



THE IMPACT OF INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES ON LEARNING OUTCOMES IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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Abstract: By analyzing empirical data and reviewing current educational theories, the research identifies key benefits of interactive activities, such as increased motivation, better retention of information, and the development of critical thinking and communication skills. It explores how various interactive techniques, including group discussions, role-plays, educational games, and technology-enhanced activities, contribute to improved language acquisition and student engagement. The study emphasizes the importance of active learning environments where students participate in collaborative and experiential learning processes.

Keywords: Active Learning, educational games, collaborative learning, teaching strategies, language acquisition, classroom interaction, pedagogical techniques, student motivation, experiential learning, communication skills.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the realm of education, the quest for effective teaching methodologies that foster meaningful learning experiences remains paramount. Traditional lecture-based approaches, while valuable, often fall short in engaging students and promoting active participation. As a result, there is a growing interest in interactive activities that can transform the learning environment, particularly in language education. This thesis explores the impact of interactive activities on learning outcomes in English classrooms, aiming to demonstrate how these techniques can enhance language acquisition, student engagement, and overall academic performance.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to offer insights into best practices for integrating interactive activities into English language instruction. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature and empirical research, this thesis seeks to identify the key benefits and challenges associated with these activities. It will also provide practical recommendations for educators aiming to create a more inclusive and stimulating classroom environment.

By highlighting the transformative potential of interactive activities, this research contributes to the broader discourse on educational innovation. It underscores the importance of adopting learner-centered approaches that cater to the diverse needs and preferences of students. Ultimately, this study aims to demonstrate that interactive activities are not merely

supplementary tools but essential components of effective language teaching that can significantly improve learning outcomes in English classrooms.

Teaching a language is a complicated process which requires considering and applying a method while performing it and is conducted through a method in a language class, whether foreign language learners (FL) are very keen in studying grammar. They often ask their teachers to teach them the essentials of the FL grammar that allow them to reduce set of complicated rules.

The current article is devoted to the study of effectiveness of games in teaching grammar to learners with different levels. This work represents the range of scientific works on this study by different scientists. This work shows the ideas, opinions and facts of different scientists related to the study of games. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to prove the effectiveness of games in teaching grammar as sub-skill to learners.

In order to ensure the implementation of the President's decisions on further improvement of the system of learning foreign languages, many important works are being carried out in our country. According to the opinion of our head of state, in order to perfectly master his field and compete at the world level, every business owner must be able to understand and speak a foreign language fluently.

It is known that it is very important to take into account the age and psychological state of learners



when teaching a foreign language. Special attention should be paid to this, especially when teaching a foreign language to young children. In the decisions of our country's president, attention has been paid to this issue, that is, grammar material is not provided to first graders in foreign language teaching.

According to the definitions given in the dictionaries, "grammar is a system of rules and principles followed in the construction of oral and written speech; is a science that studies the structure of words and sentences". According to Teaching English Grammar in Malaysian Primary Schools, "grammar is a language system. Sometimes people describe grammar as the "rules" of language; but in fact there are no rules of any language" [1;46]. According to the manual, "if the language is spoken on the basis of rules, it is also believed that the rules do not mean that the rules appeared before the language. After all, people first made sounds, and then made words, phrases and sentences, and language was created"

2 METHODS

Interactive activities, such as group discussions, role-plays, educational games, and technology-enhanced tasks, create dynamic and participatory learning experiences. These methods encourage students to be active learners, collaborate with peers, and apply their language skills in practical contexts. By shifting the focus from passive reception to active engagement, interactive activities help students develop critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and effective communication skills.

However, in many sources, grammar is defined as the rules that make up the structure of language. Children have a hard time learning the rules and get bored as a result. Interestingly, language grammar seems to be a difficult area to master even for adults. In our opinion, not really. It is well known that the ways of presenting grammar should be simplified and, of course, interesting. Returning to the above point, in order to teach the grammar of a foreign language to young children, language teachers should make the material somewhat easier and simpler and increase children's interests. Because the skills of cognitive analysis have not yet been formed in young children. Using the principle of demonstration in teaching a subject, especially a foreign language, to students of this age has a good effect. Children do not need to have perfect knowledge of grammar to be able to communicate easily in English. It is natural that grammar rules seem boring to children. It has been proven in psychology that young children are full of enthusiasm. Therefore, it is desirable that the grammatical material presented to

children should be interesting, understandable and enjoyable for children.

