DIFFICULTIES FACED BY YOUNG LEARNERS IN LEARNING NEW WORDS IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND THEIR CREATIVE SOLUATIONS

Abstract:

This article is devoted to the investigation of language learning through interactive games in EFL(English as a Foreign Language) classes. The article also focuses on the educational benefits as well as on recommendations how to incorporate games into a learning environment. It is considered that using game activities in the lessons not only aid to improve the students' vocabulary and knowledge of English, but also it makes lessons much more effective, entertaining and enjoyable. Learning vocabulary is a complicated task for all learners, so games can encourage them to acquire the target language much more easily.

Key words:

game activities, interactive activities, learning vocabulary, positive attitude, target language, communicative skill.

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Introduction

There has been a surge in interest in using games as a tool for learning vocabulary. Many educators believe that educational games are becoming increasingly valuable in language education as they make the learning process more enjoyable. According to Ural's research, combining games with education can create an engaging and informative learning environment, leading to positive attitudes and increased motivation among learners. Teaching English to young learners is not limited to traditional methods like reading from textbooks; it involves interactive activities to keep the process interesting. For instance, when introducing new words, teachers can use visuals to help students associate the word with the object, encouraging them to practice pronunciation and reinforce their learning. By incorporating games and interactive elements into lessons, teachers can make language learning more engaging and effective for young learners.

Another creative solution in developing children's thinking and speech and learning foreign language words is thinking aloud and justifying their solution, and this solution always has a positive effect on the development of the student's mental qualities. The level of mental and academic skills of students of junior school age is quite high. In direct learning, children can create and absorb more knowledge than what the school curriculum teaches them. One of the characteristics of children's educational activities in the youth period is increasing, they absorb the special strength material of this period.

According to McCallum, they can serve as a good feedback, can be used with all learning skills and the preparation of materials is often easy. There are numerous vocabulary practice games and activities. Some of them are recommended by Scrivener:

discussions

matching pictures to words/parts of the words to other parts/words to other words (e.g. collocations, synonyms, opposites etc.)

role plays

word formation activities.

classifying items into lists

filling crosswords, grids or diagrams

filling gaps in sentences

memory games

If teachers use these kinds of activities during their vocabulary lessons,

they can accomplish in their teaching process. Because all of these activities are very useful and attracting that students have a desire to do these activities and games.

Materials and Methods

When young learners embark on the journey of acquiring a new language, they often encounter various challenges when it comes to learning and retaining vocabulary. Understanding the difficulties they face and implementing creative solutions can significantly enhance their language learning experience. Here are some common difficulties encountered by young learners in learning new words in a foreign language along with creative solutions:

1. Difficulties Faced by Young Learners:

Limited Exposure: Young learners may have limited exposure to the new language outside the classroom, which hinders their ability to practice and internalize vocabulary in real-life context

Learning vocabulary is a hard work, so attempt is required to understand, produce and manipulate the target words. Games help and encourage many learners to learn target language more easily. They also help teachers to create contexts in which the target words are useful and meaningful; they also bring fun for students, thus help them learn and retain new words more quickly. In other words, game-based learning can create a meaningful context for language learning process. After learning and practicing new vocabulary through games, students have the opportunity to use language in stressful way. Games are advantageous and effective in learning vocabulary.

1. Lack of Context:

Without sufficient context, memorizing isolated words becomes challenging for young learners, making it harder for them to understand usage and meanings.

Therefore, vocabulary games bring real world context into the classroom, and enhance students' use of English in a flexible, communicative way. The role of games in teaching and learning vocabulary cannot be denied. However, in order to achieve the most from vocabulary games, it is essential that suitable games be chosen. Whenever a game is to be used, the proficiency level and cultural background of the students should be taken into account, and also it should be useful for students with lower language ability and should be easily applied in the class. Many experienced textbook and methodological manual writers have argued that games are not just time-filling activities but have a great educational value. This paper offers the rationale for implementing games as a stress-free tool of learning words.

Phonics Bingo:

Description: Create Bingo cards with phonetic symbols, letters, or words in the target language. Call out the sounds or words, and students mark the corresponding symbols on their cards.

Benefits: Encourages recognition and association of sounds with symbols, enhancing phonetic awareness and pronunciation accuracy in a structured and enjoyable way.

Pronunciation Relay Race:

Description: Divide students into teams and set up a relay race where each student must correctly pronounce a word or sound before passing the baton to the next teammate.

Benefits: Promotes peer collaboration, competition, and rapid pronunciation practice under time pressure, enhancing fluency and accuracy in articulating words.

Role-Play Pronunciation Game:

Description: Assign roles to students (e.g., characters from a story) and have them engage in a dialogue where correct pronunciation, intonation, and stress patterns are crucial for effective communication.
Benefits: Combines pronunciation practice with creative expression, storytelling, and social interaction, making pronunciation learning engaging and relevant
Pronunciation Pictionary:
Description: Play a Pictionary-style game where students draw pictures representing words with challenging phonetic sounds, while others guess the word and practice pronouncing it correctly.
Benefits: Enhances visual learning, vocabulary retention, and pronunciation reinforcement through a collaborative and artistic approach to language practice.
Result and Discussion
Creative Solutions:
1. Interactive Learning Activities: Incorporate interactive activities like language games, songs, role-playing, and storytelling to engage young learners actively in using new vocabulary in a fun and meaningful way.
Sure, here are some creative game-based solutions tailored for young learners that can aid in language acquisition and make the learning process enjoyable and effective:
The majority of activities, which are found in resourceful materials for teachers, are based on the belief that the games children enjoy and are interested in playing outside the classroom can be adapted and exploited for use in the English language classes. Furthermore, as they use English for real purposes, they make the children play and learn at the same time. Moreover, games help to create a context in which children's attention is focused on the completion of a task without realising that language items are being practised. As a result, language learning takes place in a context that children can directly relate to. However, it is always necessary to keep in mind the interests and needs of the learners. cost involved in realizing some conceptions, lack of handbooks from which to get ideas, lack of skills to design some activities. A good solution to overcome some of the difficulties mentioned above seems to be to involve pupils in preparing activities. They are full of ideas and enthusiasm. They can do some illustrations, they can prepare short stories and dialogues or riddles, and they can also make rhymes, chants, or short poems. It gives them a real reason for using language and gradually,they can createactivities foreach. Before choosing an activity for use with a class, it is necessary to consider some criteria which should be helpful in making decisions whether to use the particula ractivity. First of all, it is essential to provide a clear and meaningful purpose for using language which capitalizes on young learners' desire to communicate, for example, activities which involve a game, puzzling something out, or getting missing information from another person. All these make sense and are meaningful to young learners.
Vocabulary learning is often perceived as boring by learners, especially for those who grew up in the digital age. The internet has opened up a world of possibilities for improving the vocabularies of young learners. By using online games, teachers and parents can ensure that their young learners are prepared for the adventure of reading and writing. Computer games are an important aspect of what Sefton-Green describes as 'a wider ecology of education where schools, home, playtime, the library and museum all play a part'. They are a valuable site for exploring the ways in which new and older forms of literacy and multimodality combine, changing understandings of what constitutes text and engagement and providing insights into the highly effective learning principles incorporated into games as an essential precondition of commercial success and play. However, as Facer and others point out, much games research, while identifying the power of games and