

## The Application of Game Method in Primary School Students Teaching

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### **Abstract**

*Interest is the key element of learning a language, and game method is the way to irritate students' learning ability and efficiency. Game method is the combination of teaching and game, emphasizing that teaching method should apply for the characteristics like outgoing and funny of primary students, and learning English in a free and happy atmosphere. The dissertation is about the game method in primary school teaching, and the game method uses the game to make the boring language teaching interesting. Besides, it is good for the learning process, the ability of memorizing and the ability to use the language, which can greatly improve the teaching ability. And according to the characteristics of primary students, the game method is very effective. The paper uses game method in primary students' class, and shows the obvious advantage of using game method.*

**Key words:** primary school English; game method; teaching; application

### **I. Introduction**

Einstein once said that interest is the best teacher of learning. As English is the second language for our Chinese to learn, most students feel that English is very difficult and dull for them to learn. According to the mental tendency of doing something, the interest is based on knowing and exploring the outside world, and it is the motivation of learning new things. And game can make the students feel relaxed and make a happy class atmosphere, which is the basis of stimulating the learning interest. Besides, it can make the hard learning become happy learning, which is suitable for primary students' physical and mental characters. Primary students love acting,

willing to accept new and interesting things. What the teacher teaches can directly influence the students' learning interest. And the game method can make the teaching easy and decrease their learning pressure, and it is suitable for the requirement of quality-oriented education.<sup>[1]</sup>

In the 20th century, the American philosophers and educators hold the opinion that game and competition are suitable for the students' mental character, which is the favorite thing of the students. If the students can learn English in the game, they will be very intelligent, which is beneficial for their development. So American philosopher and educator Dewey uses the activity education method, emphasizing the special part of children' education, and foreign investigation for game method has a long history.<sup>[2]</sup>What's more, Chinese scholars have investigations on game method for a long time. Chinese educator WuZaiye has analysed it systematically, concluded it in using process, and did many experiences on it as well.

The paper is based on the definition of game method, the advantages of game method, the classification of game method, things the teacher need to pay attention to when using game method and the application of game method in English class. And the aim of the paper is to show game method's definition, advantages, principles, things teachers need to pay attention to when using game method, and the application of game method in English class.

## **II. Theories about game method**

Guilford's theory of intelligence structure says that intelligence is a cube model consisting of a variety of factors. Intellectual development must start simultaneously from three dimensions: intellectual activities, operations and results. In other words, in order to effectively and comprehensively develop intelligence, from the content point of view, there must be a blend of images, symbols, semantics, behavior as an integrated training material. From the operating point of view, this material must be able to operate fully, and can cognize, can remember, can be trained to divergent thinking, convergent thinking. From the results of view, this material must help students form a comprehensive intellectual achievement which have meaning, transformation, system, relations, classification and units. And these results must have testability and correctability.<sup>[3]</sup>

According to Guilford's intelligence structure theory, teaching practice combines with the child's psychological and physiological characteristics of primary language, mathematics and other subjects, teachers developed the fully developing students' intelligence game tools - "Multiple Intelligence Cards."It is a set of image (pattern), symbols (spelling, math), semantics (Chinese characters, numbers) and behavior (spelling, arithmetic) as a whole. To fully operate these elements (cognition, memory, divergent thinking, convergent thinking and evaluation), it is conducive to the formation of a comprehensive intellectual achievements to develop a comprehensive intellectual material. At the same time, elaborate design and use the "multiple intelligence Cards" rules and methods of the game, the arrangement can simultaneously mobilize the students' intellectual factors of non-intelligence factors which are involved in more than 200 intelligent games. Teachers and parents can choose the right game according to a child's development and learning conditions

for children's scientific education. Teachers and parents can also make up for their children's classroom knowledge deficiencies, and review and consolidate and promote the mastery of knowledge. Besides, they can train children's learning habits and develop child's multiple intelligence.

