Research on the Application of Gamified Teaching in Primary School English Oral Teaching

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Abstract. This study aims to explore the design and integration of educationally meaningful video games to enhance students' problem-solving and planning skills in English oral instruction. By amalgamating educational and technological elements, we endeavor to create an engaging and effective learning milieu that stimulates students' motivation and augments their proficiency in English oral expression. The research employs an experimental methodology, encompassing the design and development of an educational video game prototype, alongside field observations and survey analysis of students. The findings indicate that the use of educationally significant video game prototypes markedly increases students' interest and engagement in problem-solving and planning, while also achieving substantial improvement in their English oral communication skills.

1. INTRODUCTION

The incorporation of information technology in English language instruction has emerged as a fervent topic of discussion within the educational sphere. Makhkamova, ALIMOV, and Ziyayev said that with the continual evolution and widespread accessibility of technology, Information technology, including interactive games, offers an array of innovative pedagogical methods and tools for English language teaching [1]. Specially, the application of educational information technology in this realm encompasses various dimensions. Primarily, it affords a plethora of diverse learning resources, such as online courses, instructional videos, e-books, and video games, thereby facilitating a more flexible approach for students in acquiring English proficiency. Additionally, Zmuda, Curtis, and Ullman mentioned in their article that interactive learning games enable personalized learning experiences, tailoring content and feedback to align with each student's unique learning pace and capabilities [2]. Furthermore, the use of interactive learning tools and gamified educational approaches enhances student engagement and interest, thereby augmenting their motivational drive and efficacy in learning.

This study mainly searches for relevant literature on "Gaming Teaching", "Oral English Teaching in Primary Schools", "English Teaching Mode in Primary Schools" and other relevant literature through CNKI, EBSCO, SSCI and SCI databases. On the basis of extensive reading and analysis of literature, it also collects first-hand materials such as English teaching plans and teaching logs of primary English teachers in Chinese Mainland. Based on the literature discussion, combined with the current situation and existing problems of oral English teaching in primary schools in Chinese Mainland, the author analyzes the causes of the existing problems, and puts forward the teaching strategy of game based teaching to solve the problems that affect primary school students in Chinese Mainland who do not like to speak English or dare not speak English, by sorting out the internal correlation, and provide theoretical support and practical reference for the design of oral English teaching in primary schools.

Firstly, this paper explains and defines the relevant concepts of this study, including the concepts of gaming and gamification, gamification teaching, and oral proficiency; Then sort out the theoretical basis of gamified oral teaching; Continue to review and evaluate the current research status of global adoption of gamified teaching methods and primary school English oral teaching, and provide a detailed classification and explanation of current English classroom games; Finally, the application of gamified teaching in primary school English oral teaching was summarized.

2. DEFINING CONCEPTS.

2.1. Games and Gamification

The word 'game' has a long history of origin as a form of human activity and entertainment, the spirit of which can stimulate positive emotional experiences and attitudes, and has been used in education, psychology, and many
other fields as time goes on. The words 'play' and 'game' are used in academic vocabulary to express the concept of "game" in both the broad and narrow sense. Play is broadly defined, and all activities of a recreational nature can be called games; Game refers to those activities which are structured, organized, and scaled, and bounded by rules of the game, which may even include those social games with competitive nature, i.e. games in the narrow sense [3]. The games we refer to and use in our teaching are usually games in this sense.

Johan Huizinga, a famous Dutch cultural historian, argued that play is the origin of human culture and that it is the primary factor in the creation of culture. In his book "Homo Ludens", he pointed out that the premise of what constitutes a game is free and voluntary, and that this activity or pastime is different from other activities in everyday life in that it has binding characteristics and rules, and takes place in a specific space and time [4]. The participants of the game have a strong sense of self and their own clear purpose in the game activity, and the emotional experience during the game is both intense and joyful. According to scholars Spodek and Sarscho, play is a highly structured activity of different kinds that includes specific principles to be followed [5]; According to Kapp et al. games are complex systems that possess numerous elements such as goals, rules, plots, level concepts reward mechanisms and also imply an aesthetic point of view [6].

