

THE ROLE OF INTERACTIVE GAMES IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract. The present study investigates the pedagogical and methodological significance of interactive games in teaching English as a foreign language. The research aims to analyze the impact of game-based learning on students' motivation, communicative competence, vocabulary acquisition, and classroom interaction. The study employs qualitative analysis, comparative review of pedagogical literature, and observation of classroom practices. The findings indicate that interactive games function not merely as motivational tools but also as effective instruments for developing communicative skills and fostering learner-centered environments. The study contributes to the methodological framework of communicative language teaching by systematizing the functions and pedagogical benefits of interactive learning activities.

Keywords: interactive games, English language teaching, communicative competence, motivation, game-based learning, pedagogy.

Annotatsiya. Mazkur tadqiqot ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o'qitishda interfaol o'yinlarning pedagogik va metodik ahamiyatini o'rganishga bag'ishlangan. Tadqiqotning maqsadi o'yin asosida o'qitishning o'quvchilar motivatsiyasi, kommunikativ kompetensiyasi, lug'at boyligini o'zlashtirish hamda dars jarayonidagi o'zaro mulohazaga ta'sirini tahlil qilishdan iborat. Tadqiqotda sifat tahlili, pedagogik adabiyotlarni qiyosiy ko'rib chiqish va dars jarayonlarini kuzatish metodlaridan foydalanildi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatdiki, interfaol o'yinlar nafaqat motivatsiyani oshiruvchi vosita, balki kommunikativ ko'nikmalarni rivojlantirish va o'quvchi markazli ta'lim muhitini shakllantirishda samarali pedagogik vosita hisoblanadi. Tadqiqot kommunikativ til o'qitish metodikasi doirasida interfaol o'yinlarning funksiyalari va pedagogik afzalliklarini tizimlashtirish orqali metodik asoslarni boyitadi.

Kalit so'zlar: interfaol o'yinlar, ingliz tilini o'qitish, kommunikativ kompetensiya, motivatsiya, o'yin asosida o'qitish, pedagogika.

Аннотация. Настоящее исследование посвящено изучению педагогического и методического значения интерактивных игр в обучении английскому языку как иностранному. Цель исследования — проанализировать влияние игрового обучения на мотивацию учащихся, формирование коммуникативной компетенции, усвоение лексики и взаимодействие в учебном процессе. В работе использованы методы качественного анализа, сравнительного обзора педагогической литературы и наблюдения за учебной практикой. Полученные результаты показывают, что интерактивные игры выступают не только как средство повышения мотивации, но и как эффективный инструмент развития коммуникативных навыков и формирования обучающей среды, ориентированной на учащегося. Исследование вносит вклад в методологические основы коммуникативного обучения языку, систематизируя функции и педагогические преимущества интерактивных форм обучения.

Ключевые слова: интерактивные игры, обучение английскому языку, коммуникативная компетенция, мотивация, игровое обучение, педагогика.

Introduction. In recent decades, foreign language pedagogy has undergone significant transformation, shifting from teacher-centered instruction to learner-centered and communicative approaches. This transition reflects broader changes in educational philosophy, emphasizing active participation, collaboration, and meaningful interaction as

fundamental components of effective learning. Within this context, interactive games have emerged as a powerful pedagogical tool in English language teaching (ELT).

Traditional grammar-translation methods often prioritize accuracy and memorization, sometimes at the expense of communicative competence. However, modern educational frameworks highlight the importance of developing learners' ability to use language in real-life situations. Interactive games create conditions that simulate authentic communication, encouraging learners to negotiate meaning, express opinions, and respond spontaneously.

Moreover, contemporary students are increasingly influenced by digital and interactive environments, which shape their learning preferences and expectations. As Prensky [5. 145-150 p.] argues, modern learners tend to respond more positively to interactive and engaging learning formats. Consequently, incorporating game-based activities into language instruction aligns with both pedagogical theory and learner psychology.

The aim of this study is to analyze the role of interactive games in teaching English, identify their pedagogical functions, and evaluate their effectiveness in developing communicative competence and learner motivation.

