**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING GAME ELEMENTS IN ENGLISH LESSONS**

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Through my pedagogical experience working with students, I have observed that incorporating game elements into English language teaching—when aligned with students' age and lesson topics—proves highly effective. If a teacher effectively integrates games into each lesson, the learning objectives can be successfully achieved, leading to positive results. In my English lessons, especially for primary school students, I frequently use game elements. Initially, I ensured that the games matched the lesson’s theme and objectives. During reflections at the end of lessons, I noticed that the use of games began to show effective results.

However, repeatedly using the same game in every lesson can cause students to lose interest. To prevent this, I started diversifying the games I used. When planning lessons, I carefully select a game that aligns with the topic and objectives. It is essential that each game has a clear purpose, and the necessary materials should be prepared in advance. Consequently, various teaching aids are gradually accumulated, such as balls, balloons, colorful papers, different puppets, traditional Kazakh "asyk" game pieces, cardboard sheets, and flashcards. Most importantly, all students actively participate, increasing their interest in the subject. Games encourage students to express their thoughts, listen to and expand on others' answers, and develop their ability to recognize both strengths and weaknesses in their learning.

Therefore, successfully implementing game-based teaching, organizing lessons using effective methods, and ensuring both practical and developmental benefits should be key goals of language instruction.

### **What is a Game?**

* An interactive activity
* A tool for learning and education through group engagement
* A means of developing cognitive and psychological skills
* A fun way to make learning more engaging

For instance, this year I am working with the Smiles 1 textbook by Jenny Dooley and Virginia Evans for first-grade students under the new curriculum. The assessment system includes formative and summative assessments, where formative assessments play a crucial role. In order to achieve success, students actively participate in games. Through engaging and well-planned games, they master the lesson's objectives.

This textbook includes sections like My Family, My School, My Room, My Pets, My Food, My Music, each of which can be supported by different types of games. By planning which games to use in different lesson stages, teachers can achieve meaningful results. To make learning more engaging, Activity Book and Pupil’s Book are designed with colorful illustrations. At the end of the book, students are provided with stickers for matching activities, which they enjoy working with. Additionally, smiley face stickers are used as part of formative assessment. Beyond just games, the book also incorporates songs, which make learning new words enjoyable and effective. Other activities like Draw and Say, Listen and Colour, Find and Draw Lines, Project Time, Let’s Play Bingo, and Craftwork are designed according to students’ age levels and integrate game-based learning.

As Kazakhstan’s education system gradually aligns with global education standards, the role of foreign language instruction is increasing. In the context of 12-year education, teaching English through game elements and interactive activities is one of the most effective methodologies. Games serve as a valuable teaching tool, boosting students’ engagement, motivation, and interest in learning.

At the early stages of learning, games help students grasp language materials more easily. When conducted properly, games increase students’ motivation to learn the language and sustain their interest. Since playing games reduces fatigue and maintains engagement, they also promote collaborative learning and encourage students to explore and develop problem-solving skills.

### **Goals and Benefits of Using Games in Lessons**

Game Goals:

* Reinforce and consolidate acquired knowledge
* Strengthen understanding of lesson topics
* Provide hands-on practice and application

Game Benefits:

* Spark students’ interest and boost engagement
* Encourage active participation in lessons
* Develop independent thinking and problem-solving skills

Each lesson should incorporate carefully chosen educational games that match the topic and carry educational value. This not only stimulates students' critical thinking but also strengthens their love for the subject. A teacher must plan lessons based on students’ abilities and psychological characteristics to ensure that learning remains engaging and effectivewithout becoming monotonous.

After reviewing various educational resources, online materials, and books, I discovered that games can make even complex topics easier to understand. As a result, I identified four main categories of didactic games for English lessons:

1. Phonetic Games
* Goal: Help students pronounce English sounds correctly and learn the alphabet easily.
1. Grammar GamesGoal: Strengthen students’ understanding of grammatical structures and improve their accuracy.
2. Spelling Games
* Goal: Develop correct spelling and writing skills.
1. Vocabulary Games
* Goal: Expand and reinforce students’ vocabulary based on previously covered topics.

For example, let’s consider the "Act Out the Actions" game. Students stand in a circle while one student is in the center. The others give commands like "Sit down," "Stand up," "Dance, dance," "Jump, jump," and the center student performs the actions. All students actively participate and quickly memorize new words through movement.

For the "My Body" topic, another engaging game involves blindfolding a student and asking another student to name body parts (e.g., "eyes, nose, ears, mouth"), while the blindfolded student attempts to draw them. At the end, they compare the drawing with real features, making learning fun and memorable.

Another frequently used game is "Polyglot". I throw a ball to a student and say an object’s name in Kazakh. The student must then say the word in three languages (Kazakh, English, and Russian) before passing the ball to another player. Students love this activity and eagerly compete to recall words they’ve learned. Some even mention that they’ve seen similar activities on educational TV programs like "ABC English" and enjoy practicing what they’ve learned.

### **Conclusion**

Games play a significant role in enhancing students’ knowledge, skills, and learning abilities. They help learners internalize language material, strengthen communication skills, and encourage active participation. When effectively integrated into lessons, games serve both as a teaching method and a motivational tool, making learning more engaging and effective.

By incorporating game-based learning into English lessons, teachers not only increase student engagement but also improve learning outcomes. As a result, education becomes more dynamic, enjoyable, and productive. Teachers should carefully design lessons that blend educational content with interactive activities to create a fun, accessible, and meaningful learning environment for students.