

THE ROLE OF INTERACTIVE GAMES IN LEARNING ENGLISH

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Abstract: This article discusses the role of interactive games in helping students acquire English, increasing engagement, motivation, and the development of language skills. Resources like Kahoot, Wordwall, Bingo, and Charades are analyzed to be effective classroom tools to make mundane classroom sessions fun and entertaining. The above-mentioned observations make it clear that games encourage increased participation, reduce the hesitancy of learning, and retain memories through the emphasis of core areas of the language skill, like speaking, listening, and vocabulary development.

Keywords: interactive games, English language learning, game-based learning, student engagement, vocabulary development, classroom interaction.

Introduction. Recently, there has been a great emphasis in English language education on student-centered and interactive techniques. In the traditional schooling method, dominated by books and teacher talk, learners are less likely to get engrossed in the lessons. On this account, many students can become inactive, stressed, or disengaged, particularly when learning an additional language becomes a struggle or a chore. It led many teachers to look for new, more interesting ways of presenting lessons. One exceptional solution for English class could be the integration of game activities. Games make the classroom an engaging, participatory learning space where learners enthusiastically take the plunge. Unlike conventional practices, game activities at English classes require the learner not only to interact with the subject matter, but also with fellow class participants as well as teachers. Based on a combination of competition, collaboration, or repetition, English skills are honed without any test-related pressures.

Kahoot, Wordwall, Bingo, Charades are all common interactive games that are popular tools for targeting specific areas of language. These activities can be modified in order to improve vocabulary skills, enhance listening skills, and speaking skills. By incorporating these activities into the classroom, teachers are giving students the

opportunity to use the language naturally outside of the classroom activities. Moreover, these activities help reduce anxiety and enhance confidence by viewing mistakes not as failures but as lessons. Another significant advantage is the role of games in encouraging peer interaction and team work. Learning the English language is always a social process, and playing games challenges students to communicate and help each other. The result is not only better linguistic skills but also leads to good social skills, and students develop a positive attitude towards English studies.¹

In modern-day classrooms, retention of students as motivators and retainers is already an increasing concern; thereby, their relevance in modern-day learning is rather apparent. This discussion thus focuses on their role in enhancing participation rate, mending anxiety issues, and fostering good linguistics in English classes.

Main part. Interactive games have become an integral part of modern English teaching: they turn one-way lessons of yore into an active and entertaining process. While in traditional classes, students passively received information, interactive games draw learners into the learning process, raise motivation, and reduce anxiety, thus speeding up language development. Another advantage is that such teaching shifts to a learner-centered classroom: Students are encouraged to join in, practice the language, and interact with fellow learners. Games shift the focus from teacher talk to student interaction, increasing responsibility for learning. Learners who are actively engaged tend to remember more and develop a positive attitude toward studying English. Other digital games, such as Kahoot and Wordwall, are employed in vocabulary building and comprehension. Kahoot allows the teacher to create quizzes that introduce some element of competition and immediate feedback. Such a setting attracts the attention of students and increases motivation since students want to see the results immediately. Repetition through quizzes solidifies memory, while the game-like atmosphere helps overcome the fear of failure.²

Wordwall offers a set of interactive activities-matching, sorting, and gap-filling- that make the practice of vocabulary and grammar quite engaging. Such repeated and varied interactions with content help learners grasp structures more deeply. Wordwall activities let teachers also tailor materials to different proficiency levels, making learning more inclusive and personalized. The two other important traditional interactive games are Bingo and Charades. It works well in reviewing the vocabulary, listening practice, and word recognition. Repetition and focused listening reinforce the

¹ Plass, J. L., Homer, B. D., & Kinzer, C. K. (2015). Foundations of game-based learning. *Educational Psychologist*, 50(4), 258–283 pp.

² Saidova, M. N. (2020). Ingliz tilini o'qitishda o'yin texnologiyalarining samaradorligi. *Zamonaviy Ta'lim*, 4(2), 33–40 b.

students' learning of the words or set of phrases. The competitive yet friendly nature of Bingo keeps learners engaged.

