

## USING GAMES IN ESL AND EFL TEACHING IN ENGLISH

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### ABSTRACT

The article deals with the language games and their role as one of the modern and effective ways of teaching English as a second and foreign language. The article covers various types and the problems of adopting language games aimed at improving language learners' speaking skills and the problems of adopting them at the lessons.

**Keywords:** *ESL (English as Second Language), EFL (English as a Foreign Language), CLT (Communicative Language Teaching), language learner, language games, technique.*

Lesson is like a stage in theatre where teacher is a dramaturge. To make a performance more impressive and unmissable, dramaturge needs to choose meaningful play for performers. As for ESL and EFL class, teacher is the only person who chooses appropriate ways of teaching for language learners. Adopting games is one of the prominent strategies to teach efficiently within a language class. The aim of using any kind of game is to make learning atmosphere easier and fascinating. They create motivation for learners of English to get involved and participate actively in the learning process.

#### **Reasons for applying games**

Games play a range of roles in the language teaching. Basically, they are adopted as: Warm-up activities in the introduction stage of class. As this point, the teacher attracts learners' attention and interest from the very beginning of the lesson.

Strengthening activities at the end of lesson. It is a stimulating way to involve learners to practice what they have learnt and realize whether learners achieve expected result.

Interactive games to add variety into language teaching-learning process.

Games are very useful teaching techniques, due to they provide free communicating atmosphere for learners rather than the pressure of doing it absolutely

rightly. Moreover, a main factor for applying games in the lesson is the relationship between teacher and students. This is very important, because the teacher should inspire learners' confidence. On the other hand, considering the demands of CLT, language games are effective strategies to conduct student-centred lessons. The point is that, teacher assumes a role as a moderator, whose function is observing, analysing, helping, taking notes and providing feedback when the game is over. Teacher gives clear instructions and a little demonstration of the game to assure that learners understand the activity.

### **Classification of language games**

Today, majority of language instructors are using games more often. Creative teachers are creating various games depending on the presenting or practicing topic. However, classifying games into categories is still more complicated issue. Hadfield presents two ways of classifying language games<sup>1</sup>.

1. She distinguishes two types of language games:

- Linguistic games which focus on correct language accuracy, e.g. supplying the correct form of the verbs.
- Communicative games that emphasis successful exchange of information and ideas, e.g. two students identify the differences between two pictures which are similar one another.

2. The second division of language games is more detailed that contain several categories. Sorting, ordering or arranging games;

- Information gap games;
- Guessing games;
- Search games;
- Matching games;
- Exchanging games;
- Board games.

Another ways of classifying games are worked out in accordance with level and age of the students or language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary), sub skills (pronunciation, spelling, punctuation, etc.) and size of class. In this chapter, we are suggesting some interactive games that help to improve communication skills of language learners. They are excellent techniques to motivate learners and to provide effectiveness of each lesson. Three in a row is a game that reinforces effective communication, listening and teamwork. Before the class, teacher prepares some questions on the topic that they are discussing, e.g.

education, human cloning, technology and etc. Hadfield J. Intermediate vocabulary games. Harlow, Essex. Longman. 1999.

Next stage is drawing a nine square grid on the board and filling each box with question. Teacher divides the class in half and designates one half as “x” and the other half as “o”. Seats of the groups are arranged in round tables facing each other.

Coin is the best tool to identify who starts first. The first group chooses the question and prepares answer in a limited time. They discuss the question and identify a volunteer to present the answer. When answer is presented, teacher and the other group decide whether it is acceptable. If answer is accepted teacher marks sign of the group over the question, otherwise the other group gets their sign instead. The questions are discussed until getting three the same sign in a row. Three in a row wins. One more option is that, grid can be drawn on a sheet of paper and presented to each group. Group members are in charge to mark “x” or “o” on their own.

