

THE ROLE OF INTERACTIVE GAMES IN TEACHING ENGLISH GRAMMAR

Yaqubova Nigoraxon Ibrohimjon qizi

Tashkent university of applied sciences Faculty of history and philology Teacher of department of foreign language and literature

Abstract: Today, there are various fields in modern linguistics, the most important of which is the study of the grammar of a language. Grammar is very important in learning a language. But today's students face several difficulties in learning grammar. In order to overcome such difficulties, many linguists have conducted some researches. Most of these scholars have said that using different games is the most important way to learn and teach the grammar of the language. In this article, the author talked about the role and importance of modern language games in learning and teaching English grammar. She tried to prove his ideas by giving examples from the theories of scientists in this regard.

Keywords: method, games, interactive methods, English, grammar games, activities, teaching strategies, linguistics, grammar, teaching.

РОЛЬ ИНТЕРАКТИВНЫХ ИГР В ОБУЧЕНИИ ГРАММАТИКИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

Ягубова Нигораксон Иброхимджон кизи

Ташкентский университет прикладных наук Факультет истории и филологии
Преподаватель кафедры иностранного языка и литературы

Аннотация: Сегодня в современной лингвистике существуют различные области, важнейшей из которых является изучение грамматики языка. Грамматика очень важна в изучении языка. Но сегодняшние студенты сталкиваются с рядом трудностей в изучении грамматики. Чтобы преодолеть подобные трудности, многие лингвисты провели исследования. Большинство из этих ученых заявили, что использование различных игр является наиболее важным способом изучения и преподавания грамматики языка. В этой статье автор рассказала о роли и значении современных языковых игр в изучении и преподавании грамматики английского языка. Она пыталась доказать свои идеи, приводя примеры из теорий ученых на этот счет.

Ключевые слова: метод, игры, интерактивные методы, английский язык, грамматические игры, занятия, стратегии обучения, лингвистика, грамматика, обучение.

INGLIZ TILI GRAMMATIKASINI O'QITISHDA INTERFAOL O'YINLARNING AHAMIYATI

Yoqubova Nigoraxon Ibrohimjon qizi

Toshkent amaliy fanlar universiteti Tarix va filologiya fakulteti Chet tili va adabiyoti kafedrasida o'qituvchisi

Annotatsiya: Bugungi kunda zamonaviy tilshunoslikda turli xil sohalar mavjud bo'lib, ularning eng muhimi biror bir tilning grammatikasini o'rganish hisoblanadi. Biror tilni o'rganishda grammatikaning ahamiyati juda kattadir. Lekin bugungi kun o'quvchilari grammatikani o'rganishda bir qancha qiyinchiliklarga duch kelishmoqda. Bu kabi qiyinchiliklarni bartaraf qilish maqsadida ko'p tilshunos olimlar izlanishlar olib borishgan. Bu olimlarning ko'pchiligi tilning grammatikasini o'rganish va o'rgatishda turli xil o'yinlardan foydalanish eng muhim usul ekanligini aytishgan. Mazkur maqolada muallif ingliz tili grammatikasini o'rganish va o'rgatishda zamonaviy til o'yinlarining roli va ahamiyati haqida so'z yuritgan. Bu boradagi olimlarning nazariyalaridan misollar keltirgan holda o'z fikrlarini isbotlashga harakat qilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: metod, o'yinlar, interfaol metodlar, ingliz tili, grammatika o'yinlari, mashg'ulotlar, o'qitish strategiyalari, tilshunoslik, grammatika, o'qitish.

Introduction. Our country is currently engaged in a number of noteworthy initiatives to ensure that the President's directions for improving the foreign language education system are carried out. According to our chief of state, in order for a business owner to compete worldwide and completely grasp their speciality, he or she must be fluent in both spoken and written foreign languages.

The current article focuses on how games can be used to teach grammar to students of different skill levels. This book represents the range of scientific investigations carried out by numerous scientists on this subject. The theories, opinions, and actual evidence from various scientists who research games are presented in this work. Therefore, the study's objective was to show students how effectively games teach grammar as a sub-skill.

