

EDUCATIONAL GAMES IN TEACHING COVERING ALL MAIN SKILLS INTEGRATEDLY

Zulfuzar Rasulova, an English teacher of school №3 in Bakhmal district, Jizzakh

Annotation

This article deals with the importance and expected results of applying educational games in lessons of foreign languages. The issue of choosing and adapting games to the classroom is also discussed. Some common but effective games are given as examples.

Key words: educational games, skills, goals, motivation, classroom activities

Today, as never before, meeting our society's challenges demands educational excellence and our school systems need to respond better to a changing world. As teachers, we can help our students connect learning with real life and provide them with the necessary skills to prepare them for success in life. It will be essential to learn how to form purposeful goals, work with others with different perspectives, find opportunities and identify multiple solutions to big problems in the coming years. So education needs to equip students with the skills they need to become active, responsible and engaged citizens.

In order to achieve our goals, we can plan a series of activities, organize lessons and develop materials to focus on these skills. It is stated that all four language skills can easily be activated when students are asked to research a topic discuss or debate that topic with peers, and write about what they find and these activities don't require high levels of English proficiency. Students even at lower-intermediate levels can conduct basic research and have meaningful discussions with peers about real issues. They can make short films, interviews, compare statistical data, act in plays, prepare presentations, join debates, and try to find solutions to certain problems which will promote their communicative, creative, critical thinking and collaboration skills by working in groups.¹

Games can focus on various skills, grammar, listening, speaking, writing, reading, pronunciation, so they can be extremely complex. Games also help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful.

Games must not be seen as a way of passing the time, because their purposes are multiple. Besides the major importance of games of spurring motivation and reducing the stress level in the classroom, games have a great advantage in the sense that children learn without knowing they are learning. During games, children do not worry much

¹ Vacide Erdoğan. Integrating 4C Skills of 21st Century into 4 Language Skills in EFL Classes

about grammar mistakes, they are focused on what they are trying to convey. Apart from having fun, they will learn a grammatical rule just by playing an appropriate game. Another advantage in teaching through games is that games increase learners' proficiency. Playing games in the classroom can enormously increase children's ability in using language because they have a chance to use it with a purpose and in the situations mentioned.

Game-like activities provide choices for the classroom. 'They allow teachers to add variety and flexibility to the teaching menus'. Sometimes educators feel weighed down by assigned curricula and need to come up with new ideas and interesting activities.²

Students have come to class carrying baggage from their day. While their class time with you is just one component of their lives, it's very likely an important one for them professionally and personally. Quite the contrary, games are perfect for practicing vocabulary and targeting grammar; thus increasing camaraderie through light competition, boosting energy levels, reducing stress, promoting problem-solving, and buying more focused lesson time later in the hour. While it's clear that children and beginners shine brighter when playing, it's also true that adults and advanced learners enjoy competition and lighter moments in class. This is not to say that you should convert your class into a permanent playpen, rather, that the addition of moments of play give contrast in class and allows students of all learning types to thrive. The followings are classic games that can be adapted to suit different skill levels.

1. **Casino** Divide students into groups and give each a budget of, say, mythical money. Explain that they are going to bet their money to try to win more (establish a minimum bet). Write an incorrect sentence on the board, adapting the gravity of the error for your class's level, and ask each group to identify the error, write it down, and make a bet. The groups who identify the error win, while those who didn't, lose their bet. Repeat several times.

Pictionary, charades, and celebrity heads Always classic, these games are super versatile, let students practice specific vocabulary and expressions, and have the added bonus of encouraging a gleeful sort of atmosphere. Create a stack of words, phrases, concepts, or historical figures that your class has recently studied and try to mix levels amongst teams. You might like to experiment with playing as a whole class (where half competes against the other half) or in smaller groups with time limits.³

² Simona Laurian-Fitzgerald. The Effects of Using Games for English as a Second Language Primary School Learners

³ <https://www.eslkidstuff.com/Gamescontents.htm>

Taboo This is a great way to get students speaking and practice your unit's vocabulary. In Taboo, one student must communicate a concept or word to their partner without using a specific list of related words. For example, they must make their partner say "forest", yet they are not allowed to use the words "tree," "woods," "Sherwood," or "Black". Once their partner says the word, the students switch roles.

Twenty objects Put 20 objects on a table and give students a minute to memorize them. Cover the objects with a cloth and ask the students to write down as many as they can remember. You might choose to use objects related to your current module of study or that are connected in some other way.

Categories Put up a simple table on the whiteboard with a different category in each column, for example: United States presidents, rivers, fruit, movie titles, boy's names, emotions, animals, cities. (Alter the categories for difficulty according to your class's level.) Randomly select a letter of the alphabet. Now, within a time limit groups or pairs of students must identify one example per category. The first group to correctly do so wins.

Bingo This classic game is often forgotten and can easily be adapted to suit your class's needs. Besides classic bingo, you might create play boards where students cross off pictures, antonyms, synonyms.

There are thousands of educational games for elementary level pupils and it is not limitation. A good teacher can create new types or adapted version of the games that are suitable for his or her class. Because the atmosphere, facilities and culture differ from each other. And that is why teachers must be creative at selecting appropriate games and adapting them into the class.

We can conclude that games can help children acquire new language and memorize words. Unintentionally they learn the grammar of English and they automatically be able to communicate in the target language step by step. All main skills can be practiced by games in an interesting and motivating way, so it is so crucial to apply educational games in every lesson. And I believe, if we spend at least five minutes to motivate and encourage our pupils by interesting games at each lesson, our pupils will not lose their interest to learn English and we will achieve our goal of the curriculum that is required by teachers.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Arum Nisma Wulanjani The Use of Vocabulary- Games in Improving Children's Vocabulary in English Language Learning
2. Dwi Nurul Fajariyah. Improving Students' Speaking Proficiency Using Games- 2008/2009

3. Mania Moayad Mubaslat. The Effect of Using Educational Games on the Students' Achievement in English Language for the Primary Stage – 2011
4. Simona Laurian-Fitzgerald. The Effects of Using Games for English as a Second Language Primary School Learners
5. Vacide Erdoğan. Integrating 4C Skills of 21st Century into 4 Language Skills in EFL Classes
6. Ying-Jian Wang. Investigating the Impact of Using Games in Teaching Children English. International Journal of Learning & Development, November 28, 2011