Charades deal with non-verbal communication and speaking. The students act out words or any phrases while the others guess, developing creativity, imagination, and spontaneity in language use. This is particularly efficient for reduction of anxiety in speaking, as one focuses on a game rather than grammar perfection. The learners build up their confidence and become more willing to speak English. Emotional and psychological factors are important, too. A lot of learners feel anxious, fear making mistakes, or feel unconfident with a new language. Games create a friendly and relaxed atmosphere in which even errors are something inevitable and just part of learning. This sense of safety invites risk-taking, which is the necessary condition for developing speaking and listening skills. Games also enhance peer interaction and collaborative learning. Most require paired or group workings, which fosters communication and cooperation. By doing so, the learners share ideas, negotiate meaning, and help one another. It is this social dimension of using games that enhances communicative competence and helps individuals in their growth toward both language and interpersonal abilities. From a pedagogical perspective, games fit into distinct stages in various lessons: They activate prior knowledge and stir interest at the stage of introduction; they offer meaningful repetition and reinforcement in the practice stage; finally, they are useful tools to perform assessment and consolidation in the revision stage. Their versatility allows them to be very useful indeed.³

Moreover, interactive games support a number of language skills at the same time. For example, listening to instructions and then responding verbally enhances both listening and speaking. Vocabulary games develop one's lexical knowledge, while grammar-oriented activities enhance one's grammatical accuracy in context. This develops holistic language and not stand-alone skills. Of course, for effective usage of games, it is necessary to plan and have clear aims. They should coincide with learning goals, not just entertainment. Activities should target specific language skills and assure active involvement for all students. Good classroom management will not allow excessive noise or distractions. Another consideration is that of balancing the elements of competition with those of cooperation. While competition may be a stimulant, too much of it may actually turn off some students. A supportive environment which emphasizes learning and not winning is most conducive. Group-based games or collaborative tasks help in achieving this balance. In short, interactive games enrich the process of English learning: they make lessons more interesting, enjoyable, and effective, turning passive reception into active participation and assisting both the cognitive and emotive features of language acquisition. By weaving interactive games

³ Peterson, M. (2016). Digital games and language learning: Autonomy and motivation. *ReCALL*, 28(3), 321–336 pp.

into teaching practice, educators can heighten motivation, reduce anxiety, and enhance language retention. Thus, they are a strong methodological tool in modern English education.⁴

Conclusion. This paper has examined how interactive games can increase English learning and demonstrated that interactive games not only entertain, but also play an active part in good English language education. Through the findings, it is evident that games are not simply used as educational fillers, used for entertainment and passing time, but that interactive games are highly effective education aids for increasing student engagement and development of foreign language acquisition. The implications of these observations are that some of the popular choices such as Kahoot, Wordwall, Bingo, and Charades are examples that promote participation and repetition, which are essential for effective language learning. These games present opportunities for the students to learn vocabulary, listening, and speaking skills in a stress-free environment where mistakes form part of the learning process. As such, the pupils feel confident and are more receptive to English in class. Another important point that could be learned here is that interactive games increase peer interaction and collaborative learning. Group and pair activities enable students to negotiate meaning, interact, and help each other. This important social element leads to successful language development, as well as developing appropriate attitudes toward English classes. Learners involved in immersing themselves in games tend to reveal strengthened motives for learning. This study also reinforced the importance of games as a methodological practice throughout a lesson. Games can be useful tools for teaching new information, developing language skills, and reinforcing material already taught. Games offer the advantage of versatility, allowing the teacher to adapt to different levels of proficiency. However, games must be implemented with careful planning.

Conclusion-wise, it's safe to say that interactive games in the English language class are the backbone of modern teaching methods and are responsible for activating the process of knowledge by involving the emotional as well as intellectual faculties in the process of mastering the English language. Hence, teachers are advised to incorporate interactive games in the class to activate the process of participation and to strengthen the process of retaining the English language in the minds of students. The role of interactive games in boosting the motivation and performance of students needs further research.

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