Игры часто используются как короткие разогревающие задания или в конце урока, если остаётся немного времени. Различные виды игр должны быть в центре обучения иностранным языкам, так как они повышают мотивацию учащихся, предоставляя убедительный стимул использовать целевой язык. Игры могут использоваться для практики всех языковых навыков и различных видов общения. Для многих учащихся, особенно для самых юных, изучение языка само по себе не является главным мотивирующим фактором, поэтому включение игр в учебный процесс критически важно для привлечения внимания учащихся и повышения эффективности урока.

**Ключевые слова:** контекст, основанный на играх; целевой язык; процесс обучения; усвоение входной информации; эффективность; развлекательный характер; коммуникативная компетенция; повышение мотивации; совместное обучение

Games provide students with a relaxing fun learning atmosphere. After learning and practicing new vocabulary, children have the opportunity to use the language in non-



stressful way. While playing games, the students' attention is on the message, not on the language. Rather than paying attention to the correctness of the linguistic forms, most participants will do their best to win.

This alleviates the fear of negative evaluation, worry being judged negatively in front of others, and which is one important factor preventing learners from using the target language in public. In a game-oriented context, anxiety is reduced and fluency of speech is produced - communicative competence is achieved.

Games are also motivating. Games introduce an element of competition into language-building activities. This provides valuable impetus to a purposeful use of language (Prasad 2003). In other words, these activities create a meaningful context for language use. The competitive atmosphere also makes learners concentrate and think thoroughly during the learning process, which enhances unconscious acquisition of inputs. Most students who have experienced game-oriented activities hold positive attitudes towards them (Uberman 1998). An action research conducted by Huyen and Nga (2003), students said that they liked the relaxed atmosphere, the competitiveness, and the motivation that games brought to the classroom. On the effectiveness of games, teachers in Huyen & Nga's (2003) reported that action research reported that their students seem to learn more rapidly and retain the learned materials better in a stress-free and comfortable environment.

The advantages of using games in language-learning can be summed up in nine points. Games are learner centered, where

1. promote communicative competence.
2. create a meaningful context for language use.
3. increase learning motivation.
4. reduce learning anxiety.
5. integrate various linguistic skills.
6. encourage creative and spontaneous use of language.
7. construct a cooperative learning environment.
8. foster participatory attitudes of the students.

The advantages of using games

Many experienced textbook and methodology manuals writers have argued that games are not just time-filling activities but have a great educational value. W. R. Lee holds that most language games let learners use the language instead of thinking about learning the correct forms.

He also says that games should be treated as central not peripheral to the foreign language teaching programme. A similar idea is expressed by Richard-Amato, who believes games to be fun but warns against overlooking their pedagogical value, particularly in foreign language teaching.

There are many benefits of using games. "Games can lower anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input more likely" (Richard-Amato). They are highly motivating and entertaining, and they can give shy students more opportunity to express their opinions and feelings (Hansen). They also enable learners to obtain new experiences within a foreign language which are not always possible during a typical lesson. Moreover, to quote



Richard-Amato, they, "add diversion to the regular classroom activities," break the ice, "but also they are used to introduce new ideas". In short, relaxed ambiance which is organized by using games, students remember things faster and better. Further support comes from Zdybiewska, who believes games to be a good way of practicing language, for they provide a model of what learners will use the language for in real life in the future.

Games entertain, encourage, teach, and promote fluency. If not for any of these reasons, they should be used just because they help students see beauty in a foreign language and not just problems.

There are many factors to think over while discussing games, one of which is suitable. Teachers should be very careful about choosing games if they want to make them productive for the learning process.

Games are often used as short warm-up activities or when there is some time left at the end of a lesson. Yet, as Lee observes, a game "should not be regarded as a marginal activity filling in odd moments when the teacher and class have nothing better to do". Games ought to be at the heart of teaching foreign languages. Rixon suggests that games be used at all stages of the lesson, provided that they are suitable and carefully chosen. At different stages of the lesson, the teacher's aims connected with a game may vary.

If it is accepted that games can provide intense and meaningful practice of language, then they must be regarded as central to a teacher's repertoire. They are thus not for use solely on wet days and at the end of term!

Games are highly motivating because they are amusing and interesting. They can be used to give practice in all language skills and be used to practice many types of communication.

In Korea a noted teacher Lee Su Kim distinguished games as follows.

There is a common perception that all learning should be serious and solemn in nature, and that if one is having fun and there is hilarity and laughter, then it is not really learning. This is a misconception. It is possible to learn a language as well as enjoy oneself at the same time. One of the best ways of doing this is through games.'

There are many benefits of using games in the classroom:

1. Games are a welcome break from the usual routine of the language class.
2. They are motivating and challenging.
3. Learning a language requires a great deal of effort. Games help students to make and sustain the effort of learning.
4. Games provide language practice in the various skills- speaking, writing, listening and reading.
5. They encourage students to interact and communicate.
6. They create a meaningful context for language use.'

Games also lend themselves well to revise exercises helping learners recall material in a pleasant, entertaining way. All writers referred to in this article that even if games resulted only in noise and entertained students, they are still worth paying attention and implementing in the classroom since they motivate learners, promote communicative competence, and generate fluency.



Games add variation to a lesson and increase motivation by providing a plausible incentive to use the target language. For many children between four and twelve years old, especially the youngest, language learning will not be the key motivational factor. Games can provide this stimulus. (Lewis, 1999)

- teacher acts only as facilitator
- builds class cohesion
- fosters whole class participation
- promotes healthy competition

Adaptability:

- easily adjusted for age, level, and interests
- utilizes all four skills
- requires minimum preparation after development

So acquiring a new language is a difficult task which can sometimes be frustrating. Constant effort is required to understand, produce and manipulate the target language. Well-chosen games are invaluable as they give students a break and at the same time allow students to practice language skills. Games are highly motivating since they are amusing and at the same time challenging. Furthermore, they use meaningful and useful language in real contexts. They also encourage and increase cooperation. Therefore, the role of games in teaching and learning new language cannot be denied. Whenever a game is to be conducted, the number of students, proficiency level, cultural context, timing, learning topic and the classroom settings are factors that should be taken into account.

In conclusion, teaching and learning foreign language through games is one of the effective and interesting way that can be applied in any classrooms. The results of this research suggests that games are used not only for mere entertainment but more vital for the beneficial practice and review of language lessons.

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