

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Using Gaming Technologies to Form Functional Literacy in Primary School Students During English Classes

R. R. Saifullin

Uzbek National Pedagogical University, Faculty of Philology, Department of Theory and Methods of the English Language, Uzbekistan

VOLUME: Vol.06 Issue04 2026

PAGE: 81-83

Copyright © 2026 European International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Management Studies, this is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 4.0 International License. Licensed under Creative Commons License a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Abstract

The article explores the methodological potential of using game technologies in the formation of functional literacy among primary school students during English language lessons. Particular attention is paid to the role of games as an effective tool for developing communicative, reading, cognitive, and social skills in younger schoolchildren. The article emphasizes that game technologies enable the creation of natural speech situations, increase student motivation, activate their vocabulary, and develop the ability to use the English language in both educational and real-life contexts. The article also presents various types of game-based tasks used in English lessons and highlights their significance in the development of functional literacy in primary school students.

KEYWORDS

Functional literacy, game technologies, English language, primary school, younger schoolchildren, communicative competence, speech activity, interactive learning.

INTRODUCTION

In today's education system, particular attention is given to the development of functional literacy in students. Functional literacy is defined as the ability to apply acquired knowledge, skills, and competencies in various real-life situations. In primary school, this process is especially important, as it is during this period that the foundations of cognitive activity, independence, communicative culture, and readiness for further learning are established.

As a school subject, English has considerable potential for fostering functional literacy among primary school students. In English lessons, pupils learn to understand simple instructions, perceive information by ear, read short texts, ask and answer questions, describe objects, people, and events, and use the foreign language in basic communication situations.

However, primary school students have distinct age characteristics: they tire quickly, require frequent changes of activity, emotional support, visual aids, and high levels of engagement. In this context, game technologies represent one of the most effective methodological tools in English language teaching. Games make the learning process interesting, accessible, and practically oriented.

The development of functional literacy in English lessons requires teaching methods that enable children not only to acquire language material but also to use it in real communicative situations. Game technologies play a central role here, as play is a natural form of activity for young learners. Through games, children more easily absorb new material, actively engage in verbal interaction, demonstrate greater interest, and gradually learn to apply English in real or

simulated contexts.

According to L.S. Vygotsky [1], instruction should be based on the child's zone of proximal development — actions a learner can perform with the support of an adult or more capable peers. This principle is highly relevant when designing game activities in English lessons. Games allow teachers to create conditions where students perform manageable speech tasks (repeating words, answering simple questions, following instructions, and participating in mini-dialogues), which gradually become independent, thereby enhancing both linguistic and functional literacy.

D.B. Elkonin [2] regarded play as the leading activity of childhood, through which imagination, self-regulation, communication skills, and social experience are developed. In English lessons, game-based activities help young learners master speech patterns in an accessible and emotionally engaging way. For instance, in the role-play "At the shop," students use language purposefully: asking prices, selecting items, and thanking others. This promotes practical application rather than mere memorization.

A.N. Leontiev [3] emphasized that any human activity is motivated and goal-directed. Game technologies are effective because they create intrinsic motivation for speech production. Students speak English not because they are told to, but to achieve a game goal — finding a pair, guessing an object, winning a team challenge, or performing a dialogue.

I.A. Zimnyaya [4] stressed that modern education should focus on developing competencies that enable individuals to act effectively in various situations. In English teaching, this means pupils should understand simple information, respond to instructions, ask questions, and work with texts and visual materials. Game technologies facilitate the integrated development of these skills.

E.I. Passov [5], a leading proponent of the communicative approach, highlighted the importance of creating speech situations close to real-life communication. Game technologies successfully model such situations (e.g., "Doctor and Patient," "At the Café," "My Family"), allowing students to use English as a genuine means of communication.

I.L. Bim [6] and other researchers (N.D. Galskova, N.I. Gez [7]) underline the need to consider the psychological and age-related features of primary school children. Game technologies fully align with these needs by incorporating visual aids,

movement, songs, role plays, and frequent activity changes while developing linguistic, speech, sociocultural, and cognitive skills.

Game technologies contribute to the formation of several types of functional literacy:

- Communicative literacy — through dialogues and role plays;
- Reading literacy — through working with flashcards, short texts, and instructions;
- Cognitive literacy — through classification, comparison, and problem-solving games;
- Social literacy — through team and pair work.

Examples:

- When studying "Food," the game "Healthy or Unhealthy" helps pupils sort vocabulary and explain choices ("Apples are healthy. Chips are unhealthy.").
- In the topic "Animals," "Guess the Animal" develops descriptive skills ("It is big. It is grey. It has big ears.").

CONCLUSION

The use of game technologies in primary school English lessons is an effective means of developing functional literacy. They correspond to the age and psychological characteristics of young learners, increase motivation, create a positive emotional atmosphere, and promote active participation.

Through role plays, card games, movement activities, and team tasks, students not only memorize vocabulary and structures but also learn to apply them in meaningful communicative situations. This practice-oriented approach directly supports the core essence of functional literacy — the ability to use knowledge and skills in real-life contexts.

Therefore, systematic and methodologically appropriate integration of game technologies should be considered a key component of modern English language methodology in primary education and an important condition for forming functionally literate individuals.

REFERENCE

1. Vygotsky L.S. Thinking and Speech. Moscow: Labyrinth, 1999. 352 p.
2. Elkonin D.B. The Psychology of Play. Moscow: Vldos,

1999. 360 p.

3. Leontiev A.N. Activity. Consciousness. Personality. Moscow: Politizdat, 1975. 304 p.
4. Zimnyaya I.A. Key Competencies — A New Paradigm of Educational Outcome // Higher Education Today. 2003. No. 5. P. 34–42.
5. Passov E.I. The Communicative Method of Teaching Foreign Language Speaking. Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1991. 223 p.
6. Bim I.L. Methods of Teaching Foreign Languages as a Science and the Problems of the School Textbook. Moscow: Russian Language, 1977. 288 p.
7. Galskova N.D., Gez N.I. Theory of Teaching Foreign Languages. Linguodidactics and Methodology. Moscow: Academy, 2006. 336 p.
8. Solovova E.N. Methods of Teaching Foreign Languages: Basic Course of Lectures. Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2002. 239 p.
9. Shchukin A.N. Teaching Foreign Languages: Theory and Practice. Moscow: Filomatis, 2004. 416 p.
10. Vereshchagina I.N., Pritykina T.A. English Language: Teacher's Book to the Textbook for Primary School. Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2012. 128 p.
11. Federal State Educational Standard of Primary General Education. Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2021. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 260 p.
12. Cameron L. Teaching Languages to Young Learners. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 258 p.
13. Brewster J., Ellis G., Girard D. The Primary English Teacher's Guide. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2002. 283 p.
14. Wright A., Betteridge D., Buckby M. Games for Language Learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 193 p.