

# GAME-BASED LEARNING IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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## ABSTRACT

*The formation and development of a new education system and the labor market promotes that requirements to the level of language proficiency of students considerably increase. The purpose of learning of foreign language is changing. The knowledge of English language and ability to conduct a fluent dialogue becomes one of the criteria of professionalism and future career development. In connection with these requirements, teaching a foreign language acquires a particular importance. The efficiency of teaching a foreign language in higher education institution assumes modernization of the content and educational technologies. The aim of the paper is to overlook the impact of active and game-based approaches on the educational process. Positive and the negative sides of applying game-based learning in teaching English are under argument. The article reveals the essence of such terms as «game-based learning», «pedagogical technology», and «educational game». The use of game-based learning influences emotional and personal spheres of students and pushes the studying process of learning a language; the main goal of self-realization and self-improvement of knowledge in the field of English language. The content of paper may be useful for foreign language teachers, application of game-based learning is required for improvement of quality of education.*

**Keywords:** language education, game-based learning, communicative competence, university education, educational game.

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays requirements to university graduates' results of studies are increasing. The demand for certified specialists in various areas, able to act independently and solve their professional problems quickly and competently grows very quickly.

Modern educational institutions define the priority tasks in the course of training of the graduate, priority of acquisition of necessary knowledge, skills and qualities; strengthen the ability to apply the gained knowledge in new situations in the conditions of independent life, to think, analyze and express the point of view in non-standard situations. For the solution of tasks, effective forms of the organization of educational process, application of new pedagogical technologies, inclusion of active methods of training are required because traditional forms of education give a passive part of a learner and don't allow achieving goals.

## METHODOLOGY

Modern method of foreign language teaching focuses on the formation and development of personality a student, able to achieve the necessary level of foreign language communicative competence, and also to participate in cross-cultural communication in the target language and their own perfecting in the mastery of foreign language speech activity. The main type of speech activity is speaking. In the process of teaching speaking the simulation of verbal communication

is used. In this regard for the development of communicative skills of students applying the game-based learning in the classroom is relevant. In the last decades the main technologies in training of the Foreign Language (FL) in higher education institution were defined by the authors. In this case it is necessary to consider concepts of pedagogical technology and game technology. According to the Russian educator V. M. Monakhova the pedagogical technology is productive model of joint pedagogical activities for design, organization and carrying out educational process which is supposed as comfortable conditions for students and a teacher. In this connection set technological standards of permissible deviations from teaching and learning process where the achievements of targeted results are guaranteed necessarily. Game-Based Learning (GBL) is an expansive category, which spans the range from simple single-player or small-group card and board games all the way up to complex massively multiplayer online games and alternate reality games. Thus, the term of game-based learning includes a vast group of methods and techniques of organization of the pedagogical process in the form of various educational games.

Pedagogical game is a form of interaction of a teacher and students during educational process, allowing includes learners in the situations promoting development of their communicative skills. The main psychological problem of the learning is the interest in self-improvement. If it is missed, learning process is formal, and is accompanied by overcoming such difficulties as unwillingness to learn, inability to organize independent work, etc. As a result this circumstance is a prerequisite for unwanted results of learning including: low quality of training, the fragility of knowledge and the duration of their assimilation. To avoid it various didactic means among which a widespread use of different types of game technologies are entered into educational process. The students become subjected to educational activity by means of game while studying. Establishing of truthful relationship in the class, a choice of content and control of speech and nonverbal behavior of students, contributes providing favorable conditions for the flow of communication and the formation of steady interest to the subject. There are different types of pedagogical games:

- "Imitation games" have clearly defined communicative situation (e.g. interview practice) presented in the form of a dialogue. During playing students have an analogue of dialogue with admissions which should be filled with the corresponding remarks from the role card. Typically, these tasks are performed in pairs, taking a relatively short period of time, 10-15 min and suitable for students of all language levels.
- "Game scenes" have a certain subject, but each student can change the game course according to a card with language clichés and a process of the scenario. These games can be used in the classroom with students of all different levels from beginner to advance.
- "Sociodrama", a kind is close to the game scenes, but in this case ability to feel a situation in a group, estimate and change a role of other person is fulfilled.

The game structure includes the following steps: the preparation stage (the stage where the scenario of carrying out a lesson is developed, the roles for each member of a group are defined; the following stage includes process of game (only the leader can interfere the game course, in the case if someone leaves a main goal of game); the last stage of analysis is a form of discussion and evaluation of the results of the game where the students express their opinions about the done work and the teacher summarizes and corrects the errors.

Distinctive feature of pedagogical game is the presence of clearly defined learning objective and appropriate pedagogical results, which can be substantiated, allocated in an explicit form and are characterized by learning and cognitive orientation. Applying game-based learning in teaching foreign language changes the role of student from the passive participant of teaching

and learning process to active. This new role and inherent characteristics allow forming an active person, possessing all necessary skills and qualities of a successful modern personality. Use of educational games represents the organization and conducting process of the training and education directed to activation of educational cognitive activity of students by means of wide comprehensive, didactic and organizationally administrative means. The organization of training with usage of educational games is based on the following principles:

- The principle of individualization which is based on creation of system of multilevel training of students who consider specific features trained, gives opportunity of the maximum disclosure of abilities for every one;
- The principle of flexibility requires a combination of variable training based on the needs and wishes of students, with the possibility of rapid changes of direction;
- The principle of cooperation implies the development of relations of a teamwork, student and student form of work, the development of respect, trust to each other, allowing to take the initiative.

