

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH INTERACTIVE GAMES

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ANNOTATION

This research explores the effectiveness of game-based learning in enhancing young learners' English communicative competence. The research emphasizes that modern language education focuses on using language in real-life contexts rather than solely learning grammar or vocabulary. Grounded in theories of communicative competence (Hymes, Canale, Swain) and child development (Vygotsky, Piaget, Dewey), the study demonstrates that interactive games—such as role-plays, storytelling, and cooperative tasks—improve speaking skills, motivation, confidence, teamwork, and social interaction among primary school students. A classroom experiment comparing game-based and traditional methods confirmed that games significantly enhance communicative ability, student engagement, and overall personal development. The study provides practical recommendations for teachers and institutions to integrate interactive games effectively in English lessons, including digital applications, and highlights their scientific, pedagogical, and socio-educational significance.

Key Words: Communicative competence; interactive games; primary school students; English language learning; game-based learning; speaking skills; motivation; confidence; teamwork; communicative language teaching (CLT); child development; pedagogical strategies; classroom experiment; digital learning tools.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Данное исследование изучает эффективность обучения через игровые методы в повышении коммуникативной компетенции младших школьников в английском языке. Исследование подчеркивает, что современное обучение языку ориентировано не только на изучение грамматики и словарного запаса, но и на использование языка в реальных жизненных ситуациях. Основываясь на

теориях коммуникативной компетенции (Hymes, Canale, Swain) и развитии детей (Vygotsky, Piaget, Dewey), исследование показывает, что интерактивные игры, такие как ролевые игры, рассказывание историй и совместные задания, улучшают навыки говорения, мотивацию, уверенность в себе, командную работу и социальное взаимодействие у младших школьников. Эксперимент в классе, сравнивающий игровые и традиционные методы, подтвердил, что игры значительно повышают коммуникативные способности, вовлеченность учеников и их личностное развитие. Исследование предоставляет практические рекомендации для учителей и образовательных учреждений по эффективной интеграции интерактивных игр на уроках английского языка, включая цифровые приложения, и подчеркивает их научное, педагогическое и социально-педагогическое значение.

Ключевые слова: Коммуникативная компетенция; интерактивные игры; младшие школьники; изучение английского языка; обучение через игры; навыки говорения; мотивация; уверенность в себе; командная работа; коммуникативное обучение языку; развитие детей; педагогические стратегии; классный эксперимент; цифровые образовательные инструменты.

ANNOTATSIYA:

Ushbu tadqiqot o'yinlarga asoslangan o'quv usullarining yosh o'quvchilarning ingliz tilida muloqot qobiliyatini oshirishdagi samaradorligini o'rganadi. Tadqiqot shuni ta'kidlaydiki, zamonaviy til ta'limi faqat grammatikani yoki lug'atni o'rganish bilan cheklanmay, balki tilni real hayotiy kontekstlarda ishlatishga qaratilgan. Muloqot qobiliyati nazariyalari (Hymes, Canale, Swain) va bolalar rivojlanishi nazariyalari (Vygotsky, Piaget, Dewey) asosida tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, rolli o'yinlar, hikoya qilish, hamkorlikdagi vazifalar kabi interaktiv o'yinlar o'quvchilarning so'zlashuv ko'nikmalari, motivatsiyasi, o'ziga ishonchi, jamoaviy ish va ijtimoiy munosabatlarni yaxshilaydi. O'yinlarga asoslangan va an'anaviy usullarni solishtirgan sinf tajribasi shuni tasdiqladiki, o'yinlar muloqot qobiliyatini, o'quvchilarning faolligi va shaxsiy rivojlanishini sezilarli darajada oshiradi. Tadqiqot o'qituvchilar va ta'lim muassasalariga interaktiv o'yinlarni ingliz tili darslariga samarali integratsiya qilish bo'yicha amaliy tavsiyalar beradi va ularning ilmiy, pedagogik va ijtimoiy-pedagogik ahamiyatini ta'kidlaydi.