The most effective way to interest children in the early stages of learning English is to organize lessons with various interactive games. Grammar lessons organized with the help of games are also very interesting. In this place, scientists expressed such opinions about games.

According to Haldfield (1999): "A game is an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun... Games should be regarded as an integral part of the language syllabus, not as an amusing activity for Friday afternoon or for the end of the term."

This definition highly evaluates the importance of games in teaching. Haldfield (1999) adds: "Games can be used at all stages of the progression from controlled to free practice, serving at one end of the range as a memory aid and repetition drill, at the other as a chance to use the language freely and as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. They can also serve as a diagnostic tool for teacher, who can note areas of difficulty and take appropriate remedial action."

Haldfield further emphasizes the effective use of games. Students are always lazy to do the tasks. Therefore, games are used suitably in the way in which learners are led to participate in the games so that learners can have a chance to practice or use the new language items they have just learnt eagerly and willingly instead of forcing them to do the tasks unwillingly. It is more effective in a way that students can play and learn at the same time.

Lee (1991) defines: "Games in the stick sense, which have a definite beginning and end, are governed by rules..." Similarly, Hadfield (1990) defines games as "an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun" (p.3). Games are not carried in chaos. Games have the rules, and it is necessary for players to classify these rules before the start so that they can play the games smoothly without committing them.

According to Greenall, "The term "game" is used whenever there is an element of competition between individual students or teams in a language activity" [2; 6]. When appears "an element of competition", all above rules are most needed. Besides, games are, in this case, emphasized to encourage students' solidarity in teamwork in which they have to try their best to do the tasks or maybe to code any requirements given in the games for their team spirit. Therefore, games comprise many factors such as rules, competition, relaxation, and learning. The main focus of using game in class is not only to help students to learn more effectively but also to have fun.



However, before starting playing, the rules of the games should be clearly explained and they must be well understood by the students. There should be only a few, well-explained rules. Demonstrations also can be very helpful because it can help students understand the game and help them follow the rules.

As Caillois mentioned “A game is an activity that must have the following characteristics:

- *fun*: the activity is chosen for its light-hearted character;
- *separate*: it is circumscribed in time and place;
- *uncertain*: the outcome of the activity is unforeseeable;
- *non-productive*: participation is not productive;
- *governed by rules*: the activity has rules that are different from everyday life;
- *fictitious*: it is accompanied by the awareness of a different reality” [3; 44].

There are many kinds of games designed for different levels as well as topics, so that students with different language proficiency levels can enjoy and gain the best results from them.

Classifying games into categories can be difficult because categories often overlap. Hadfield explains two ways of classifying language games. First, language games are divided into two types: linguistic games and communicative games.

- *Linguistic games* focus on accuracy, such as supplying the correct antonym.

- *Communicative games* focus on successful exchange of information and ideas, such as two people identifying the differences between their two pictures which are similar to one another but not exactly alike. Correct language usage, though still important, is secondary to achieving the communicative goal [5; 62].

Second, Hadfield classifies language games into many more categories. Together with the classification of games as linguistic games or communicative games, some games will contain elements of more than one type.

Sorting, ordering, or arranging games. For example, students have a set of cards with different products on them, and they sort the cards into products found at a grocery store and products found at a department store.

Information gap games. In such games, one or more people have information that other people need to complete a task. For instance, one person might have a drawing and their partner needs to create a similar drawing by listening to the information given by the person with the drawing. Information gap games can involve a one-way information gap, such as the drawing game just described, or a two-way information gap, in which each person has unique information.

Guessing games. These are a variation on information gap games. One of the best known examples of a guessing game is 20 Questions, in which one person thinks of a famous person, place, or thing. The other participants can ask 20 Yes/No questions to find clues in order to guess who or what the person is thinking of.

Search games. These games are yet another variant on two-way information gap games, with everyone giving and seeking information. Find Someone Who is a well-known example. Students are given a grid. The task is to fill in all the cells in the grid with the name of a classmate who fits that cell, e.g., someone who is a vegetarian. Students circulate, asking and answering questions to complete their own grid, and help classmates complete theirs.