"Multiple Intelligence game" study is based on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence. It means: intelligence is to solve practical problems of individuals or the production of a variety of ability or cultural value of the product. Human intelligence is a pluralistic way of a group of intelligence, including at least the language, mathematical logic, spatial perception, a various of intelligent body movements, music, rhythm, interpersonal relationships, self-awareness, and natural observation. Therefore, each student has the above-mentioned eight basic intelligence in varying degrees of intelligence, the different combinations of intelligence exhibit the differences in intelligence between individuals. "Multiple Intelligence game" is based on Gardner's multiple intelligence development, and it has the design of various types of games. It also has rules of the game. All kinds of games were mixed to multiple child's comprehensively intelligence development and train the comprehensive ability of the child.

The starting point of education is not how smart a person, but rather how to be smarter and wiser than before. Gardne's Theory of Multiple Intelligence has been in guiding our research and practice. This can promote children's self-awareness, interpersonal communication, sensory integration and other functions, cultivate children's divergent thinking, cross thinking, reverse thinking, identify problems and solve problems, and many other capabilities. And this is in line with the country's new curriculum requirements. New Curriculum Reform (Elementary Education Curriculum Reform in China) will also be listed as an important theoretical basis, and it points out the direction of comprehensively updating the teaching goals for primary and secondary school.

### **III. The species of game method**

Game method is to teach in games, using game to make learning and teaching easy and interesting. It's the combination of game and teaching. The broad sense is any organized language activity in foreign language or second language teaching; the narrow meaning is the language activities which are interesting, flexible and various to invoke the interest of students in foreign or second language teaching or go over what have been learned.<sup>[4]</sup> The object of game method is to make the students feel interested in the class and feel successful in games. By using game method, students can gain knowledge easily and find happiness in learning. Besides, they learn how to corporate with others and compete with others in the process. There are four kinds of game method teaching: practice type game, interesting game, cooperative game, music used in English teaching.

Practice type game is usually used before class to review words and other knowledge. For instance, the teacher shows the picture or card with words. And the students read the words aloud one by one and speak out the Chinese meaning of the words. Just like the teacher shows a card with "want", the students read w-a-n-t-want. Whenever the students learn a pair of new words, it's necessary to recover the newly learned words by using the practice type game. For example, when

showing the picture, the teacher asks students to say a word whenever they see a letter, when they see the last letter, the students stand up and read the word. Interesting game is used for introducing the new knowledge, and the object is to motivate the interest of students to gain new knowledge, just like the guess game. For instance, guess, what's in my bag? This kind of game can not only go over a lot of words and sentences, but also make the students think and speak, because the students are eager to know what are in the teachers' bag.<sup>[5]</sup>

Cooperative game is operated by the group cooperating and communicating. It can be used to show something or cultivate cooperative sense, which can motivate the interest of students and cultivate the cooperative sense of students, and make them know that the power of collectivity is infinite. The showing of cooperative game is objective to show the fruit of study. Just like the role play game, the teacher writes the important sentences on the blackboard, instructing them to create a situation and act in it. and the cooperative part is the part to change the knowledge to ability, which makes the students excited. This is also a good opportunity to exert the students' conversation ability. The competitive cooperative game is a good way to learn and practice, because the primary students are very eager to win, the teacher can use it to motive students' interest to practice and recover knowledge. This kind of game method can be used throughout the class. Figuring out the winner and the loser can cultivate the competition sense. Just like the word competition, in which teacher gives each group a blank paper, and asks students to write as many words as possible in five minutes. Then the teacher counts which group has more words and asks them to speak out the Chinese meaning of the words too. A word counts one point, and one Chinese meaning counts one point too. The group with more points wins. This kind of game can cultivate the interest of study and help the students learn a lot of words as well.<sup>[6]</sup>

The relaxing music can not only make students feel relaxed, but also make a pleasant and relaxing atmosphere to motivate students' interest of learning English. Many experiences suggest that music can make students have a deep impression of the class. For example, when the teacher teaches one to ten, the teacher can play the song "ten Indians" to let the students sing the song and learn the numbers as well. And as the students like music, they would be very active to sing the song and learn the numbers. Consequently they can acquire the number one to ten easily.

#### **IV. The advantages and principles of game method.**

##### **A. The advantages of game method.**

In class, the teacher changes the pure English teaching to the cooperation between the teacher and students and students and students in game method. And the primary students rely on their teacher. The game method makes students have more time to stay with their teacher and their classmates, which units the class and is good for the excellent class building.