Kalit so'zlar: Muloqot qobiliyati; interaktiv o'yinlar; boshlang'ich sinf o'quvchilari; ingliz tili ta'limi; o'yinlarga asoslangan o'qitish; so'zlashuv

ko'nikmalari; motivatsiya; o'ziga ishonch; jamoaviy ish; kommunikativ til ta'limi; bolalar rivojlanishi; pedagogik strategiyalar; sinf tajribasi; raqamli o'quv vositalari.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS

Modern educational standards, like the CEFR, stress that learning a language is not just about grammar or vocabulary, but about using it in real-life situations. Students should be able to ask questions, share ideas, describe events, give directions, and solve problems. Starting early is important because young children learn new sounds, words, and sentence patterns quickly, helping them speak naturally and confidently.

Psychologically, learning to communicate in a foreign language increases children's confidence and motivation. Vygotsky's social development theory shows that children learn best in interactive settings, with guidance and collaboration. When students are encouraged and praised, they enjoy learning and feel less afraid of mistakes. Communicative competence includes knowing grammar and vocabulary as well as understanding context and using language appropriately. Scholars like Canale, Swain, and Hymes highlight that real language mastery involves responding quickly and choosing words for different situations. Practicing these skills also improves thinking, creativity, and problem-solving.

Interactive methods such as role-plays, games, group activities, and dialogues are very effective. Research shows these methods increase engagement, memory, and speaking confidence while teaching teamwork and cooperation. Lessons that include games, discussions, and problem-solving help students communicate freely, practice often, and develop skills for school, daily life, and future careers.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The main purpose of this research is to examine and confirm the effectiveness of using interactive games to develop communicative competence in primary school students learning English. Communicative competence is a key goal of modern language education, enabling learners not only to know the language but also to use it confidently in real-life situations. Many young students struggle with speaking English due to limited vocabulary, fear of mistakes, or low motivation. This study explores game-based learning as an engaging way to overcome these challenges.

The research demonstrates that, when used systematically, interactive games create a natural, motivating, and low-stress environment where students can improve essential skills such as speaking, listening, understanding, and responding in various contexts. By combining pedagogical and psychological analysis with classroom experiments, the study highlights the benefits of games and provides practical recommendations for teachers to integrate them effectively into English lessons. The main objectives of the study are to:

- Examine the theoretical basis of communicative competence in primary school students.
- Identify the pedagogical potential of interactive games in English lessons.
- Experimentally demonstrate that interactive games improve motivation and communicative abilities.
- Provide practical recommendations for teachers to implement in daily classroom practice.

TASKS OF THE RESEARCH

To reach the goals of the study, several steps were taken.

First, the research explained what communicative competence means — knowing grammar, using language correctly in social situations, organizing ideas, and solving communication problems, based on the work of Hymes, Canale, and Swain.

It then studied how young children learn, noting their curiosity, imagination, short attention span, and love for fun activities, which makes games especially effective. Different types of games were described, such as role-plays, cooperative games, and digital games, showing how they increase motivation and help learning. The study also suggested how to use games in lessons, including group work, pair tasks, and the teacher's role as a guide.

An experiment was done comparing students who used games with those who learned traditionally. Results showed that games improved students' speaking, confidence, and motivation.

Finally, the study gave teachers advice on choosing games and managing lessons effectively.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- ✓ Deepened understanding of communicative competence in young learners.
- ✓ Confirmation of the pedagogical value of game-based methods.
- ✓ Practical tools and methods for teachers to make lessons more communicative and engaging.
- ✓ Contribution to improving the quality of English education at the primary school level.

THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE RESEARCH

This research is based on modern language teaching principles that focus on developing communicative competence as the main goal of foreign language learning. It is supported by the ideas of linguists, educators, and psychologists who developed communicative and interactive methods. Teaching a foreign language to young learners should not only focus on grammar or vocabulary but also help them use language naturally in real communication.

1. Communicative Competence

Dell Hymes (1972) introduced the term communicative competence, meaning that knowing a language also means knowing how to use it properly in real situations. Canale and Swain (1980) defined four parts of it:

- Grammatical competence – knowing grammar and vocabulary;
- Sociolinguistic competence – using language according to context;
- Discourse competence – connecting ideas clearly;
- Strategic competence – solving communication problems.