The definitions given in the dictionaries state that grammar is “a science that studies the structure of words and sentences; a system of rules and principles followed in the construction of oral and written speech”. Teaching English Grammar in Malaysian Primary Schools defines grammar as a language system. Grammar is commonly referred to as the «rules» of language, even though there are no rules in any language. The guidebook states, “It is also believed that just because a language is spoken according to rules, it does not necessarily follow that the rules existed before the language”. After all, sounds are the foundation of human language, which evolved into words, phrases, and sentences.

Methods. Nguyen in “How to teach Grammar communicatively” which was carried out at Nong Lam university with the involvement of 100 students and 10 teachers, suggested ways to present and practice new grammatical rules communicatively for students learning and enjoying at the same time [5;42-48]. The methodology he carried out included games that played an important part in teaching grammar communicatively. Also emphasized in the results, “games are as “vital part” of a teacher’s equipment because they provide not only practice but also an amusing and challenging recipe from other classroom activities”.

Luong studied the application of games in grammar review lessons for sixth graders. The study consisted of a survey with the involvement of 8 teachers and 225 students from three high schools and an experimental project with 82 students within 3 months. The results showed a rapid improvement of students’ ability in using grammatical knowledge in written tests and oral performance as well [7; 21-26].

Nguyen in “Teaching and learning Grammar through games in the tenth grade at Hung Vuong high school” indicated the necessity of games for easing the difficulties, exciting the atmosphere in teaching and learning Grammar [6; 12-19].

The results emphasized that for the teachers who just follow the tasks given in the textbook and do not create any games activities lead a grammar lesson to a boring, hard-digesting experience to their students and surely, do not meet the need for more interesting and effective grammar classes. One of the best solutions is through games which meet the purpose of creating a relaxing and motivating atmosphere for most learners.

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However, the pedagogical implications suggested in the studies with games carried out in traditional way in which teachers use handouts, pictures without the help of technology. So far, no attention has been paid to the use of games in electronic lessons as a means to motivate and immerse learners in the grammar lessons. In addition, the researchers did not emphasize the necessity in carefully choosing games which are suitable for the content of the lesson and students’ level and ages as well.

Teachers should be careful about choosing games if they want to make them advantageous. First of all, the teacher should decide on the purpose of a game. A game may seem appropriate and useful.

However, when its value is considered from the view point of foreign language teaching, it may have little or no purpose. Nedomova underlines the fact that we “should consider whether the game-like activity is for children only to make the lesson more attractive and protect them from being bored or whether we tend to revise and practice some particular part of grammar, vocabulary” [8; 18-25].

Results and discussion. Considering the level of the game is equally important while choosing games. Teachers must decide whether the level of the game fits students’ language level because a game may become difficult when it is beyond the learners’ level or it may become boring when learners find it too easy to carry on. When a game’s value in grammar teaching is considered, teachers tend to use them for practice or to reinforce a specific grammatical aspect of language only if a game is suitable for learners’ level so that the grammatical knowledge can be used easily as they are playing the game.

The fact that games enable social interaction and participation is also important. Learners, especially the young ones, learn better when they interact with their peers. Some games may include both cooperation and competition together. While students cooperate within a team, they, at the same time, compete against another team [9; 5-11]. What teachers should consider while choosing a game is the fact that children learn best with games which require physical action, interaction, competition and participation.

Exceptionally, teachers should take all these factors into account while choosing a game because a game which seems to be most appropriate may turn into a complete failure in the end.

Games are mostly used when there is some time left at the end of the lesson to keep students quiet. However, Lee [4; 13-20] proposes that “games should not be regarded as a marginal activity, filling in odd moments

when the teacher and class have nothing better to do.” With this in mind, games should be put into the center of classroom teaching and they should not be treated as a merely warm-up activity. Rinvoluceri clarifies that a game can be used in any of these three stages while using them as a part of grammar instruction:

- a) before presenting a given structure, especially to find out diagnostically how much knowledge is already known by the learners;
- b) after a grammar presentation to see how much the group have grasped;
- c) as a revision of a grammar area [10; 3-9].