The implementation of game methods and game situations occurs in such direction: didactic purpose set before students in the form of a game task. Educational activity submits to the rules of the game, the training material is used as its means, the element of cooperation appears transferring a didactic task to the game and successful performance of a didactic task associates with game result.

## RESULTS

To determine the effectiveness of GBL in teaching English language the experimental work was carried out. The experimental work took place on the basis of Kazan Federal University with 1<sup>st</sup> year students of Geology faculty in Kazan city in 2015. The experiment involved 26 students.

The purpose of the experiment is to show the positive side of game-based learning applying in teaching English and increasing students' interest in language learning.

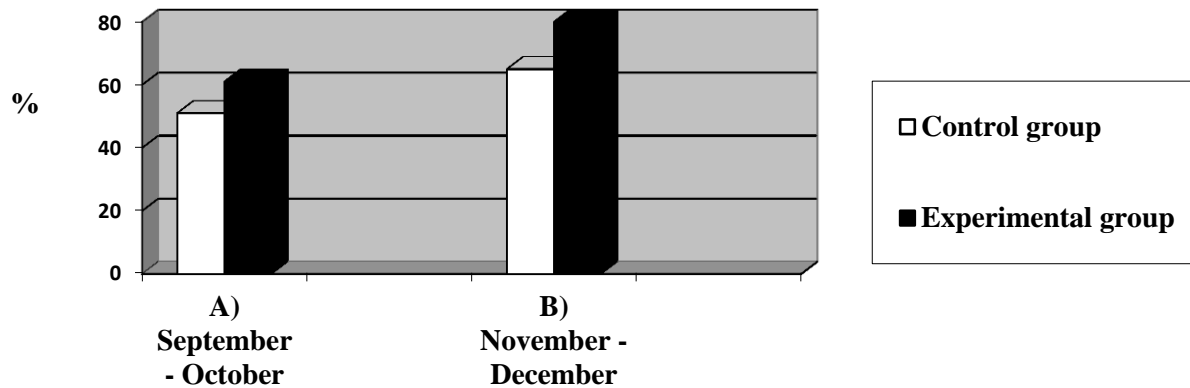
The experiment consisted of three stages: ascertaining, forming and control.

- The placement test of English was held;
- Classes with using game-based learning in experimental group were developed and conducted.
- The comparative analysis of the stating and control stage of experiment, and also conclusions about efficiency of application of this technique were made.

In the course of experiment the following methods of research were used: analytical (theoretical analysis of psychology and pedagogical, scientific and methodical literature); diagnostic (supervision, testing); forming (experiment); statistical (analysis and data processing of experiment).

The experiment reveals the increase of interest and activity of students during the lessons; the intensity of students' work was noticed; the increase of English language level was proved by statistical data processing (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**  
 THE DYNAMICS OF CHANGES OF THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WITH MARKS «4» AND «5» WHILE TEACHING ENGLISH WITH USING GBL (A - BEFORE EXPERIMENT, B - AFTER EXPERIMENT)



According to analysis of studied materials and obtained results positive sides of using GBL should be noted:

- Improving communication skills in all types of speech activity due to the fact that in the process of preparation for lesson students learn the necessary material in English, analyze it and make appropriate conclusions;
- Using the game activity helps to overcome the fear of spontaneous communication in the target language;
- Prevention of routine classes and emotional learning become a key to more effective learning. According to results obtained during the experiment students are strongly motivated in game and feedback shows good points and evaluation. As a result there is an improvement in the quality of student achievements. Moreover, used games may be professionally oriented. Thus, professional orientation of foreign-language training which according to the international requirements and standards is focused on formation of foreign-language communicative competence of future experts amplifies.
- Formation of cooperation and partnership due to the fact that a game contains not only the dialogue but a polylogue and covers the group of students, make them interact and help each other.
- Simulating of the situations connected with professional activity (interview practice, meeting with people, business discussions) causes additional stimulation of communication in language. Intrinsic motivation is the motive of cognitive interest associated with this subject. In this case, the acquisition of knowledge is not a means to achieve other goals and students' ones too. Only in this case it is the own activity of a student, directly satisfying the cognitive need". In the broad sense of positive motivation of students, the development of sustained interest promotes a result and becomes the target of learning.
- Organization of favorable conditions for students with a high level of foreign language communicative competence, general culture and intentions fully realize its potential in the field of foreign language learning.

Negative sides of experimental work also should be mentioned:

- A great variety of unfamiliar or forgotten words;
- Emotional overloads of students;
- The complexity of using this method in large groups

## CONCLUSION

Application of GBL in training of English promotes formation of common cultural and professional competences, including foreign-language communicative competence which provides rational use of English as means of communication. Moreover, it enhances the motivation of students to learn English creating new level of cross-cultural communication within a specific professional context.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is better to carry out a game situation on the basis of recently studied material gives to students confidence in own knowledge and initiative in communication. If group members are not willing to participate in the game and shy role of communication, this exercise will be ineffective.

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