Literature review. The use of games in language education has been widely discussed in linguistic and pedagogical research. One of the earliest theoretical foundations for interactive learning can be found in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction in cognitive development. According to Vygotsky [7. 84-91 p.], learning occurs most effectively within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where learners benefit from collaboration and guided participation.

Krashen's Input Hypothesis [4.10-14 p.] also provides a theoretical basis for using interactive games. Krashen argues that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to comprehensible input in low-anxiety environments. Games naturally reduce stress and encourage risk-taking in language use, thereby facilitating acquisition.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) further supports the integration of games into classroom practice. Richards and Rodgers [6. 90-95 p.] emphasize that communicative activities, including role-plays and problem-solving tasks, are essential for developing fluency and interactional competence.

Harmer [3. 120-125- p.] notes that games serve multiple pedagogical purposes: they increase student motivation, provide opportunities for meaningful practice, and create a positive classroom atmosphere. Similarly, Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby [8. 3-8 p.] argue that games enable learners to practice language in context, making learning more memorable and effective.

Recent research on gamification has expanded this perspective. Deterding et al. [1. 9-15 p.] define gamification as the application of game design elements in non-game

contexts. Studies indicate that gamified learning environments improve engagement, persistence, and learning outcomes.

Thus, existing literature consistently demonstrates that interactive games play a significant role in language learning by supporting cognitive, affective, and social aspects of education.

Research methodology. The present study employs a qualitative research design combining several methodological approaches:

1. **Theoretical analysis** of pedagogical and linguistic literature related to interactive learning and communicative language teaching.
2. **Comparative analysis** of traditional and interactive teaching methods.
3. **Classroom observation** to examine the impact of interactive games on student participation and motivation.
4. **Descriptive analysis** to interpret the pedagogical outcomes of game-based learning.

This methodological framework allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of interactive games in English language teaching.

Scientific Novelty. The scientific novelty of this study lies in the following aspects:

1. Systematization of the pedagogical functions of interactive games within the framework of communicative language teaching.
2. Identification of psychological and methodological mechanisms that explain the effectiveness of game-based learning in foreign language acquisition.
3. Integration of sociocultural and communicative theories to provide a comprehensive model of interactive learning in ELT.
4. Demonstration of the role of interactive games not only as motivational tools but also as instruments for developing communicative competence and critical thinking skills.

Results and Discussion. The analysis indicates that interactive games contribute significantly to the effectiveness of English language teaching.

First, interactive games increase learner motivation. Motivation is widely recognized as one of the most important factors in language acquisition [2. 35-38 p.]. Games introduce elements of challenge, competition, and enjoyment, which sustain learners' interest and engagement.

Second, interactive games facilitate vocabulary acquisition. When learners use new words in meaningful and contextualized situations, retention improves significantly. Research in cognitive psychology suggests that active retrieval and contextual learning strengthen memory formation.

Third, games enhance speaking and listening skills. Role-playing activities, simulations, and information-gap tasks require learners to use language spontaneously, thereby improving fluency and interactional competence.

Fourth, interactive games promote collaborative learning. Group activities encourage students to share ideas, negotiate meaning, and support each other's learning. Such collaboration reflects real-world communication and fosters social skills.

However, the effectiveness of interactive games depends on careful planning and pedagogical alignment. Games should be selected according to learning objectives, students' proficiency levels, and classroom context. Poorly designed activities may distract learners rather than support learning.

Overall, the findings confirm that interactive games contribute to both cognitive and affective aspects of language learning, making them an essential component of modern ELT methodology.

Conclusion. The present study demonstrates that interactive games play a crucial role in teaching English as a foreign language. They enhance motivation, improve communicative competence, facilitate vocabulary retention, and promote collaborative learning.

The integration of interactive games into language teaching reflects broader educational trends emphasizing learner-centered instruction and active engagement. While games should not replace systematic instruction, they serve as valuable pedagogical tools that complement traditional methods.

Future research may focus on the integration of digital games and online platforms into language education, as well as quantitative studies measuring the long-term impact of game-based learning on language proficiency.

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