

# A Study on Problems and Strategies of English Game Teaching in Primary School---A Case Study of G Primary School

He,Guilan

ChongQing Three Gorges University, Chongqing, 404100, China

**Abstract:** *The English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education* (2022 Edition) proposes to stimulate students' curiosity and thirst for knowledge through games, guiding them to actively participate in language learning and practice. The emergence of game teaching not only conforms to the psychological characteristics of primary school students, but also makes their learning environment more relaxed and enhances teaching effectiveness. The author found through extensive literature review that there are significant issues in primary school English game teaching that cannot be ignored and urgently need to be addressed. This study aims to solve the problems in primary school English game teaching and propose corresponding solutions through research on primary school English game teaching, in order to improve the quality of English classroom teaching. This study used the English teaching case of G primary school, Through the analysis of classroom teaching cases in primary school English, the author found three main problems in game teaching, namely: low learning enthusiasm of students in game teaching, chaotic classroom order, and failure to achieve teaching objectives. The author hope that this study can help English teachers solve the problems in game teaching, use games reasonably, and better promote English teaching.

**Keywords:** Primary English; Game teaching; Problems and strategies

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## 1. Introduction

### (1) The background of the research

In line with the physical and mental health development characteristics of primary school students. Primary school students are in the period of visual thinking. They are curious about things, active and lively, and do not like abstract thinking. The reason is that their understanding ability is poor and their attention span is short. When primary school students first start learning English, they develop curiosity about the characteristics of foreign languages and develop an interest in learning English. However, with the increase of learning content and difficulty, teachers mainly adopt a cramming teaching method, which inhibits their creativity and imagination, causing them to gradually lose interest and enthusiasm in learning English, and even experience feelings of boredom.

Adapt to the requirements of the new curriculum reform. *The English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education* (2022 Edition) propose "Pay attention to students' experience, perception, and practice, stimulate their interest in English learning, and maintain their attention to learning. Select topics that are close to students' daily life, such as family life, school life, animals and plants, and use intuitive, vivid, and interesting teaching methods to mobilize students' multi-sensory participation in learning. Use videos, pictures, physical objects, and other materials to lead students to read stories, sing songs; Stimulate students' curiosity and thirst for knowledge through games, and guide them to actively engage in language learning and practice. From this, it can be seen that game teaching can stimulate students' interest in learning and maintain their attention to learning. Using game based teaching is a measure to adapt to the requirements of the new curriculum reform." The new curriculum reform places greater

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#### About the Author

He,Guilan (1999-), female, Han nationality, Chongqing, bachelor, Chongqing Three Gorges University, research direction: Primary education.

emphasis on the subject status of students, emphasizing the cultivation of their knowledge and skills, emotions and values, as well as processes and methods. It changes students' learning methods, stimulates their interest in learning, and establishes a harmonious teacher-student relationship in the classroom.

## **(2) The purpose of the research**

The author found through extensive literature review that there are significant issues that cannot be ignored and urgently need to be addressed in primary school English game teaching. Therefore, this study aims to solve the problems in primary school English game education through research on primary school English game teaching. Based on the English teaching cases and interviews of G Primary School. This study conducts classroom observations and interviews with G Primary School English teachers and students. This study mainly focuses on the problems in primary school English game teaching, analyzes the reasons for the problems, and proposes corresponding countermeasures.

## **(3) The significance of the research**

This study can provide some thinking on game teaching design for primary school English teachers, help them design English games based on students' characteristics, create a game based teaching environment, better integrate and sublimate the theory and practice of game teaching, and make games better serve teaching.

# **2. Literature Review**

## **(1) The definition**

This study indicates that game teaching is actually a compound noun composed of two words: game and teaching. Game teaching effectively combines games with teaching content, complementing each other, and creating a good classroom atmosphere. In fact, game teaching is essentially a teaching method that integrates game elements into normal teaching activities. The lively and joyful teaching atmosphere and rich and colorful educational content allow students to easily learn knowledge unconsciously. According to Feng He (2016), game teaching is a new teaching method based on specific game teaching theories, aimed at strengthening text teaching, mastering new words, cultivating students' language abilities, developing their potential and intelligence, and gradually organizing English activities according to certain procedures. The game teaching attempts to transform dull language teaching into vivid and interesting games that students can easily accept, allowing them to learn in games and ultimately achieve the objectives of teaching through entertainment.

## **(2) Research status**

### **1) Literature research on English game teaching in primary school**

Among the 16 selected literature studies on English game teaching in primary schools, most of them focus on the connotation, role, problems, and strategies of English game teaching in primary schools.