When students are allowed enough time for discussion, teacher observes the groups how well they are communicating using the target language. Moreover, the game helps students to learn how to listen to each other rather than ignoring others’ opinions. This is a perfect strategy to teach learners working with others. Back to the board is a game adopted in variety of ways, depending on the teacher’s decision. Traditionally, it is played in small groups in order to raise enthusiasm of learners for winning the game. Moreover, it is a stimulating technique for practicing language and as well as new vocabulary. Thus, it is applied to help learners to memorize new vocabulary in an easy way. Procedure of the game starts with dividing students into two equal groups. One volunteer from each group sits on a chair with their back to the board, facing other members of the group. Teacher writes a word on the board and encourages volunteers not to look at the board. Other members of the groups give definitions that can describe what word is on the board. Each volunteer guesses the word, listening to the definitions presented by their group members. The first volunteer who guess the word gets a point for their team. All members of the groups should have a seat with the back to the board. In accordance with the amount of points, the winners are announced. Phrase box is applied to revise vocabulary and to practice grammar, mainly tenses such as present perfect, past perfect and etc. Class is divided depending on the number of the students.

Organizing this grammar game with the whole class is one more option to involve all the learners at the same time. Before the class, teacher prepares some cards with the sentences omitting the items that they are discussing. If the aim is to

practice grammar, filling the gaps with the correct form of the verbs can be set as a task. Game commences asking all the learners to come to the middle of the class and stay as a circle. Teacher places cards in the box and gives it to one of the students. When teacher plays the song, students start passing the box to each other. Since the song is off, the student who catches the box takes a card and presents a phrase filling the gaps. Whereas, game is played in a small groups, correct answers can get points for the groups. Teacher observes procedure of the game and analyzes the answers. At the end of the game, the group who has more points is winner.

Capital letter is a fascinating game for learners played at the end of the lesson. It is adopted in the ESL and EFL classes to change the atmosphere, to make a lesson interesting and unforgettable. Obviously, capital letter is an excellent technique for varying the classroom. The game is played at least in two small groups. To begin the game, teacher whispers any letters until learners disturb by saying “Stop!” Whenever teacher stops, the last letter becomes the capital letter of each word for completing the chart. For example, if teacher stops at letter “G”, groups need to write a word which starts with the letter “G” in each column such as, for name – George, noun – garden, adjective – gentle, etc. A minute is enough for completing each letter. Games continues with checking the different and the same words after each letter. Scores are calculated by the group members as following: For single word (the word that the others cannot find) – 15 For two the same words – 10 For the same words that every group has – 5 No any word – 0 In this game, the role of teacher is moderator. After allowed time, teacher strictly stops each group and analyses each word with the members of the groups. Each group calculates their scores after each letter, considering the words of other groups. Scores are written in the last column of the chart in order to calculate the total score at the end of the game. “Whispering game” or “Broken telephone” is an enjoyable and fun game to play with language learners.

In this game, teacher can keep points to identify winners or it can be played just for pleasure. Class is divided into two equal groups. If there is an odd number of students, one can be “assistant” for teacher. Both of the teams are called to the middle of the class. Groups are asked to take a place from the right and left side of the teacher or assistant. For example, group A is on the right and group B is on the left. The teacher whispers a message to the first person in the lines. The game starts when first players know the message. Then, each player whispers the message to the next player in the group until the last player gets the message. The group who correctly repeats the message first gets a point. Teacher’s assistant is in charge to compute the

points. Players who are the second in line takes a turn for the next message. Game lasts until the last player becomes the first in line.

### CONCLUSION

Students have their own point of view on a sentence or question highlighted in the text interpret with their eyes. In doing so, they understand the point of view. You can ask questions for. Talk to students who have a different opinion is given the opportunity. The teacher can add to the comments, can fill. This method makes students active, creative and free teaches thinking, initiative, fluency of oral speech. The application of such methods to the lesson is for all students changes attitudes to training, independent thinking, creativity, encourages research. The teacher also taught the students will be able to monitor their readiness, interests and manages to assess all students in a short time.

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