

THE IMPORTANCE OF USING GAME-BASED METHODS IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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ANNOTATION

This article discusses the significance of game-based methods in teaching English to preschool children. It analyzes how games influence children's cognitive, emotional, and social development, and explains why playful learning increases motivation and language retention. The article also outlines effective types of games, their methodological principles, and practical recommendations for preschool educators. The results show that game-based learning creates a natural, stress-free environment in which children acquire English more easily and actively.

In recent years, the demand for early English language instruction has increased all over the world. Preschool age is considered a sensitive period for language acquisition, as children naturally learn new sounds, words, and structures through imitation and active interaction. At this stage, traditional teaching methods may not fully correspond to children's psychological characteristics. For this reason, game-based learning has become one of the most effective approaches for teaching English in preschool education.

Games support natural learning, foster curiosity, and help preschoolers engage actively in the lesson while reducing stress or pressure.

Keywords

Game-based learning; play-based pedagogy; preschool English education; early childhood language acquisition; interactive learning strategies; communicative language teaching; Total Physical Response (TPR); role-play activities; vocabulary development; pronunciation practice; cognitive development in early learners; motivation and engagement; multisensory learning; visual aids; movement-based games; storytelling techniques; musical and rhythm games; collaborative learning; social interaction skills; child-centered approach; educational games; language exposure; natural learning environment; imaginative play; task-based activities; attention and memory development; positive emotional environment; creative thinking in preschoolers; active participation; playful communication; learning through imitation.

Main Part

The Role of Games in Preschool English Teaching

Game-based methods align with children's natural way of exploring the world. Studies in early childhood pedagogy show that children learn best when activities are fun, meaningful, and interactive.

Motivation and interest formation

Games immediately attract children's attention. Bright visuals, movement, songs, and playful challenges stimulate internal motivation, which is essential for learning a foreign language.

Cognitive development

Games help strengthen memory, attention, and thinking. When children match pictures, classify objects, or identify colors in English, they unconsciously develop important cognitive skills.

Emotional comfort

A playful environment reduces anxiety and creates a positive emotional atmosphere. Children feel free to pronounce new words and express themselves without fear of mistakes.

Social interaction

Many games require teamwork, turn-taking, and communication. Through these activities, preschoolers practice simple phrases such as “My turn”, “I need blue”, “I found it,” which supports both English learning and social development.

Types of Effective Game-Based Methods

Language games

These games directly focus on vocabulary and simple grammar structures.

Examples:

Flashcard games (matching, memory pairs)

“What’s missing?”

“Simon Says” for learning verbs

Word-basket games (collecting objects by name)

Movement-based games

Preschoolers learn better when movement is included. TPR (Total Physical Response) activities help children connect language with action.

Examples: jumping to colors, walking to shapes, or acting out animals.

Role-play games

Role-plays such as “shop,” “family,” “doctor,” or “restaurant” help children use English in meaningful contexts. These activities develop imagination and real-life communication skills.

Musical and rhythm games

Songs, chants, and finger-plays teach pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation. Repetitive melodies naturally reinforce vocabulary.

Digital games

Age-appropriate educational apps or interactive boards introduce English words visually and auditorily. However, screen time must be limited and monitored.

Advantages of Game-Based Learning

Increases motivation and curiosity

Improves pronunciation and vocabulary retention

Builds communication and teamwork skills

Supports creativity and imagination

Creates a natural environment similar to first-language acquisition

Reduces stress, making language learning enjoyable

Conclusion

Game-based methods play a crucial role in teaching English to preschool children. They align with children’s developmental needs and provide a natural, engaging, and meaningful learning experience. Through games, children learn

English without pressure, gain confidence, and develop essential cognitive and social skills. Therefore, educators should integrate a variety of well-designed games into daily English lessons to maximize learning outcomes and foster positive attitudes toward foreign languages from an early age.

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