#### **① The connotation of primary school game teaching method**

Among the 16 selected documents, there are many introductions to the connotation of the game teaching method in primary school English. Liu Fengping (2017) believes that the most representative literary work is Pan Hong's. Pan Hong (2012) stated that "the game teaching method is to transform boring language knowledge into vivid and interesting game forms that students are willing to accept as much as possible in the classroom, creating a rich language communication environment for students, allowing them to play middle school and learn while playing, achieving the goal of" learning and entertainment. ". The author believes that, the game teaching method is to skillfully combine "game" and "teaching". Teachers teach in the form of games, while students learn in the form of games. Game teaching is the combination of games and teaching, which meets the needs of primary school

students' learning and development, and promotes the orderly development of primary school English teaching. In the modern educational and teaching environment, introducing games into primary school English teaching has stimulated students' enthusiasm and initiative in learning, providing a greater platform for teachers to carry out teaching. Through the setting of game links, students and teachers can really play together. In the process of playing, teachers and students communicate with each other to achieve better communication effects.

## ② The role of game teaching in primary school

There are five articles in the research literature that illustrate the role of games in primary school English teaching. According to this study, Li Yuwei (2018), Zhang Fengjuan (2018), and Kyriaki Dourda, Tharrenos Brattis, Eleni Griva, and Penelope Papadopoulou (2014) are the most representative groups. They believe that primary school students are at a growing stage and often exhibit undesirable phenomena such as inattention and playfulness in classroom learning. If the teacher cannot guide them at this time, but blindly instills knowledge, the teaching effect will be greatly reduced. In this study, based on three people's descriptions, game teaching has the following functions in primary school English teaching: creating a relaxed and pleasant learning atmosphere; increasing the fun of learning English; strengthening the spirit of unity and cooperation among students; improving teaching efficiency.

## ③ Problems and countermeasures in English game teaching in primary school

From the literature, it can be seen that the problems and countermeasures in English game teaching in primary schools have always been the focus of research. Many scholars have clarified the problems existing in English game teaching in primary schools. According to comprehensive literature, most studies (Yan Xiaoyu (2015), Xu Weihua (2016), Li Dongjie (2013), Wang Lijun (2014)), Siti Nazleen Abdul Rabu, and Zuliana Talib (2017) believe that there are many problems in English game teaching in primary schools. According to the literature (Liu Lingyu (2013), Cheng Yuan (2016), Bao Yanhui (2015), Chonglin (2016), and Xu Weihua (2016)), and Liang Suwen (2021), although game teaching has been widely used in English classroom teaching, the following three issues have become the top priority of current game teaching research and need to be addressed: games are not innovative and cannot arouse students' interest in learning; disordered discipline in the process of game teaching affects classroom teaching; games are disconnected from teaching and cannot achieve teaching objectives. The solution of these three problems has a profound impact on the development of game teaching theory and practice.

## 2) Summary of research gap

Based on the above analysis, this study believes that there are still many shortcomings in the research of English game teaching in primary schools in China, including the following aspects.

① There are many studies on misunderstandings and issues, but there is little research on causal analysis. After reading a large amount of literature research on primary school English game teaching, the author found that there are many research literature on the problems in primary school English game teaching, but there is little research on their causes.

② There is a lot of research on advice and strategies, but there is little research on actionable games. In the collected papers, there are many suggestions or precautions for primary school English game teaching, but none of them can be directly used in the classroom, and most of them are general. If we can increase research with strong operability, we can broaden the research direction of game teaching and provide practical assistance for teachers' teaching.

In summary, analyzing the reasons for the problems in primary school English game teaching and proposing specific and actionable measures is a topic worthy of in-depth research. Therefore, this study has certain practical significance.

### **3. Research Findings**

#### **(1) The problems of English game teaching in primary school**

Through classroom observation, the author discovered three main problems of primary school English game teaching: lowness of students' learning enthusiasm; disordered teaching order; failure to achieve teaching objectives. The following are the specific research results.

##### **1) Lowness of students' learning enthusiasm**

Through classroom observation, it can be found that in English game teaching, students' enthusiasm for participating in games is not high. The application of game teaching in most schools is not ideal. Although many teachers have conducted classroom practice on game teaching, their designed game teaching content is too single, without considering the specific situation of the school and the actual learning situation of students. They only copy the games involved in textbooks and teaching materials, without paying attention to students' subjectivity in the classroom. Therefore, it is difficult to stimulate students' interest in participation.

##### **2) Disordered teaching order**

Through classroom observation, it can be found that in English game teaching, in primary school English gamified classrooms, the teaching order is mostly chaotic. The following are the specific manifestations.

Students are not paying attention to the lecture. Due to the excitement and excitement caused by playing games, students may be distracted or not pay attention to lectures during game teaching. This will affect their understanding and mastery of the game content.

