DEVELOPING PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS' COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH DIDACTIC GAMES

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Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada ingliz tilini o'qitish jarayonida boshlang'ich sinf o'quvchilarining kommunikativ kompetensiyasini shakllantirishda didaktik o'yinlarning o'rni ko'rib chiqiladi. Unda o'yin asosida o'qitishning nazariy va pedagogik asoslari o'rganilib, ta'limiy o'yinlarning o'quvchilarda gapirish, tinglab tushunish, lug'at boyligini o'zlashtirish va o'zaro muloqot qilish ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishdagi ahamiyati yoritiladi. Ayniqsa, rolli o'yinlar, "Find Someone Who", "Yes or No", "Vocabulary Rounds" va "Sentence Chain" kabi amaliy faoliyat turlariga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Maqolada o'quvchilarning yosh xususiyatlariga mos ta'lim usullarini qo'llash, ularning faol ishtirokini ta'minlash, hamkorlikni rivojlantirish va qulay ta'lim muhitini yaratish muhimligi ta'kidlanadi. Didaktik o'yinlarni ingliz tili darslariga tizimli ravishda tatbiq etish ta'lim jarayonini yanada qiziqarli qilish va mazmunli muloqot uchun imkoniyatlar yaratishga xizmat qilishi asoslab beriladi.

Kalit so'zlar: kommunikativ kompetensiya, boshlang'ich sinf o'quvchilari, didaktik o'yinlar, ingliz tilini o'qitish, o'yin asosida ta'lim, gapirish ko'nikmalari, interfaol metodlar, tilni o'zlashtirish.

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматривается роль дидактических игр в формировании коммуникативной компетенции учащихся начальных классов в процессе обучения английскому языку. Изучаются теоретические и

педагогические основы игрового обучения, а также объясняется, как образовательные игры способствуют развитию навыков говорения, аудирования, усвоения лексики и взаимодействия учащихся. Особое внимание уделяется практическим видам деятельности, таким как ролевые игры, «Find Someone Who», «Yes or No», «Vocabulary Rounds» и «Sentence Chain». В статье подчёркивается важность применения методов обучения, соответствующих возрастным особенностям учащихся, их активного участия, сотрудничества и создания благоприятной образовательной среды. Обосновывается, что систематическое использование дидактических игр на уроках английского языка делает процесс обучения более увлекательным и создаёт возможности для содержательного общения.

Ключевые слова: коммуникативная компетенция, учащиеся начальных классов, дидактические игры, обучение английскому языку, игровое обучение, навыки говорения, интерактивные методы, усвоение языка.

Abstract. This article examines the role of didactic games in developing primary school pupils' communicative competence in English language education. It explores the theoretical and pedagogical foundations of game-based learning and explains how educational games can improve pupils' speaking, listening, vocabulary acquisition, and interaction skills. Particular attention is paid to practical activities such as role-playing, "Find Someone Who," "Yes or No," "Vocabulary Rounds," and "Sentence Chain." The article highlights the importance of age-appropriate teaching strategies, active participation, cooperation, and a supportive classroom environment. It argues that systematic integration of didactic games into English lessons can make learning more engaging and create opportunities for meaningful communication.

Keywords: communicative competence, primary school pupils, didactic games, English language teaching, game-based learning, speaking skills, interactive methods, language acquisition.

In modern education, the development of communicative competence has become one of the major objectives of foreign language teaching. Learning English involves not only acquiring vocabulary and grammatical structures but also developing the ability to use language appropriately in different communicative situations. Therefore, primary school education should provide pupils with opportunities to communicate, express their ideas, ask questions, and interact with others in English.

Primary school pupils have specific psychological and educational characteristics. They are generally interested in activities that involve movement, imagination, competition, and cooperation. For this reason, traditional teaching methods based mainly on memorisation and repetition may not always provide sufficient opportunities for active communication. Didactic games offer an alternative approach by combining educational objectives with enjoyable and purposeful activities. The use of games in English lessons can create a positive learning environment, increase pupils' motivation, and encourage them to use the target language more confidently. Previous research has also examined the potential of game-based technologies for developing communicative competence among primary school learners [1; 2]. The aim of this article is to analyse the pedagogical significance of didactic games in developing primary school pupils' communicative competence and to present practical examples of their application in English language lessons.

Communicative competence refers to the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in different social situations. It includes grammatical knowledge, vocabulary, pronunciation, the ability to understand others, and the skills required to participate in conversations. Dell Hymes introduced the concept of communicative competence to emphasise that successful communication involves more than knowledge of grammatical rules. Learners must also understand how language is used in particular social and cultural contexts [3]. Canale and Swain further developed the theoretical understanding of communicative competence by identifying grammatical,

sociolinguistic, and strategic components. Their work provides an important foundation for communicative language teaching [4].

In primary education, these components should be developed through activities appropriate to pupils' ages, language levels, and learning needs. For example, pupils can practise grammatical structures by describing pictures, develop sociolinguistic awareness by greeting classmates politely, and improve communication strategies by asking for clarification when they do not understand a question. Didactic games are particularly useful because they place language within a meaningful context. Rather than simply memorising isolated words, pupils use language to complete tasks, exchange information, solve problems, and achieve common goals.

Didactic games are educational activities designed to achieve specific learning objectives through rules, tasks, interaction, and feedback. Unlike games used solely for entertainment, didactic games have a clear pedagogical purpose and are selected according to the content of the lesson. Their application in primary English classrooms can contribute to the development of several important skills.

