

Abstract

The article deals with the advantages and useful sides of using games in teaching the English language.

Key words: games, lessons, teaching, communicative competence, goal of teaching, skills.

In our eagerness to establish a welfare society, we seem to be working at cross purposes, when we deprive students from the weaker sections, of an important tool of advancement, namely, communicative competence in English. Well-to-do parents send their children to English medium schools while the poorer sections send their children to local schools and institutes. At the collegiate level the two streams come together and present a sharp contrast.

The English teacher therefore, is faced with a difficult three-fold task; (a) motivating the weaker students from the regional medium schools; (b) providing an atmosphere conducive enough for them to overcome their inhibitions, and interact fruitfully with their classmates and with the teacher; (c) and making the classes interesting and challenging for those students whose level of competence in English is comparatively high.

Nowadays the main goal of teaching any foreign language is to teach pupils to communicate in the target language. However, communication is impossible without knowledge of grammar, phonetics, orthography and especially vocabulary. Communication is one of the implementation of language function in society as a means of carrying out the affairs. Students are not easy to speak English fluently if they only study at school generally, they will get it in real life listening to the native speaker. But, if the school has certain rule and has good condition of school environment, so the students can speak English as well.

The game is excellent for practicing speaking skills; though make sure you save a time for after the game to comment on any mistakes students may have made during the game. (I generally like to reserve this for after the game, so you don't disrupt their fluency by correcting them as they speak). With older groups you can have some real fun and you might be surprised what you'll learn about some of your students when playing this particular educational game.

As with other learning activities, teachers need to pay careful attention to the difficulty level of games. Part of the appeal of games lies in the challenge, but if the challenge is too great, some students may become discouraged. The challenge can be of two kinds: understanding how to play the game and understanding the language content. Some suggestions for both types of understanding are:

1. Demonstrations of how the game is played. The teacher can demonstrate with a group of students or a group can demonstrate for the class.

2. A kind of script of what people said as they played or a list of useful phrases. Similarly, key vocabulary and concepts may need to be explained.

3. Clear directions. Demonstrations can accompany directions, and directions can be given when needed, rather than explaining all the steps and rules in one go. Some initiated- students' modifications can be accepted.

4. Games already known to students.

5. Games used to revise and recycle previously studied content, rather than involving new content.

6. A game must be more than just a fun.

7. A game should involve "friendly" competition.

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8. A game should keep all of the students involved and interested.

9. A game should encourage students to focus on the use of language rather than on the language itself.

10. A game should give students a chance to learn, practice, or review specific language material.

11. Students may wish to play games purely for fun. Teachers, however, need more convincing reasons.

12. Teachers need to consider which games to use, when to use them, how to link them up with the syllabus, text book or programmed, and how, more specifically, different games will benefit students in different ways. The key to a successful language game is that the rules are clear, the ultimate goal is well defined and the game must be fun.

13. Groups are heterogeneous in terms of current language proficiency, so that the more proficient members can help others.

14. Resources, online or print, such as dictionaries and textbooks.

Since children's concentration and attention spans are short, variety is a must. This means variety of activity, variety of pace, variety of organization. As already mentioned, children have an amazing ability to absorb language through play and other activities which they find enjoyable. That is why games seem to be a challenging and exciting tool to make the young learners motivated and satisfied with making progress in acquiring a language. There are many reasons why creating activities for young children's language learning is very important. First of all, it is extremely valuable because it allows for meeting pupils' individual needs. Complete dependence on the textbook is not suitable for all students as they are of different levels and have different interests and diverse learning styles. Furthermore, the textbook being designed for a general audience may not fully match the students' specific requirements. However, creating materials for learning can be very time consuming and often needs resources, like photocopying facilities. Moreover, the most common barriers can also be the cost involved in realizing some conceptions, lack of handbooks from which to get ideas, lack of skills to design some activities. A good solution to overcome some of the difficulties mentioned above seems to be to involve pupils in preparing activities. They are full of ideas and enthusiasm. They can do some illustrations, they can prepare short stories and dialogues or riddles, and they can also make rhymes, chants, or short poems. It gives them a real reason for using language; and gradually, they can create activities for each other.

There are many ways to introduce English for school students. One of them is by means of games. As all of us know that children like to play so by means of games as a teaching method students can be more interested in learning English. Games can be used not only for an entertainment, but also for motivation of students to master English easily and quickly. Training at practice is a good way to make them easily understand about English because with doing amusing actions, they will find it easy to remember and to learn material which is taught by the teacher.

Teaching English is a hard work. Interest in studying English steadily grows in recent years. To help children to study and develop skills of conversation becomes more important, than just to learn language. Nevertheless, the teaching process should not be difficult or painful. Teachers can teach English in an amusing way. There was a movement from traditional methods of teaching English by writing, copying and worksheets to more active approach – teaching English by means of games.

Researches show that games help and encourage many pupils to maintain their interest and work. Games in language class help pupils to see that studying of English is pleasant and useful. Playing games in class develops ability to communicate in cooperation without being aggressive and to be "a good loser".

Games also help teachers to create conditions in which their language is useful and significant. Pupils want to take part and to make very much to understand what is told by others, or was written, and they have to speak or write to express their own point of view or to give information.

Besides, games have advantage that allows students to practice and to analyze vocabulary, grammar widely. They can make it because students are often more motivated to play games, than work at a table. Besides, during games students are concentrated on activity and finally absorb language subconsciously. It is also possible to add

that cheerful educational games, as a rule, contain repetition which allows the language to stick.

The last concern of teachers of a foreign language is that using games they teach their pupils to communicate. After realization of communicative competence, activity or methods which are purposeful and which direct children to use language inventively have gained recognition.

Games also can be used for revision of the exercises helping pupils to remember material in pleasant, entertaining form. All authors mentioned in the present article agree that even if games lead only to noise and entertain students, all of them still are worth paying attention to and realization them in class as they motivate pupils, promote communicative competence, and also generate fluency.

In order to put a game into practice the teacher should get ready to check the access of the game, to examine physical space, to take into account the size of the class and the last to anticipate possible problems. In general, games increase the independence, confidence and language practice of the learners. They are useful tools in language teaching methodology.

References:

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