English is a subject which needs to memorize a lot of words and other things, which is a big challenge for the primary students who can't concentrate on the class. And the game method can change the boring teaching into interesting activities. For example, the teacher teaches the

knowledge about family. There are father, mother, sister, brother, grandparents and other words to represent family member. The teacher can use role play to increase the interests of students.<sup>[1]</sup>

The primary students always memorize quickly, but they forget very quickly as well. So some teachers ask their students to remember many times, asking students to memorize words and sentences when the class begins, which is resisted by the students. The game method helps students to memorize words when they play, avoid their bad moods, and help them to memorize words effectively. For example, when teaching words about food, teachers can write fish, meat, bread on a card, asking students to find the right card when they hear the word on the card. It can not only improve the students' listening comprehension, but also play the game, making the students in a pleasant environment and feel good about words, which is good for memorizing.

When the teacher uses the game method, the whole class atmosphere is very relaxing. And in this teaching environment, students will not feel stressful, and they learn knowledge in the entertainment environment. They feel very relaxed to face any challenge in class as well. And there is no such atmosphere in traditional class. Teacher designs active games, and encourage students to anticipate in the activity actively, decreasing the stress of both teachers and students.

### **B. The principles of using game method**

Children's worlds are full of innocence, so the game in class must connect with the interesting things in reality. For example, the teacher puts the cards with the words monkey, rabbit, tiger, bird into a box, and every student picks up a card blindly and uses it to make a sentence. Although there are sentences like "tiger is drinking juice; Fish is flying; Monkey is eating meat", these sentences make students very excited. Because they know tiger can't drink juice, fish can't fly and monkey doesn't eat meat. In this way, students can not only remember the words, but also learn the sentences.<sup>[7]</sup>

The game services for the teaching. Primary school English teaching game enables students to not only please in activities and games, but also to gain the language knowledge and certain language skills, eventually for getting the initial language skills. Therefore, teachers can not design and organize classroom game in only pursuit of forms, but focus on teaching objectives.<sup>[6]</sup> For example: in learning mango, pear and other eight kinds of fruits words, teachers can design a "Wheel of Fortune": make an activity wheel on which the teacher writes eight kinds of fruits word, the teacher ask while point the picture: What's fruit is it, Can you guess? The children raised their hands; some guess grape, some guess apple..... Teachers then turn the dial to see what is right and can get reward points. The purpose of the game is very strong, students' participation and the exercises they do are more enough.

Because the children's knowledge is limited, and it's hard for them to distinguish things, the design of the game must be close to life and give the correct introduction to them. A teacher writes "horse, cat, monkey, dog, potato, tomato, grass, meat, fish." to make sentences. Children choose the animals, foods they like to make sentences, and they think freely, feeling very excited. There is a

sentence “a horse eats meat”, which is a vague message. And we should avoid this kind of vague message.

Organizing games and activities is an effective form of teaching to help students learn English. To really play its secondary teaching function, to achieve the purpose of entertaining, teachers must design and organize well, so that the classroom game can be lively, vibrant, rigorous and orderly. When the teacher is organizing games and activities, the teacher should pay attention to the following points: the teacher should deal with the relationship between teacher and students. In most games classroom, the teacher plays the role of the director, and the students are actors. Sometimes teachers also become the moderator, referees, cheerleaders and even actors, and create conditions for students to play multiple roles, students can also serve as a director. However, regardless of the role of teachers in the classroom game, the teacher must be the image of a wise hermit, and grasp the students' game program, rhythm and performance as a whole. The teacher should also organize the game well. Especially when conducting competition of the game, teachers should take the self-evaluation, group evaluation, teacher evaluation together. Games should be used properly, and have a reasonable schedule. It can not be exhaustive, for too much will affect the main teaching content. The teacher should pay attention when students are meeting difficulties or when students are in “thinking trough” effect, then the teacher can carry out students’ favorite game with the shortest time. Teachers should also encourage students to actively participate in the game. Game design should pay attention to all students, so that everyone can participate in. Conducting game activities should be based on the actual level of students, so that all students can experience the joy of success and keep their learning interest.<sup>[8]</sup>

