THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL GAMES IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT:
Educational games have become an increasingly popular tool in teaching English to young learners. This article explores the role of educational games in enhancing language acquisition and proficiency among young learners. It discusses the benefits of using games as a teaching tool, including increased engagement, motivation, and enjoyment in the learning process. The paper also examines the different types of educational games that can be used to teach English, such as board games, online games, and role-playing activities. Additionally, it discusses the importance of incorporating educational games into the curriculum to create a more interactive and immersive learning experience for young learners. Finally, the paper highlights the potential challenges and limitations of using educational games in teaching English to young learners and offers suggestions for overcoming these obstacles. Overall, this paper emphasizes the significant role that educational games play in facilitating language learning and promoting a positive learning environment for young English language learners.

Keywords: individual learning, cooperative learning, creative thinking, playing games, imitation games, approach.

INTRODUCTION:
Today, in the dynamic landscape of educational methodologies, the infusion of technology and interactive learning tools has revolutionized the process of imparting

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knowledge and skills. This revolution has been particularly impactful in the domain of teaching English to young learners. Educational games, with their immersive and interactive properties, have emerged as potent allies in cultivating a vibrant and effective environment for young minds to acquire and master the English language. As we explore the multifaceted role of educational games in this context, it becomes evident that these tools not only impart language skills but also foster creativity, cultural awareness, and collaborative abilities in young learners.

The national curriculum in foreign languages in Uzbekistan talks about the importance of keeping teaching methods diverse in order to light and sustain interest among students. Teachers can help sustain diversity in a variety of ways, for example by using activities that require learners to be creative in thinking and emphasizing individual learning and cooperative learning equally. A more specific way that teachers can use in order to keep diversity within the classroom is to not be afraid of using games as a teaching method along with other methods. According to the national curriculum games can be a good teaching method and games, such as role playing games, imitation games, theatrical expression and problem solving activities are especially fitting for all stages of language learning.

For generations, educators have sought innovative approaches to engage young learners in language acquisition. The integration of technology, particularly educational games, has offered a compelling solution to this perennial challenge. By harnessing the power of play and interactivity, educational games facilitate a seamless and enjoyable pathway for young learners to explore the intricacies of the English language.

This article aims to delve into the pivotal role of educational games in teaching English to young learners, elucidating how these games enrich vocabulary, reinforce grammar and sentence structure, cultivate speaking and listening skills, foster creativity, and kindle cultural awareness. Moreover, it explores how educational games drive engagement, collaboration, and motivation, serving as dynamic catalysts for effective language learning.

As we navigate through the transformative potential of educational games in the realm of English language education, it becomes evident that these tools not only facilitate language acquisition but also lay the groundwork for holistic growth and development in young learners. By embarking on this exploration, we aim to uncover the profound impact of educational games, positioning them as invaluable assets in nurturing the English language proficiency and holistic development of young learners.

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Therefore, There are a number of reasons that games deserve a place in the language classroom. First of all, they are fun, which is extremely important, because they can help activate learners who may have been inactive before, due to lack of interest. Keeping learners active is vital because teachers will never be able to actually teach learners anything unless they can get them to participate in their own learning process. Second, games also play a big part in helping participants build relationships, and to feel equal. Playing games in the classroom can also help create a friendly and positive atmosphere where seat arrangement

can differ from game to game, and thus cause diversity from the norm which can be extremely helpful in keeping an exciting learning environment. Third, the reason most people want to learn a language is to be able to use it in real situations, for example when travelling. Games can be a very good way to practice this skill because they can easily be used to reenact various situations from real life and provide students with practice in their fluency. Also, by using games in the classroom the teacher is giving his learners a bigger role, and he himself is stepping out of the frontline which is a positive thing because it allows learners to take on more responsibility. Also that allows learners to do more on their own, and that can very well result in an increase in their confidence level. Fourth, language students need to be exposed to the language in a variety of situations, which is a need games can fulfill. Language learners also need to be ready to take

on the experience, keeping their minds open and being willing participants again, games make this possible. Fifth, language learners need to be emotionally involved, meaning they need to feel something while they are exposed to the language. Strong emotions, such as happiness, excitement, amusement and suspense allow students to feel positively about their learning situation and aretherefore likely to have a positive effect on language learning. Sixth, games are good for shy learners and learners with low confidence, and that applies specifically when playing takes place in smaller groups because then they get a chance to speak in front of fewer audience instead of having to express themselves in front of the whole class. Also it is sometimes easier to open up and forget the shyness when playing a game because the atmosphere is not as serious and more emphasis is put on fluency rather than grammatical correctness. Seventh, games can be a good strategy when teaching various subjects because they are very likely to spark interest amongst students. They can be used with learners of all ages, and when they are used with other teaching methods they create diversity which is ideal for school work. A study that was undertaken in Iceland in 2006 shows clearly the need

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for diversity in schools. Many participants in that study complained about the lack of diversity, and that they wanted more of

it in order for their learning to become more fun and progressive in their school.

