



A New Teaching Method: Using Games in Chinese Primary School English Teaching

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Abstract. As China increasingly integrates into the world, the importance of English learning has become prominent. English, as a second language in China, is a major subject from primary school to university. However, when it comes to English Teaching in primary school, there may be a lot of problems. Some researches show that an increasing number of students studying in primary school have no interest in learning English, they even hate it. Therefore, a throng of experts try to handle this complex problem. They found Interest has a great effect in accelerating students' attainment of high academic standard and the development of their knowledge horizon and abilities necessary for thriving in a nonnative speaking world. However, interest-based English teaching is a kind of innovation; it needs our time to practice, these approaches need to be tailored to the cultural and linguistic context among students, so that interest-based English teaching can create good environment to enable students succeed academically, further more socially, enhance their social skills and improve their interpersonal communication abilities. This passage mainly talks about using games in primary school, through this way, we can create a good learning environment and inspire children's interest.

Keywords: children · English teaching · using games

1 Introduction

With the development of society and economy, English has become more significant in the international world. [1] Some people hold that the fundamental goal for introducing English to primary school children is to help them to acquire a new skill and get to know the latest information about the world. We will think that this is only partly true. I think the main aim to learn English in primary school is to keep their interest in learning, keep the thinking way so that students can use different ways to deal with problems encountered in daily life. Playing games in English teaching is one of the useful ways to motivate children to study hard and cultivate their interests in learning English. However, some teachers still think that language games are a waste of time and prefer not to use them in classroom. In fact, games do play a significant role in English Teaching. [2].

However, using games in English class is not a easy thing. I find that use many teaching methodologies in lower English class is an effective way, it is not only aroused the students interest, but also made the students interested in the subject they are learning.

They are active in the class, and their learning skills are fully developed. The ability is obviously, especially in teaching practice. As teachers in primary school, we are supposed to try our best to use different games in English class so that we can achieve a better goal. [3] Firstly, teachers should know the needs of students, which can help us build a good relationship between teachers and students. Secondly, teachers would be kind to students, as the saying goes, “smile can cure everything”. In the world, we believe we can create a good learning environment if we use games in English teaching. [4].

The purpose of this passage is that we want to use different games in primary school so that we can form an excellent environment. According to the recent survey, an increasing number of students have no interest in English studying, therefore, we are supposed to try our best to help students. I think using games in primary school can produce desirable influence on studying.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Game Teaching in Foreign Countries

Different students have different needs. Games teaching in foreign countries have long history. Different people hold different ideas. Plato thought games should not only be played but also combined with education in ethics. At the same century, English philosopher and educator John Locke (1632–1704) thought teaching should be suitable for children’s age in order to make learning interesting. [5] In the early 18th century, the French philosopher Rousseau stated that children should be free to express their energies in order to develop their individual talents, echoing an ancient concept by Plato (428–347 B.C.). German educator Friedrich Froebel is the father of children’s education in western countries. He started the first kindergarten in 1837. He wanted his school to be a garden where children unfolded as naturally as flowers. In the 20th century, progressive education continued to emphasize the needs and potentials of the children, rather than the needs of society or principles of religion. Among the influential reform educators of this century were Maria Montessori of Italy, John Dewey of the United States and Piaget of Swiss. [6].

2.2 Game Teaching in China

In Song Dynasty, private schools pour much attention into the children’s interests. Zhu Xi also stressed the significance of happy teaching. In the contemporary, Mr. Chen Heqin was one of the greatest educators who made the outstanding contribution to Chinese children’s education and set up the first research center of children’s education-Kindergarten in Gulou. [7] Many games there were full of creation. He expounded that games were activities that were beneficial to children’s psychological and physiological development. Only games could make children lively and teachers should make good use of all kinds of game materials and give them enough changes to practice according to their age. Hu Shuyi, another educator who encouraged children to play games more than seventy years ago. From modern age to the contemporary, game teaching theory has been improved step by step. [8] Many educators, philosophers or thinkers encouraged children to play games, such as Hong Zirui, Hui Youlian and Li Shengping et al.

3 Definition and Functions of Games

Games have different kinds. They have different rules. Specially, teaching how to play games is not easy. Byrne (1995) gave the definition to games as a form of play governed by rules. He suggested: “Games should be enjoyed and fun. They are not just a diversion, a break from routine activities, but a way of getting the learner to use the language in the course of the game”. [9].

The functions of game teaching can be concluded these: help students to find interest; help students to find pleasure; and training students’ innovation ability. There are more than this.

3.1 Help Students to Find Interest

As we know, there is a saying that goes, interests are the best teacher. If students are interested in English, they are happy to learn it. Students can learn a lot from games. Different students have different interests. Therefore, we must know different student needs. To be honest, English as the most widely useful one in the world, it can broaden our horizons and help us get to know the latest information about the world.

If you travel in other countries, we can communicate better with other people. Therefore, a conclusion can be drawn is that helping students interested in learning English is greatly useful for their future. [10] As a teacher in primary school, we are expected to try our best to use games in English Teaching so that make students willing to learning English, which is everyone’s duty, I argue.

3.2 Help Students to Find Pleasure

In English class, we could use various kinds of games, which can make our class more vivid and lively. During the game teaching, all the students can participate this and all have an opportunity to get succeed. More important, they can get pleasure from English learning. Using games in English teaching can make class more interesting and colorful. Students can become masters of the whole class, and inspire their interests. Therefore, they can have a good time and a good job.