Gamification is the application of game elements, game design and concepts to other non-game contexts, and Richard Bartle, a pioneer of multiplayer online game design in the UK, was the first to introduce the concept of "gamification" back in the 1980s. However, it was not until 2003, when designing an online game interface, that Nick Pelling formally used the definition of "gamification" to mean "making a game out of something that is not a game" [7]. Later, in order to give more fun to the task, people began to apply the thinking, elements and mechanisms of games to non-game tasks in other fields, with the help of such means to stimulate intrinsic motivation, and at the same time, to achieve the purpose of improving the effectiveness and profitability of task completion. Games play an important role in the creation and development of human civilization, and their participants are human beings. Since human life is closely related to games and education is a part of life, it is possible to trace the origin of games to the fact that, in an ontological sense, game activities also imply human education [8]. The combination of play with other fields, such as education, is highly appropriate because it is rooted in the observation and study of children, and is adapted to the local context.

From the definitions of play given by scholars, it can be concluded that play usually consists of the following elements: recreational, adapted to the physical and mental development of the child, regulated, structured, and devoted to the development of the child's own initiative. Therefore, we can consider play as an activity with specific rules, entertaining, resourceful, joyful and equal to the principles of play. The combination of games with the field of education has produced teaching games, which are able to turn knowledge into a game and become an effective form of supplementing classroom teaching, allowing children to enjoy exploring and discovering problems and using them to solve them, which is a relaxing, enjoyable and creative form of teaching and learning. This study starts from the perspective of teaching English as a foreign language in elementary school, and the games and gamification mentioned in this paper are activities designed by the teacher to achieve the teaching goals in a relaxing and enjoyable atmosphere so that the students can learn voluntarily.

2.2. Play-based Teaching and Learning

The advantages and values of games for children's development are reflected in the physical and cognitive, emotional and emotional, and social interaction levels, which in turn affect students' academic achievement, IQ and EQ development levels. The advantages and value of games for children's development can be seen in physical, cognitive, emotional-emotional, and social interactions, which in turn affects students' academic achievement, IQ, and EQ, and this has become the consensus of many educators around the world [9]. From the cognitive dimension, games have positive significance in maintaining and enhancing students' internal motivation, engagement and immersion by virtue of their fun and challenging characteristics. Gamification teaching is the application of games to teaching situations, with the help of which the learning process is enriched, students' internal motivation is stimulated, and the learning effect is enhanced [10]. In other words, gamification teaching tools provide a cooperative and competitive situation, so that students enjoy it, see learning as an internal motivation or internal demand, have a strong interest in learning, more willing to participate in learning activities, and can consciously complete the corresponding learning tasks and continue to promote the learning process. Therefore, the combination of games with the field of education, thus exploring the path of gamified teaching and the promotion of teaching has become a hotly debated topic among educators. The games used in this study are broad in scope, and any teaching activity that can be used for fun is classified as a kind of teaching game. Since the perspective chosen for this study is oral teaching, which is more communicative and interactive than other types of English teaching, the selection and setting of games need to take into account the combination of efficient participation and communicative interaction.

2.3. Oral Proficiency

Oral proficiency in English refers to students' ability to communicate orally and to use language in a precise representation of the target language. It is a yardstick for measuring students' English proficiency, which can be considered in three dimensions: complexity, precision and fluency [11], including the use of language elements, discourse organization and sociolinguistic competence. The ability to use language elements refers to the ability
to pursue vivid and rich language on the basis of accurate use of phonology, vocabulary and grammatical structures; Discourse organization ability refers to the use of correlatives and connectives, the length of consecutive discourse, the articulation and coherence of sentences or parts of speech, and so on; Sociolinguistic competence refers to the use of oral communication strategies to express oneself appropriately and the ability to participate effectively in oral communication activities of different scales [12]. Therefore, cultivating and improving elementary school students' English oral competence is the goal proposed for elementary school oral teaching, and also the research goal of game-based instructional design applied to English oral teaching. Through classroom game activities, students are attracted to oral learning, so that they can gradually master the rules of the English language, learn the English vocabulary, and improve the fluency, accuracy, and coherence of the English language, which can be applied to oral communication. The final goal is to make students realize the purpose of communication through the use of language.

