

Short communication

ENCOURAGING LEARNERS' ACTIVE LEARNING THROUGH GAMES, SONGS AND SONGS

Nargiza Khushbokova

*MA student in Webster University and in Westminster International University in Tashkent
Teacher in British School of Anglia, Tashkent.*

INTRODUCTION

There is can be different approaches of engagement, in this study it refers to the effective ways of teaching young learners and engage them in an active classroom. By these strategies, activities teachers develop young learners' interest, active participation and learning awareness.

Motivating young learners to learn English can be difficult process but we can use several approaches for motivating young learners' awareness on learning language such as, through stories and songs, pictures, videos as well as games, these methods at an early age provides them the opportunity to widen their horizons and stimulate their early enthusiasm and enhance their awareness of the rich use of English also, it effects to their pronunciation, as in early ages they will have a better pronunciation. One of the linguist Ai Lian Kim said that such kind of activities have a vital role on motivating young learners' learning a language, and various activities have different role on improving different skills.

Such as, stories are important in widening children's horizons, imagination, and develop literacy skills. According to Lian Kim by reading stories they do not improve academically but it also influences children's emotional and behavioral learning. (Ai Lian Kim, 2008). Furthermore, songs and videos have an influence on building an active atmosphere in the classroom, as well as it can develop learners' listening skills unconsciously. While watching videos and singing songs children can move and act and repeat the new themes, as most

of the young learners are kinesthetic learners and when they act and repeat they learn and remember better, and the lesson

also will be more interesting, all the learners can be engaged. Most of the studies that investigated the impact of encouragement have found a relatively strong correlation between encouragement and language learning success and achievement (Oxford and Nyikos, 1993: 11-22).

But according to linguists Cook, Dornyei, Schmidt encouragement considered as an important factor on achieving goals in language learning but it relates to the individual cases as some strategies work for some learners as some of them do not work for some learners. (Cook, 2001; Dornyei and Schmidt, 2002). Many researchers such as Crookes, Smidt, Gardner, Norton claimed that encouragement develops learning, it develops the progress in language learning (Crookes and Schmidt, 1991; Gardner, 2002, Norton, 2001).

It is widely believed that literature-based instruction can positively influence the language development of primary school students (Morrow, 1992). Weinreich & Bartlett claim that in children's literature "the child ... must be regarded as a necessary condition which the author consciously or unconsciously relates to in the creative process" (2000:127). For McDowell (1973), the term "children's literature" is applicable to books written for, and read by, that group referred to as children by any particular society. According to Ghosn (2002: 172) "children's literature is fiction written for reading for pleasure, rather than for didactic purposes" But in my

opinion If we read deeply under each stories there are can be didactic cases, they give enjoy for the children and teach them how to be and for these books' heroes children can find role model for themselves and can imitate for these heroes.

MAIN PART

Games also, have a lot of benefits for both language teachers and learners when they are used in classroom. One of these advantages is that especially young learners are so motivated to learn the language when they are in a game. McCallum (1980, p. ix) emphasizes this point by suggesting that "games automatically stimulate student's interest, a properly introduced game can be one of the highest motivating techniques." In other words, games stimulate students' interest in classroom activities and as a result, students become motivated and willing to learn. According to Crookall's (1990) opinion, learners and teachers change their roles and relations through games and learners are encouraged to take active role in their learning process. As a result, games provide learners with a chance to direct their own learning. From an instructional view point, creating a meaningful context for language use is another advantage that games present. By using games, teachers can create contexts which enable unconscious learning because learners' attention is on the message, not on the language. Therefore, when they completely focus on a game as an activity, students can acquire language in the same way that they acquire their mother tongue, that is, without being aware of it (Cross, 2000, p. 153).

This study was designed as a descriptive study with an aim to explore the beliefs and habits of EFL teachers' towards using games and stories in young learners' English classes. Participants 12-13 years old children EFL teachers voluntarily participated in the study and in the selection of the participants, purposive sampling was used to get the most adequate data from the available individuals within the researchers' reach. When I have started working with these pupils there were in elementary level and they were not able to speak and write. They are just 11 and 12years old pupils, If I delivered lessons just in some traditional way there would be bored as in such

ages the students are so energetic and willing to act and engage some interactive activities. I have taken a pre-test and needs analyses from these learners about the importance of the games, stories, and songs in the classroom. Most of them considered them as significant factor on learning.

Participants of the case study are 12-13 years old Uzbek children who are studying in Russian school and learning English as a foreign language for almost 1year. Even they are considered as young learners they are able to speak and express their opinions freely. I have been teaching them for 8months when I started to work with them they were in elementary level and nowadays they are studying. In conducting the lessons with them I wanted to improve their discourse skills especially, oral skills through stories and songs, games and so on. The children are so eager to learn and express their ideas on the given topic. While working with them I realized that encouragement has a vital role on achieving success in language learning besides the learners' age purpose. But the strategies of encouraging and consequences of the research can be different; it is up to the learners' ability acquiring the language, even though learners aim, age is the same the result of the research can be different, so the teacher should approach differently and use different methods according to the learner's capability. I worked with 3 of my students who are in the same age and came in the same level, and studying together. But all the learners are so motivated and engaged to active learning atmosphere. They prefer the lessons which are taught through stories, events and after the events they tell their opinion about the topic or event. Also, they like using English songs during the lesson as the songs are the most efficient way of encouraging mood and building positive atmospheres. I took interviews from 3 students of mine about their learning process and challenges and what motivates them to learn English. The 1st learner is Diyora Samatova, who is studying at school N-103, and learning English almost for a year, the 2nd learner is Kumush. She studies at school N-168. She are learning English for a year., the 3rd learner is Sabina. She is studying at school N-163. She is learning for 1year. After the administration of the questionnaire, the results obtained from the participants were analyzed with the help of a spreadsheet

application. The data were tabulated and the frequencies and percentages for each question were presented in tables. I took interviews from my students about their challenges in learning English and what motivated them to learn English. During the interview I realized that learners are so motivated that's why they achieved such success besides their age.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to research the encouraging young learners' active learning through using games songs, and stories in teaching young learners. Games, songs, and stories are important in primary school classrooms because as Vernon (2006, p.1) claims, as young learners play a game, they "focus on the activity and end up absorbing the language subconsciously." Games are one of the best ways to direct young learners' energy into language learning because young learners like to be physically active; moreover, they are imaginative and creative and they learn subconsciously. Therefore, teaching young learners requires a special effort and challenge. Also, using appropriate songs acting and repeating them can help the teachers to engage young learners during the lesson, as young learners prefer moving and acting. To sum up, even teaching young learners are challenging process, we can encourage children with interactive games, positive, funny songs and interesting stories, these activities not only useful for their language learning but also, it enlarges learner's horizons and forms their imagination.

REFERENCES

- 1) 1. Amato, P., & Amato, A. R. (1988). Making it happen. New York: London.
- 2) 2. Bekiri, R. (2003). Playing with questions-A game for young learners. The Internet TESL Journal (August, 8).
- 3) 3. [On-line serial]: Retrieved on 05-March-2008, at URL: <http://iteslj.org/Lessons/Bekiri-QuestionGame/>.
- 4) 4. Celce-Murcia, M., & Hilles, S. (1988). Techniques and resources in teaching grammar. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Celce-Murcia, M., & McIntosh, L. (Eds.). (1979). Teaching English as a second or foreign language (pp.54- 55). New York: Newbury House