Matching games. As the name implies, participants need to find a match for a word, picture, or card. For example, students place 30 word cards; composed of 15 pairs, face down in random order. Each person turns over two cards at a time, with the goal of turning over a matching pair, by using their memory. This is also known as the Pelmanism principle, after Christopher Louis Pelman, a British psychologist of the first half of the 20th century.

Labeling games. These are a form of matching, in that participants match labels and pictures.

Exchanging games. In these games, students barter cards, other objects, or ideas. Similar are exchanging and collecting games. Many card games fall into this category, such as the children’s card game.

Board games. Scrabble 4 is one of the most popular board games that specifically highlight language.

Role-play games. The terms role play, drama, and simulation are sometimes used interchangeably but can be differentiated. Role play can involve students playing roles that they do not play in real life, such as doctor, while simulations can involve students performing roles that they already play in real life or might be likely to play, such as customer at a restaurant. Dramas are normally scripted performances, whereas in role plays and simulations, students come up with their own words, although preparation is often useful [4; 16].

Another distinction among games is that between competitive games and cooperative ones. Research suggests that learning, as well as affective variables are enhanced by a cooperative environment. Millis outlines a number of advantages of cooperative games, such as appropriate anxiety levels and more constructive feedback.

According to Lee, games have been classified into ten kinds:

- *Structure games* which provide experience of the use of particular patterns of syntax in communication;
- *Vocabulary games in which the learners' attention is focused mainly on words;*
- *Spelling games;*
- *Pronunciation games;*
- *Number games;*
- *Listen-and-do games;*
- *Games and writing;*
- *Miming and role play;*
- *Discussion games* [6; 12].

Another classification of games by McCallum consists of seven kinds:

- *Structure games;*
- *Vocabulary games;*
- *Number games;*
- *Spelling games;*
- *Conversation games;*
- *Writing games;*
- *Role play and dramatics* [7; 23].

It is shown that the classifications of games from the above linguists are common in a way that each kind of games focuses on a language item or a skill for the purpose and the content of the lesson. Therefore, teachers should be careful of choosing the most suitable game for each lesson so that learners and teachers can benefit the most from these games.

According to Wright, Betteridge and Buckby, "Language learning is hard work. Effort is required at every moment and be maintained over a long period of time. Games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work". "Games help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful".

A little different, according to Richard-Amato (1996), even though games are often associated with fun, we should not lose sight of their pedagogical values, particularly in foreign language teaching and learning (p.10). Games are effective as they create motivation, lower students' stress, and give language learners the opportunity for real communication. Yet, there has been much prejudice that games are just for fun, not for educational purposes.

Conversely, Kim (1995) disagrees with the above prejudice. He says that 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 (p.23).

Though different in the viewpoints, the linguists want to emphasize the ultimate aim of using games in

teaching is those teachers want a better lesson in which their students benefit much. What is common in all these descriptions is the fact that games involve many factors such as employing rules, fostering cooperation while making learning fun. One can simply say that games are enjoyable. However, in addition to being enjoyable, games refer to rules to be followed pointing at a serious instructional planning and delivery process. As expressed by Lee (1979, p.3) games have a very clear beginning and ending and they are governed by rules. Competition, which is associated with games, plays a crucial role as for the nature of games requires. Learners are excited by competition because the question of who will win or lose remains unanswered until the game is over. Similarly, games' making learning easier in an enjoyable way suggests that games are full of fun which leads to successful learning. In many games, learners are required to cooperate to achieve the goal and most learners enjoy cooperation and social interaction. It is believed that when cooperation and interaction are combined with fun, successful learning becomes more possible. No matter how differently games are described, one cannot underestimate their pedagogical value both in teaching and learning a foreign language.

Games provide language teachers with many advantages when they are used in classroom. One of these advantages is that learners are motivated to learn the language when they are in a game.

McCallum (1980, p. 9) emphasizes this point by suggesting that "games automatically stimulate student interest, a properly introduced game can be one of the highest motivating techniques." Avedon (1971; Quoted in Deesri, 2002, p. 2) further argues that "games spur (stimulate) motivation and students get very absorbed in the competitive aspects of the games; moreover, they try harder at games than in other courses". In other words, games stimulate students' interest in classroom activities and as a result, students become motivated and willing to learn.