## **V. Things teachers need to pay attention to when using the game method**

Child’s world is a piece of clean paper, so it is difficult to erase after drawing. Because of their limited experience, their ability to distinguish right from wrong is poor. So when the teacher designs the game, the teacher must pay attention to the content, not making it very different from real life and things. The teachers put monkey, rabbit, fish, tiger, bird word cards in a box and put word cards “drink juice, jump, swim, eat meat, fly” in another box. The teacher asks students to pick up a card from each box respectively and composes a complete sentence. The children are very excited. The problem emerged: Tiger is drinking juice, which can be right. Fish is flying, which is certainly wrong; Monkey is eating meat, and some children will think whether this is right. However, the temporary teachers also are not certain. This will leave a question mark in the child's mind. Though it not affects the overall situation, teachers should try to avoid this .Once untrue or vague information left in the child’s mind, it is difficult to erase. Thus, the game's design must be based on the truth, and teachers should give the child the right guidance.

In the game playing, the time of the game should not only depend on the social development and acknowledge of students, but also the students’ interests, abilities and teaching contents. The time of the game must be reasonable, it shouldn’t be too long or too short. If it is too long, the students’ interests will decrease, and it will be very hard to play this kind of game. If the time is too

short, the students will think they don't play enough time, and the object of using the game to use language will not be achieved.<sup>[9]</sup>

When teaching the teacher often encounters a lot of games the teacher almost sees as "play". But it can not be said as "play", and it has no value of the game, which seems a program, and students are not interested in it, and this is even a little boring. This makes the teacher think that people's brains are faster than ever before in the information era. Quick thinking requires a hosting platform. When students are addicted to games or computer games on TV or other medias, and will they still feel excited about the heritage of these classroom generations forms of the game? Games also need fashion! Of course, there is the classic practice game, which are enduring. But we also need to re-processing on the basis of reservations. Even the most classic products also require the catalyst of time. To attract the child's eye and brain from the television, computer games and entertainment, the teacher will bring in the occasional innovation, using a variety of instructional media tools to enable classroom game to become the game students want to play, and make the classroom game also keep the pace of time. Primary school English teaching objects are generally 9 to 14 year-old students, children of this period are curious, fun, restless, eager to do well, and like to be praised. Having fun is child's nature. The game can satisfy the children's nature, and the students are willing to accept their thinking in the game. Game solves the contradiction between the child's learn and play nature, and it can meet the strong demand for child's desire of self-expression. If the teacher can teach the students with the game, and combine the game and teaching When the teacher teaches, and let the students practice what they learned by games. Then the students will learn faster, remember longer, and they will not think the learning content is boring, the students will be happy to participate. Naturally, they are willing to learn. Therefore, the games became the favorite activities of children generally. The essence of game is to make learning content and mechanical exercises interesting, so as to effectively achieve teaching objectives. It combines the English language learning and language skills training organically in recreational activities, the teacher can either change the situation of English teaching unimagined, but also cultivate students' interest in learning English, and stimulate children's curiosity, and develop students' intellectual and non-intellectual factors.

Wanting to win and to be praised are the natures of children. The competition of the game provides an opportunity for students to be admitted and to receive praise. So the equal principle becomes very important, in the game playing, students care about the result and teachers' judgements, and the judgements without equity will arouse the resentments of the students toward their teachers. Besides, the students will not like game method anymore.

Teachers need to make conclusion after the game playing, which can help students to go over what they have learned and help the teachers know whether students gain knowledge. What's more, teachers need to conclude the successful and failing points of the game to gain experience for the following games.<sup>[10]</sup>

## **VI. The application of game method in primary school class teaching**

The teacher can use the game method in the teaching of primary school English. For example, the teacher uses game methods in teaching Grade Four, Unit one, Our School. The teacher uses it in class one.