The students are too excited. In game teaching, students may become too excited due to the fun of the game, engage in playful and playful behaviors, and affect classroom order and safety.

The game schedule is not reasonable. In game teaching, if the game time is too short or too long, it will affect the teaching effect and students' participation. Improper scheduling may also lead to classroom progress not keeping up with the plan.

The game rules are not clear. Game teaching requires clear rules and objectives, otherwise students may experience confusion, misunderstandings, and other situations that affect the teaching effectiveness.

##### **3) Failure to achieve teaching objectives**

The author found through classroom observation that when designing primary school English classroom game activities, teachers did not start from the teaching purpose and content of this class and search for game materials that can truly serve teaching. Game activities are not centered around teaching, and students should not actively, actively, and happily participate in game activities to learn and consolidate knowledge as much as possible. The students are playing, but they have not mastered the teaching content and completed the learning tasks.

#### **(2) The solutions to the problems of English game teaching in primary school**

The author proposed corresponding solutions to address the three problems found in primary school English game teaching through watching high-quality courses and literature reading.

##### **1) Pay attention to the innovation of games**

Students are constantly developing and changing, so games should also constantly adapt to the changes of students and the development of the times, and constantly innovate and update. The development of the times has continuously improved teaching conditions. Against the backdrop of the vigorous development of internet technology, the application of game teaching is no longer limited to traditional games. The improvement of

multimedia teaching environment provides possible and sufficient conditions for the innovation of game teaching. Teachers need to constantly learn and practice, select, develop and use educational game software that conforms to teaching. Teachers can not only complete the corresponding game tasks in educational game software in class, but also as homework for students to complete at home. Teachers closely monitor them in the game background, but it should be noted that when innovating teaching games, teachers should be easy to implement, not overly pursue fancy forms, and avoid innovating for the sake of innovation.

### ① Utilizing programming

Teachers can innovate primary school English games through source code editor software. Teachers can set different game forms, types, and gameplay based on their teaching content on this software, greatly enriching students' English learning experience and enhancing the attractiveness of the game.

### ② Watching high-quality courses

When we see more excellent gamified classrooms, we will have more ideas for game teaching design. Here is an example.

During the teaching of "At the zoo Let's learn", the English teacher uses multimedia assisted teaching methods. At the beginning of the classroom teaching, carefully crafted headgear is used to reflect physical images of ears and eyes, and students are shown. Then, 2-3 primary school students are asked to play animals such as monkeys, small white rabbits, and small flower cats, and these primary school students are asked to play these small animals, Highlight the movements of "touching the ears", "blinking the eyes", and "wagging the tail", allowing students to watch the performance carefully. After the students have performed, the English teacher will follow up another game learning activity, namely "guessing riddles", and ask other pupils to guess all the English words they encounter in this lesson, such as "ears", "eyes" and "tail". After primary school students guess these English words, the English teacher clicks on the multimedia and displays the answers to these words on the multimedia screen. At this point, the English teacher will teach the students the pronunciation and pronunciation of these words, and ask them to practice the pronunciation or pronunciation of these words repeatedly until they reach the correct pronunciation or pronunciation. By using this teaching method, students are always kept in a relaxed and active atmosphere for learning, which not only improves classroom teaching efficiency but also improves students' learning effectiveness.

In this gamified classroom, we can see that the teacher has integrated game teaching with multimedia technology and TPR teaching method, greatly enhancing the effectiveness of game teaching and enhancing the interest of primary school students in English learning. So by observing this high-quality gamified classroom, teachers can have more ideas and creativity in their future teaching design.

## 2) Strengthen classroom management

The classroom management issues that may arise in primary school English game teaching mainly include students' learning attitude, emotional control, time arrangement, and game rules. In order to effectively address these issues, teachers should pay attention to strengthening classroom discipline management, increasing student participation, arranging game time reasonably, and clarifying game rules. This can help teachers better conduct game teaching and improve the effectiveness of students' English learning. The specific measures are as follows.

Firstly, teachers can increase students' participation by increasing interactivity and setting reward mechanisms; It is also possible to enhance students' understanding of the game by enabling them to understand its rules and objectives in advance, in order to better guide them to participate in the game. For example, teachers can add disciplinary performance scores to the game rules' bonus criteria, informing students that if a student disrupts classroom discipline during the game, the group in which the student belongs will be deducted one point. If a group maintains good discipline throughout the entire process, a point will be determined for the group. Primary school students have a strong sense of collective honor, so teachers use scores to strengthen students' pure sense

of discipline, it can effectively promote the formation of a mutually supervised atmosphere in the class and maintain good classroom order.

Secondly, teachers should inform students in advance of the game rules and precautions, and remind them to abide by classroom discipline; At the same time, timely control students' emotions during the game to avoid danger or harm.