3.3 Help Teachers to Meet Children’s Needs

In our contemporary society, different students have different needs, so it is not easy to meet everyone’s need. Because we have different needs, our world become beautiful. In return, different students have made different world. Every students have fair rights. Every teachers are supposed to take care of all students. According to the recent survey, more and more students have no interest in learning English, there may be accounts of reasons behind it. English, as the most useful language in the world, is vital for everyone in the world, which can meet our different needs. For example, if we travel in other countries, we can communicate better with people.

3.4 Help Teachers to Create a Stress-Free Learning Environment

A good learning environment is important for children to learn English. In fact, real knowledge comes from practice and direct experience. Using games in the teaching procedure, students can apply what they have learned and get a better understanding of the knowledge. No doubt, teachers wish an active class. In discussing this, playing games in the class becomes a necessary activity. [11] Through this, students can learn the knowledge more quickly and eager to learn the knowledge, they cannot cover the mood of studying. So, we really need games to promote the English teaching.

4 Types of Games

There are several games can be used in the English teaching. When playing games, at the beginning, students have such a happy experience that they forget they are learning English.

The first one is Role Games. It is a game that can make students participate in this games. They can play different roles, each role has different duties. Though this game, students can deeply understand one passage, and can easily grasp the main idea, which is the best way to deal with the relationship between teachers and students. [12].

More important, students can get pleasure from this and encourage them to learn other materials. [13] They are unique and typical ones that can reflect children's real life through imitation, imagination and roles according to their interests and wishes. In role games, children associate with others in different English atmosphere according to different roles they played. So role games can improve the ability of the reflection of children's real life. For example:

A: Waite/ Waitress?

B: Yes? Can I help you?

A: May I have some milk please?

B: Ok! How much milk do you want?

A: A little, please.

B: Wait a minute.

The second one is Competitive Games. In this game, students can have good time and good job. During this game, students can accompany with each other, and have good relationship with each other. [14] In the games, students must try their best to fight against each other. Maybe the loser feel disappointed, and the winner become happy. But the relationship between each other can be nice. As the same time, the relationship between students and teachers can be successful. More importantly, students can learn a lot in this game. They can cultivate good qualities, such as: kind, friendly, helpful and so no.

The third one is Teaching Songs. Singing songs is one of the favorite activities of students. At the beginning of English learning, learn and sing songs can lower the difficult of learning a new language. So the teaching methodology of songs is a good teaching way. The rhythm and the word of the song should be simple and repeat that students can easily learn and sing it. There are several benefits as follows:

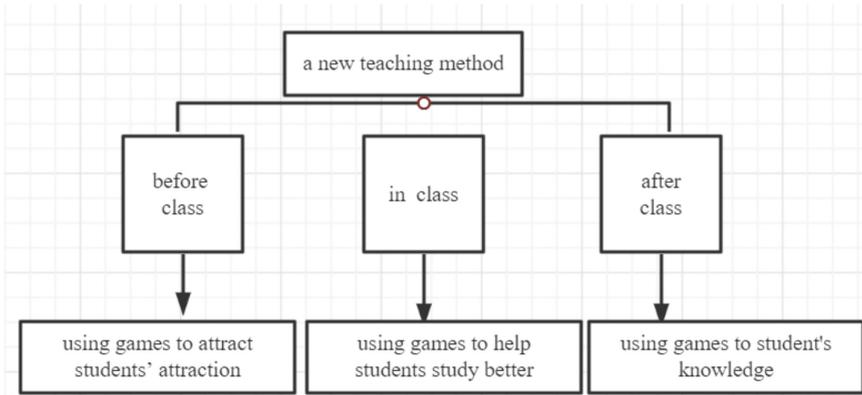


Fig. 1. The process of using games in teaching.

Firstly, it can improve the learning interests and study activeness. Teachers should serve listen and sing songs as warm up of the lesson. Students have high spirit and learning motivation, it can increase their sense of participation so as to creating a good learning environment for students. It is the ultimate goal of our teacher to build a harmonious and freely class environment, and make students “sing to learn, learn to sing”.

Secondly, it can consolidate and expand student’s language competence. Students learn more language competence from songs and will leave them a deep impression. For example, it involves all kinds of sentence structure, such as the song: the words of “We Wish You a Merry Christmas” and the words “The more we get together, the happier we will be” of the song “The More We Get Together”. The teacher should put the key sentence on the blackboard, and then make an explanation. It will be repeated several times by students. Finally they will remember those key sentence structures.

Thirdly, it can enrich student’s cultural background and promote their comprehensive quality. When teaching American Country Music and The Sounds of the World, students know little about the American music. So, I collected several American songs, such as Country Roads; Take Me Home; Say You Say Me; Right Here Waiting. [15] Learning English songs, students have a basic knowledge of American Music so that they can have a deep understanding of the text.

5 Conclusion

The purpose of writing this passage is to improve the interests of students. To our disappointed, an increasing number of students have no interests in learning English, even they hate it. Therefore, we must try our best to find ways to inspire students to learn English. Using games in class is a good choice. I find that use many teaching methodologies in lower English class is an effective way, it is not only aroused the students interest, but also made the students interested in the subject they are learning.

They are active in the class, and their learning skills are fully developed. The ability is obviously, especially in teaching practice. As teachers in primary school, we are supposed to try our best to use different games in English class so that we can achieve a better goal.

Therefore, how to use games in English teaching? There are several suggestions. Firstly, teachers should know the needs of students, which can help us build a good relationship between teachers and students. Secondly, teachers would be kind to students, as the saying goes, “smile can cure everything”. In the world, we believe we can create a good learning environment if we use games in English teaching (Fig. 1).

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