First, games promote speaking skills by encouraging pupils to produce words, phrases, sentences, and short dialogues. Second, they develop listening comprehension because pupils must understand instructions and respond to their classmates. Third, they reinforce vocabulary and grammatical structures through repetition in different contexts. Finally, games develop social skills, including cooperation, turn-taking, active listening, and respect for others. Another important advantage is the reduction of communication anxiety. Some young learners hesitate to speak English because they are afraid of making mistakes. A supportive game-based environment can help them participate more freely and gradually develop confidence. However, games are most effective when they are carefully planned. Teachers should establish clear rules, explain the language objectives, ensure that all pupils participate, and provide appropriate support when difficulties arise.

The following games can be incorporated into English lessons to develop different aspects of communicative competence.

"Find Someone Who". Objective: To develop speaking, listening, and questioning skills. Procedure: The teacher prepares a worksheet containing statements such as "Find someone who likes apples," "Find someone who can swim," or "Find someone who has a pet." Pupils move around the classroom and ask their classmates questions. For example:

"Do you like apples?"

"Can you swim?"

"Have you got a pet?"

When a classmate answers positively, the pupil records their name. At the end of the activity, several pupils report their findings to the class. This game encourages meaningful interaction and provides practice in asking questions, answering them, and using familiar grammatical structures in a communicative context.

"Yes or No". Objective: To improve listening comprehension, vocabulary recall, and sentence formation. Procedure: The teacher makes statements related to the current lesson topic. Pupils decide whether each statement is correct and respond with "Yes" or "No." They can also be encouraged to explain their answers using complete sentences. For example:

Teacher: "A cat can fly."

Pupils: "No, it cannot."

Teacher: "An elephant is a big animal."

Pupils: "Yes, it is."

The activity can be adapted to topics such as animals, food, colours, family members, and daily routines. Asking pupils to justify their answers makes the activity more communicative.

"Vocabulary Rounds"

Objective: To expand vocabulary and develop fluency. Procedure: The teacher divides the class into small groups and announces a topic, such as "Food," "Animals," "School Objects," or "Family." Each group takes turns naming words related to the topic. For example, under the topic "Food," pupils may say "apple," "bread," "milk," "rice," and "cheese." To extend the activity, pupils use the words in short sentences: "I like apples" or "My favourite food is rice." This game encourages quick recall, active participation, and the practical use of newly learned vocabulary.

"Sentence Chain". Objective: To develop sentence-building skills, grammatical accuracy, and collaborative communication.

Procedure: Pupils sit or stand in a circle. The first pupil says a sentence, and the next pupil adds another sentence connected to the previous idea. Alternatively, pupils can create a chain in which each new sentence begins with the final word of the preceding sentence. For example:

Pupil 1: "I have a cat."

Pupil 2: "My cat is white."

Pupil 3: "White animals are beautiful."

Pupil 4: "Beautiful flowers grow in our garden."

The teacher selects a topic or grammatical structure according to the pupils' language level. This activity develops creativity, sentence formation, vocabulary use, and the ability to listen carefully to others.

To achieve positive learning outcomes, teachers should consider several methodological principles when using didactic games in primary English lessons.

First, games should correspond to pupils' ages, interests, language proficiency, and individual learning needs. Activities that are too difficult may discourage learners, while overly simple tasks may fail to develop their communication skills. Second, the teacher should establish a clear relationship between each game and the lesson objectives. For example, a vocabulary game should reinforce the target words, while a role-playing

activity should provide opportunities to practise meaningful dialogue. Third, all pupils should be given opportunities to participate. Pair work, small-group activities, and rotating roles can prevent more confident pupils from dominating the game. Visual aids, gestures, pictures, and sentence patterns can provide additional support for learners who need it. Fourth, teachers should create a psychologically safe classroom environment in which mistakes are treated as a natural part of language learning. Constructive feedback and encouragement help pupils develop confidence and willingness to communicate.

Finally, games should be integrated with other language-learning activities, including listening, reading, writing, pronunciation practice, and vocabulary development. They should complement the curriculum rather than replace systematic language instruction. Teachers can assess pupils' progress by observing their participation, ability to understand instructions, use of target vocabulary, formation of sentences, and interaction with classmates. Simple observation checklists can help identify areas requiring further practice.

The pedagogical value of didactic games lies in their ability to connect language learning with purposeful action. When pupils participate in a game, they use language to achieve a specific objective rather than merely repeat linguistic forms. This creates opportunities for meaningful communication and collaborative learning. Different games contribute to different aspects of communicative competence. Question-and-answer games promote interaction, vocabulary games reinforce lexical knowledge, sentence-building activities support grammatical development, and role-playing provides practice in everyday communication. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these activities depends on the teacher's planning and implementation. Games without clear objectives may become simple entertainment and provide limited opportunities for language development. Similarly, excessive competition may discourage pupils who require more time or support. Therefore, teachers should balance enjoyment with educational purpose, individual participation with teamwork, and language accuracy with communicative

fluency. A combination of different game types can help address the diverse needs of primary school learners. The present article is based on a theoretical and methodological analysis and illustrative classroom activities. Its discussion identifies pedagogical benefits but does not claim experimentally measured improvements. Further classroom-based research could investigate how regular use of didactic games influences pupils' speaking performance, motivation, and confidence over time.

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