Teachers should be well aware of their roles while using games in their classes. Since it is rather difficult to find a game that meets all the needs of the learners, careful preparation of the teacher is necessary in this regard. McCallum [11; 9-10] suggests that the teacher should organize the game before the instruction. The teacher may need some extra equipment or materials to play the game and most of the time these equipment and materials are not available in the classroom. Before explaining the rules to the class, the teacher should first understand how the game is played. Especially when working with children, the teacher should always be prepared to adapt the game to the class. After choosing the game, the teacher should explain its rules to the learners in a direct and non-complicated way. Especially for young learners, it may be necessary to use the mother tongue because if these learners cannot understand how to play the game, there is no educational purpose in playing it.

Therefore, demonstrations may be beneficial because they can help young learners understand the rules clearly and easily. Moreover, the teacher is not recommended to interrupt a game to correct the mistakes of young learners. According to Celce-Murcia “interruptions should be as infrequent as possible so as not to detract from the student’s interest in the game [3; 21-26]. An alternative to immediate correction is to make note of errors and discuss them when the game is over”. In other words, as sudden interruptions may distract learners’ attention, it is better to wait until the game is over to discuss and correct the mistakes of the learners. In addition, appropriate class organization gives the teacher a chance to monitor the activity of the learners while they are playing the game.

McCallum asserts that learners should be in the same team during the year because it both saves the teacher’s time and helps learners develop team spirit that promotes exchange of ideas among themselves [11; 15-19]. Pair work is also beneficial as it develops learners’ communication skills. In short, dividing class into pairs and groups enables learners to improve their language and communication skills while promoting competition among the teams or pairs. As such, the teacher may find more time to focus on students’ language development.

Games increase learners’ proficiency in practicing grammar communicatively. With the help of grammar games, students can develop their ability in using language as they are given a chance to use language in the situations which have a purpose [3; 3-8]. Celce-Murcia and Hilles [13; 132-135] claim that when English language learners participate in games, the language they use is task-oriented and their aim is more than producing the correct speech. Therefore, games provide learners with a chance to practice grammar communicatively provided that games attract learners’ attention to some specific forms before the communicative practice. When this is achieved, the relation between form and discourse is enhanced with the help of games because the form(s) aimed for attention exist naturally in the larger discursive context provided by games. In short, games provide learners with an opportunity to drill and practice grammatical rules and forms by presenting them in a communicative way. Due to this, with the introduction of communicative competence, games, which were treated as time fillers or for relaxation activities, began to appear as an indispensable part of any English foreign language teaching program.

Conclusion. Students will better retain the language they learn because they will be able to feel the meaning of the words they hear, read, write, and say in a more vivid way when they play games. As was previously emphasized, games can enhance acquisition, encourage student interaction, and motivate students. Playing games can thereby boost students’ accomplishment, which can lead to improvements in test scores, communication skills, vocabulary knowledge, and other language proficiency. In short, games show to be a helpful teaching tool when used on a regular basis. In addition to providing students with an enjoyable and highly motivated learning environment, games also provide valuable practice for all language abilities.

As a result, games have the power to inspire students, encourage student interaction, enhance learning, and raise accomplishment. Games offer good opportunities for prolonged grammar practice in communication. They are stimulating as well as demanding. They promote conversation and interaction among the pupils. Students link the discourse with the game’s or the problem-solving activity’s context through these kinds of exercises. Thus, these exercises give language use a purposeful context. In the classroom, doing these kinds of activities fosters a culture of competitiveness as well as cooperation. Potential lesson plans are therefore generated, and effective,

happy, and passionate learning is delivered.

To put it briefly, this article has reviewed and analyzed the literature on teaching grammar in English. It includes an overview of games, a classification of games used in grammar instruction, and an analysis of how utilizing games affects language learners' performance. Included are earlier studies on teaching English grammar using games.

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