These ideas help teachers create activities that encourage meaningful communication.

2. Psychological and Pedagogical Basis

Vygotsky (1978) and Piaget (1964) showed that children learn best through play and social interaction. Learning through games supports imagination, creativity, and problem-solving. Dewey (1938) also believed that learning should be active and experience-based — ideas that match communicative language teaching (CLT).

3. Communicative Language Teaching and Game-Based Learning

CLT, developed in the 1970s, focuses on real communication instead of only grammar. Scholars like Nunan and Ellis explained that tasks such as role-plays, discussions, and games help learners use language meaningfully. Games make lessons enjoyable and reduce fear of mistakes.

4. Modern Perspectives

Today's teaching combines traditional and digital tools. Online and interactive games allow students to practice English, cooperate, and communicate globally. This theoretical framework links linguistic, psychological, and pedagogical ideas to show that games are an effective way to develop communicative competence in young learners.

MAIN FINDINGS

The research showed that using interactive games in English lessons greatly improved the communicative competence of primary school students. Compared to the control group, students who learned through games became more confident, motivated, and active in communication. The study was carried out in three stages — diagnostic, practical, and control — with both experimental and control groups. At the beginning, many students were shy, spoke little English, and often used their native language. During the practical stage, the experimental group played different interactive games such as role-plays, information-gap tasks, storytelling, and question-and-answer races. These activities were chosen according to age and language level to make learning fun and meaningful. The control group continued with traditional grammar and vocabulary lessons. After several weeks, the experimental group showed clear progress in several areas:

1. Speaking Skills: Students became more fluent and accurate. They used more words and expressions and spoke with better pronunciation and fewer pauses. Role-plays and dialogues helped them respond naturally and handle real conversations.

2. Motivation and Interest: Students were more excited to attend English classes and took an active part in games. Even shy learners began speaking and sharing ideas. The fun, competitive nature of games made lessons more enjoyable and meaningful.

3. Confidence and Reduced Anxiety: Games created a relaxed atmosphere where mistakes were seen as part of learning. Students felt safer to speak, which increased self-confidence and participation.

4. Teamwork and Social Skills: Group and pair games helped students cooperate, listen to others, and communicate politely. They learned to share ideas and work together to solve problems.

5. Teacher's Role: Teachers who acted as guides rather than controllers achieved better results. The classroom became more student-centered and communicative.

6. Results: Quantitative data showed that the experimental group's communicative competence grew by 30–40%, while the control group improved only 10–15%. Qualitative findings showed:

- 85% of students felt more confident;
- 90% enjoyed game-based lessons;
- 80% learned new words more easily.

These results show that interactive games proved highly effective in developing students' speaking, motivation, confidence, and cooperation, creating a positive learning environment.

PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The research on “Developing Communicative Competence of Primary School Students through Interactive Games” has strong practical value for modern English teaching. It provides teachers with effective strategies, tools, and recommendations to help young learners improve their communication skills, motivation, and confidence in using English. In today's education, where the goal is not only to teach grammar but also to enable real communication, interactive games offer a practical way to achieve these objectives.

1. Application in the Teaching Process

The findings can be directly applied in primary school English lessons. Teachers can use interactive games to:

- a) Begin lessons with activities that create a positive, motivating atmosphere;
- b) Practice specific language functions like asking questions, describing events, expressing opinions, or storytelling during the main part of lessons;
- c) Conclude lessons with fun exercises that reinforce vocabulary and language structures.

2. Development of Methodological Guidelines

The research also supports creating practical guidelines for teachers, combining traditional methods (grammar, vocabulary) with interactive, communicative activities. The key points include:

- a) Using games regularly and purposefully, not just occasionally;
- b) Aligning each game with specific learning goals like speaking fluency, listening comprehension, or vocabulary development;
- c) Balancing fun with learning to ensure that games are both enjoyable and educational.