Another advantage associated with games is that students' anxiety towards language learning decreases as games are employed. In language classes, learners feel stressful because they think that they have to master the target language that is unknown to them. Besides, learners become too anxious about being criticized and punished by their teachers when they make a mistake. Games are advantageous at this point because they reduce anxiety, increase positive feelings and improve self-confidence because learners do not afraid of punishment or criticism while practicing the target language freely.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



Games are student-focused activities requiring active involvement of learners. In Crookall's opinion, learners and teachers change their roles and relations through games and learners are encouraged to take active role in their learning process. As a result, games provide learners with a chance to direct their own learning. From an instructional view point, creating a meaningful context for language use is another advantage that games present. By using games, teachers can create contexts which enable unconscious learning because learners' attention is on the message, not on the language. Therefore, when they completely focus on a game as an activity, students acquire language in the same way that they acquire their mother tongue, that is, without being aware of it.

Games bring real-life situations to the confinement of the classroom which provides learners with an opportunity to use the language. Celce-Murcia argues that "in games, language use takes precedence over language practice, and in this sense games help bring the classroom to the real world, no matter how contrived they may be". To state this differently, by putting learners in real life situations, games make a connection with the real usage of language. In addition to these, McCallum explains that there are many advantages of games such as the fact that they:

1. focus students' attention on specific structures, grammatical patterns, and vocabulary items;
2. can function as reinforcement, review and enrichment;
3. involve equal participation from both slow and fast learners;
4. can be adjusted to suit the individual age and language levels of the students;
5. contribute to an atmosphere of healthy competition, providing an outlet for the creative use of natural language in a non-stressful situation;
6. can be used in any language teaching situations and with all skill areas (reading, writing, speaking or listening);
7. provide immediate feedback for the teacher;
8. ensure maximum student participation for a minimum of teacher preparation.

Games have a great pedagogical value providing language teachers with many advantages when they are used in foreign language classes. The review of the studies related to language games indicates that games are crucially important in foreign language teaching and learning in a variety of areas. The major areas mentioned in the literature are using games in teaching grammar to young learners; factors to consider while choosing games; deciding which game to use; deciding the time to use games; the role of teacher in using

games to teach grammar to young learners; teacher's preparation; the role of the teacher as a facilitator; class organization; learner participation; and the effectiveness of using games in teaching grammar to young learners.

The fact that games are the most suitable instructional activities for young learners is obvious because they are a natural part of their existence. Scientists argue that "young learners are not able to pay their attention for more than 10-20 minutes and after that they start to be bored and tired". Especially when the way of teaching of grammar is too dependent on rules and memorization, students start to lose their interest and motivation. Teachers know that young learners like being physically active as they learn by doing. Moreover, they are imaginative and creative and they learn without being aware of it. Besides, young learners use their previous experience, knowledge, several skills, and abilities which help the teacher present the new information by enabling children to practice the new knowledge on top of their previous knowledge. Therefore, the best way to direct this capacity in grammar teaching is using games. Hong gives some suggestions to teachers about using games for teaching young learners by claiming that:

- a. When giving instructions to beginners, a few words in the mother tongue would be the quickest way to make everything clear. More English exposure is needed at a later stage.
- b. Games are best set up by demonstration rather than by lengthy explanation.
- c. It is very important not to play a game for too long. Students will begin to lose interest. It is best to stop a game at its peak [8; 1-12].

CONCLUSION

Through a detailed examination of various interactive techniques, including group discussions, role-plays, educational games, and technology-enhanced tasks, the research has shown that these methods foster a more engaging and effective learning environment.

Interactive activities shift the educational focus from passive reception to active participation, encouraging students to engage deeply with the material and with each other. This engagement not only enhances language acquisition but also develops critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. The findings indicate that students who participate in interactive activities are more motivated, retain information better, and exhibit improved academic performance.

Furthermore, the study provides practical insights for educators on integrating interactive activities into their teaching practices. By adopting a learner-centered approach that accommodates diverse learning styles and

preferences, teachers can create a more dynamic and inclusive classroom atmosphere. This approach not only addresses the varying needs of students but also prepares them with the necessary skills for the 21st century.

The research contributes to the ongoing discourse on educational innovation, demonstrating that interactive activities are not mere supplementary tools but essential components of effective teaching. As educational paradigms continue to evolve, the adoption of interactive activities in English language instruction represents a crucial step towards fostering a more engaging, effective, and holistic learning experience. This study underscores the transformative potential of these activities in improving learning outcomes and equipping students with the critical skills needed for their future endeavors

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