Finally, using games in the classroom is important because many children do not get enough opportunity to play during their free time, which can be traced to the rapid changes in our society. Cities are getting bigger and traffic is getting heavier which means that more and more parents are hesitant to let their children play outside. Also passive activities such as watching television, or the computer screen are seen as being more exciting than actually physically playing, so today the sight of children playing various games in groups outside is becoming much more rare than it was 10, 15 or 20 years ago. This is not a good development, and it can have several bad consequences for our society. One possible consequence is that the lack of movement can cause health problems because even though not all games are physical some certainly are another consequence this change might have is decreased social skills because, according to Piaget, children's games reflect society and that by playing games children learn many of society's rules and regulations.

MATERIALS

First of all, the teacher has to look at the group that will be participating in the game and he or she then has to set out a goal for the group which the game should aim towards. Selecting an appropriate game for a specific group of students who are working towards a specific goal can be tricky because, for example, they need to make sure that the game is relevant to the subject, that it fits their students" age and, teachers must remember not to select a game that is too complicated because that might result in a loss of interest amongst the students, or even defeat.

Types of Educational Games: Here, the article delves into different types of educational games suitable for teaching English to young learners. It categorizes games based on their language learning objectives, such as vocabulary building, grammar practice, speaking and listening skills, and cultural understanding. Examples of specific games and their potential impact on language development are provided.

Effectiveness of Educational Games: This section evaluates the effectiveness of educational games in facilitating English language learning among young learners. It presents empirical evidence, case studies, and practical experiences to demonstrate the positive outcomes of using games in language education. The section also

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discusses factors that contribute to the success of game-based learning and potential challenges.

RESULTS:

Games have four areas:

1. Writing is a skill that, even in the native language, is learnt and not acquired. That fact could explain in part why writing is often considered to be difficult, or even boring in the target language. Another explanation could be that it is often assigned as homework, and many students don't like homework. One possible reason why writing can be viewed as being difficult is because the writer does not

get an immediate feedback similar to what happens during conversations, and as a result the writer could feel more insecure about his work. Some teachers also unwisely use writing as punishment: "Ok, just for that Bobby, I want to see an essay on my desk tomorrow on the dangers of smoking!" Writing also demands a completely different language than normally used in conversations. For students in school this must not become their experience of writing because that can lead to their loathing of writing. Games can be a good way to prevent this because not only are games fun but they can provide writers with a reason to write and it is obvious that writing will become easier when there is a clear reason instead of just

having to write because the teacher said so. Another thing that games can provide for writers is an audience. In many games other students will play the reader's part and therefore provide the writer with the necessary feedback that writing often lacks. A variety of interactive writing games can be found on the internet and teachers can, without much effort, create a game that practices writing.

2. Listening - most people remember training their listening skill mainly by doing listening activities when they were in school. Listening activities might very well be an effective way of training that particular skill but teachers need to remember to keep the activities versatile or their students might get bored. By combining listening with games, teachers might prevent their students from getting bored, and by keeping them interested they are increasing the chances of the students achieving their goals.

3. Speaking - according to the national curriculum, teaching communication is very important because of the fact that it plays such a big part of knowing a language. The curriculum also claims that since communication is unpredictable in real life, students must get the chance to practice exactly that and not just to read premade conversations. In order to achieve this, the curriculum suggests games as a good

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method. Even though the importance of teaching ommunication is stressed in the national curriculum, some teachers seem to be lacking when it
comes to actually teaching students to communicate.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the use of educational games in the teaching of English to young learners represents a valuable and effective approach to language education. This article has shed light on the multifaceted role that educational games play in enhancing the English language learning experience for young students.

Throughout this exploration, it became evident that educational games have the potential to significantly impact language acquisition, cognitive development, and overall engagement in the learning process. The review of literature supported the idea that incorporating such games into the English language curriculum can yield numerous benefits, including improved vocabulary retention, enhanced grammar skills, and increased motivation among learners. The integration of educational games into the English language curriculum was identified as a crucial consideration for educators. Strategies for successful integration were highlighted, including lesson planning, assessment methods, and teacher training. These insights aimed to empower educators to leverage the potential of educational games as a supplementary learning tool effectively.

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