Thirdly, when designing games, it is necessary to consider the relationship between game duration and teaching progress, and arrange the game time reasonably; At the same time, after the game teaching, summarize and review the game content in a timely manner to ensure that students have mastered the knowledge and abilities required for this game.

What's more, before the game starts, students should be introduced to the game rules, objectives, and operating methods, and ensure that they understand them. If students still have questions, they can emphasize or demonstrate multiple times to better understand and master the game content. For example, teachers can establish disciplinary rules for classroom games and clearly inform students. Such as, teachers can say "it is not allowed to leave your position arbitrarily; if you have any questions, please raise your hand; do not damage teaching aids, etc." With the principle of discipline, students have a certain degree of restraint. Teachers love to praise in a timely manner to strengthen the exemplary behavior of keeping order, which has an incentive effect on other students and enables the entire class to develop in the direction expected by the teacher. But if students engage in behaviors that violate disciplinary principles, teachers must also implement certain "punishments". It should be noted that teachers should grasp the boundaries of disciplinary power and think that punishment should be educational. Punishment should not be turned into corporal punishment. For example, when a student disrupts classroom discipline, the teacher can ask them to read the words or sentence patterns learned in this lesson. If the student successfully completes this "punishment", the teacher's school will seize the opportunity to praise them, making them aware of their mistakes while also protecting their self-esteem.

Finally, teachers should handle unexpected problems correctly. Practice and presupposition cannot always be the same. Improper handling of unexpected problems often affects classroom order. Therefore, when unexpected problems arise, teachers should maintain patience, objectively understand the causes and consequences of the problem, be good at using educational wit, and avoid situations such as canceling games or leaving the classroom directly. Teachers should also control their emotions well. If a teacher's attitude is fierce, it can make students feel anxious and uneasy, affecting their mental health. If a few students engage in behavior that disrupts classroom discipline, a teacher's gaze or a gentle tap on the shoulder when approaching a student can cleverly resolve the problem and protect their self-esteem. If there is a large-scale disturbance in the classroom, Teachers can use brief pauses for processing. In addition, teachers should move around the classroom more, pay attention to students sitting in the "blind spot" in the corner, and remind students who are not listening attentively by asking questions and tapping on the table, so that their thoughts can return to the classroom.

### **3) Adopt integral unit design**

Integral Unit Design is centered around a major theme or task, dividing, integrating, reorganizing, and developing learning content to form a structured and scientifically designed curriculum with clear themes, goals, tasks, situations, activities, evaluations, and other elements. It can be used to solve the problem of the separation of games and teaching in primary school English game teaching, which cannot achieve teaching objectives.

Game themed teaching design: using games as the theme of the entire unit, design various teaching activities related to games, such as writing game manuals, creating game picture albums, and conducting group games. Through this approach, children can experience the joy of learning in games, thereby better mastering English knowledge. Teachers can integrate teaching content into games for teaching, allowing students to naturally master

relevant knowledge and skills in the game. For example, designing continuous reading games and crossword puzzles related to unit themes to learn English through playing games, making learning easier and more fun.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study first organized and studied relevant books and literature, and further explored game teaching, laying the basic direction for this study. Through observation of the English classroom at G primary school, the author found that there are three common problems in current English game teaching in primary schools: games cannot stimulate students' learning enthusiasm, game based classroom teaching is chaotic, and game based teaching objectives cannot be achieved. At the same time, this study conducted interviews with English teachers and students at G primary school to address the problems that arise in primary school English game teaching. The author analyzes the reasons for these problems, which are lack of innovation, lack of classroom management, and separation of games and teaching. Finally, the author proposed a series of corresponding countermeasures by watching high-quality courses and reading a large amount of literature.

However, this study still has many shortcomings. Due to the fact that the author only selected one primary school and studied 14 classes offering English courses in that school, the collection of teaching case materials is limited. Meanwhile, due to the busy teaching work of the teachers, the author has limited opportunities to communicate with all English teachers on all the questions in the interview form one by one. Therefore, the communication content between the author and the teacher is relatively scattered and unsystematic. The author's own practical and theoretical research experience is still insufficient, and there is also a lack of elaboration on novel and efficient games. Therefore, in the future, the author will continue to strive to improve the shortcomings and move towards a more in-depth and effective research field of game teaching.

In short, the author hopes to provide some help or resonance for primary school frontline English teachers through their own efforts, to help teachers design English games based on students' characteristics, create a game based teaching environment, and make games better serve teaching and promote teaching. Teachers are willing to organize more innovative and interesting game teaching activities. Teachers and students learn in a relaxed and enjoyable gaming atmosphere, allowing primary school students to experience the charm of a second language with interest and passion.

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