3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Linguist Chomsky made a distinction between first language and second language learning. He pointed out that language is an innate talent of children, they are born with the ability to learn language, and they will gradually acquire the language in whatever language environment they are in, and the process of children's language acquisition is the same as their own growth process. What we now call "universal grammar" is actually an attempt to discover the rules of the language system. Just as genes provide the framework for human growth [13], Universal Grammar provides the framework within which language acquisition takes place. In the environment in which they grow up, children are able not only to gradually understand the meaning of words, but also to create new sentences, which are acquired through constant contact with the target language. He also argues that the theoretical course of action is constituted by children's language learning, a process of internalization and output of language. From imitation to learning to creation, imitation is the basic level of language and language more importantly requires creativity. For elementary school students, English learning in elementary school is just for the first glimpse of this language, as a beginner, on the one hand, they need to imitate this language, on the other hand, they also need to focus on the innovation of the language. Therefore, in English teaching, teachers should change their teaching concepts and attitudes, and try to create a learning environment as much as possible for students to learn in the same way as their first language, and to have more contacts, communication and exchanges with teachers who are native speakers or close to English native speakers. In the teaching process. Teachers should play the role of guide and helper of students' learning, guiding and helping students to generate the deep structure of phrases through a series of rules, and then create sentences. In English teaching, especially speaking teaching, teachers should also focus on two-way interaction with students so that students have more output.

Gamification teaching, with its fun nature, attracts students to have a strong willingness to participate, and teachers use this method to encourage students' output so as to achieve the goal of speaking practice. Games can attract the interest of primary school students and offset some of the fear of difficulty. Teachers firmly grasp the combination of games and teaching content, and when the game is presented, students are required to make the corresponding output of language content and constantly encourage students to do so, so that in the long run, so that the formation of good habits, and thus improve speaking ability.

4. RESEARCH ON THE VALUE AND DESIGN OF GAME-BASED TEACHING

Communicating ideas and solving problems are important purposes for people to learn language, which is also the goal to be achieved by language teaching. In order to communicate, we need to use oral listening and speaking skills. Therefore, in elementary school English teaching, the time and proportion of oral practice need to be guaranteed, with the help of listening and speaking activities to complete the tasks, prompting students to listen, read and write skills go hand in hand and develop together, and through diversified teaching means, cultivate students' ability to communicate in actual daily life, and constantly develop students' discourse ability [14]. Games, as a means of English language teaching, have been proved to have outstanding positive results in three aspects: affective and attitudinal change, language knowledge and skills, and comprehensive development of comprehensive literacy and soft skills [15], and they are also widely used in speaking teaching. Based on the concept of gamification, game-based teaching is widely used in daily educational teaching situations. The research and exploration of educational games is a popular topic in the global academic community because the development of primary school students' English speaking ability needs to rely on a visual and interesting medium so that the learning content can be presented more easily.

Relevant studies have mainly focused on the value of educational games in primary English education and the design of English educational games. In terms of value research, Wang, a senior English teacher in Taiwan China, summarized the role played by educational games in education and teaching by combining his own teaching practice, which can effectively reduce students' learning pressure, stimulate students' willingness and interest in learning, and not only achieve the teaching goals, but also develop students' multiple intelligences and cultivate their positive emotions [16]. Based on his own classroom teaching practice, Chou, another senior English teacher, believes that the addition of games in the English classroom is very popular among students, and that when setting up games in the classroom,
teachers must focus on the subject of English itself, and use the success and self-confidence gained by the students in the games to nourish the students' interest in learning English. In the process of game-based teaching, we should adhere to the principle that all students should have the opportunity to participate, and make a good distinction between levels of difficulty, so that all students can realize the joy of learning and acquire knowledge and develop their abilities. After the end of the classroom games, teachers should guide students to do a good job of feedback and organization, and organize them to review the content acquired in the game in a timely manner. Students' achievements in the game should be evaluated and feedback should be given to encourage students to actively participate in the game activities and hold a correct understanding of the game [17].

5. CONCLUSION

Overall, the integration of games into the process of oral English teaching in elementary school can arouse students' enthusiasm for oral learning and reflect the value of gamified teaching. In the design and implementation of gamification teaching, respecting the learning nature of teaching is the first principle to be upheld, and the game should be presented on the basis of the learning principle, combined with the teaching objectives, and set up the game links on this basis. Teachers should always focus on achieving the teaching goals, refer to the students' abilities, set up games reasonably, and realize the purpose of expanding basic English knowledge and mastering learning skills through games. In such a physically and mentally pleasurable atmosphere to achieve efficient practice, but do not overpower the main, to control the length of the game and the classroom rhythm, and bring students back to the original learning in a timely manner, that is, through the English teacher's design and control, to fully protect and play the student's subjectivity.

REFERENCES