In the first period of time, the teacher goes into class one's classroom with the textbook and smile. The teacher uses game method to teach in class one. Then the teacher writes the words "ride, white, bike, fly, kite" in a line, and "cow, our, town" in another line. "Play, game" are in the third line, and "could old" are in the fourth line. Beside these words, the teacher writes the sentence "Mike can ride a white bike, Jane can fly a kite. A cow is in our town. Let's play games. It is cold. An old man is at home." Then the teacher draws a bike, a kite and a cow, using the colorful chalks to draw some flowers. At the top of the blackboard, the teacher writes A and B in two lines. Some students feel curious and ask the teacher why the teacher writes A and B, the teacher telling the students it is a secret and the students will know it at class. The bell rings, and the teacher says class begins, students all stand up and say "good morning, teacher." Then the teacher puts out a pocket, students all stare at the beautiful pocket and the teacher tells them it is a magic pocket which has the things we have learned last class, then the teacher asks them to guess what is in the magic pocket, and the teacher divides the students into two groups, group A and group B. The teacher tells them answering questions can add stars to the group they belong to. So many students put their hands up. "Is it a pen?" "No, it isn't." "Is it a toy car?" "No, it isn't." "Is it a book?" "No, it isn't." "Is it a candy?" "No, it isn't." "Is it a ball?" "No, it isn't." "Is it an eraser?" "Yes, it's an eraser, and you are so clever." Whenever a student answers a question, the teacher adds a star to the group he/she belongs to, which makes the students feel very excited. The students start to learn the new lesson, the teacher teaches them the new words, "ride" and "bike", then asks the students all to stand up to act out "ride a bike". The students act it happily. Then the teacher teaches them the sentence "Mike can ride a bike". Then the teacher asked group one and group two to read it loudly and act it out separately, the group which acts better and reads louder gains a star. The students act very well and read very loudly. Then the students learn the words "fly" and "kite", and "Jane can fly a kite". Without the teachers' asking, students act out the words and phrase and read the sentence loudly. The teacher asks one student to represent group A and another student to represent group B, and let the two students compete with each other. Both of them act very well and read loudly though they are both shy students. Maybe they know their acts represent their teams. So the teacher gives each group a star. Then the students learn "cow" with imitating a cow, and learn the sentence "cow is in our town" group A, they all act like a cow and read it out, then group A and group B compete with each other. Then the teacher teaches them "play" and "game" and "Let's play a game" which the teacher says many times. They all act very well. Then the teacher uses the same way to learn "old, cold, home" and the sentence "It is cold." "An old man is at home" Finally, it was time to check their learning effect. The teacher gave them some time to remember the words and sentences. Then the teacher asks the students to have a dictation, the result is so good, almost all students pass the dictation.



In another class, grade three, class two, the teacher also uses game methods to teach unit4 *We love animals*. At first, the teacher says class begins to the class, and the students says good afternoon to the teacher. Then the teacher asks the students to play a game. And the teacher asks the students to guess what's in the box on the table. The students answers: "Is it a little dog?" "No, it isn't" the teacher says. Then the students ask "Is it a rabbit?" "No, it isn't" "Is it a chicken?" "No, it isn't" "Is it a duck?" "No, it isn't." "Is it a butterfly?" "Yes, you are right, clever babies. It's a butterfly." Then the teacher opens the box to show the butterfly to the students.<sup>[11]</sup> Then the teacher use role play to teach the students the words "cake, birthday, drum." The teacher asks Mary to stand up and let Mary pretend today is Mary's birthday. And the teacher says: "Happy birthday, Mary, this is for you." "Thank you, what's in the box?" Mary asks. "This is a drum." The teacher answers. "Wow, how nice, I like it." Mary says. All the students watches the role play among the teacher and Mary, and have a deep impression of the role play. Finally, the teacher asks the students to have conversations together. They are very active and their pronunciation are very good.

## VII. Conclusion

All in all, game is one of the students' favorite activities. Concerning about children's age and mental activities, the teacher uses game method to irritate the learning interest of students and help them to practice and recover what they learn. Besides, when students participate in the game, the interesting game has benefits for the intelligence of students and help the students to learn the spirits of cooperation. Game method emphasizes the happy learning, and helps the students to learn in a relaxing atmosphere. The aim of education is to help students grow well. And using game method to teach is one of the effective ways to achieve the aim. Consequently, it's necessary to use game method in English teaching of primary school.

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