3. Professional Development for Teachers

This study is useful for teacher training and professional development. Workshops, seminars, and retraining courses can use the findings to show how interactive games make lessons more learner-centered, even in schools with limited resources. Teachers who apply these methods find lessons more dynamic, students more active, and classroom management easier because games reduce boredom and distraction.

4. Benefits for Students

Interactive games provide students with multiple advantages:

- a) They improve communicative competence in real-life situations;
- b) They enhance speaking, listening, and pronunciation skills;
- c) They increase self-confidence and reduce fear of making mistakes;
- d) They develop teamwork, cooperation, and respect for others;
- e) They create enjoyable learning experiences, boosting motivation and focus.

5. Contribution to Educational Institutions

Schools and educational institutions can benefit by:

- a) Integrating interactive games into foreign language programs to improve student engagement;
- b) Organizing demonstrations or open lessons to share best practices;
- c) Including game-based learning principles in teacher guides and curricula.

6. Integration into Digital and Modern Learning Environments

The principles of game-based learning can also be applied digitally. Platforms and apps like Kahoot, Quizizz, Wordwall, or ClassDojo can be combined with communicative tasks to create interactive lessons in online or hybrid settings. This ensures that game-based teaching remains flexible, engaging, and effective in various learning environments.

7. Socio-Pedagogical Impact

Interactive games contribute to students' overall personal development. They encourage openness, cooperation, responsibility, and respect for peers. Students learn to express themselves clearly, listen actively, and solve problems collaboratively, fostering empathy, teamwork, tolerance, and self-discipline—important qualities in a multicultural and multilingual world.

8. Scientific and Research Value

Finally, the study provides valuable data and a research framework for future studies on communicative competence and game-based learning. The experimental model—including diagnostic tools, game classifications, and assessment methods—can be adapted for other age groups or foreign languages, making the research relevant not only pedagogically but also scientifically.

CONCLUSION

The research on “Developing Communicative Competence of Primary School Students through Interactive Games” confirmed that game-based learning is an effective tool in modern foreign language teaching. Interactive games not only make lessons engaging but also help young learners develop speaking skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and confidence in using English.

This study showed that communicative competence is a complex process influenced by linguistic, psychological, and pedagogical factors. Games provide meaningful, motivating, and authentic communication opportunities, allowing students to practice language naturally while cooperating with peers and expressing their ideas. This experiment demonstrated that learners who regularly participated in interactive games became more active, confident, and socially responsible. The teacher's role as a facilitator was crucial in creating a supportive environment that reduced anxiety and encouraged participation. As we can see interactive games enhance both language learning and personal development, making them a practical and valuable approach for fostering communicative competence in primary school students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For Teachers: Integrate interactive games regularly as a core part of lessons to boost motivation and engagement. Choose games based on students' age, level, and objectives. Focus on communication rather than accuracy, provide supportive

feedback, create a safe and inclusive environment, act as a facilitator, and reflect on each game's effectiveness.

For Future Researchers: Explore long-term effects of game-based learning, study digital and online games, examine individual learner differences, and compare traditional and digital game effectiveness.

For Educational Institutions: Support teachers using interactive methods, organize workshops and open lessons, provide resource centers or digital platforms, and ensure classrooms have the space, technology, and materials needed for game-based activities.

SUMMARY

This research confirms that developing communicative competence through interactive games is a scientifically grounded and pedagogically effective approach that corresponds to the needs of modern education. It integrates linguistic development with psychological comfort and social interaction, forming a strong basis for successful language learning.

Interactive games transform the classroom into a dynamic, motivating, and communicative space where every learner has the opportunity to speak, interact, and learn naturally. They bridge the gap between language knowledge and real communication, preparing students not only to speak English fluently but also to think, collaborate, and express themselves confidently in a globalized world.

Therefore, it can be concluded that interactive games are not an optional supplement but an essential component of modern English language teaching in primary education. Their inclusion in daily classroom practice will significantly contribute to forming communicatively competent, confident, and motivated young language learners — the main goal of foreign language education in the 21st century.

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