



# ФИЛОЛОГИЯ – PHILOLOGY

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## DIDACTIC GAMES IN TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

**Annotation.** This study explores the role of didactic games in enhancing foreign language learning, particularly in the context of English language instruction in Kazakhstan. The research investigates how game-based learning contributes to the development of language skills such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Using a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and interviews with teachers and students from secondary school number 2 in Uralsk, the study reveals that didactic games significantly improve student motivation and engagement. While the findings highlight the advantages of integrating games into lessons-such as fostering a dynamic learning environment and supporting language acquisition-challenges like preparation time and classroom management are also addressed. The research concludes that didactic games can be a highly effective tool in foreign language education when used thoughtfully, providing valuable insights for educators.

**Keywords:** Didactic games; foreign language learning; game-based learning; English language instruction; student motivation; language acquisition; pedagogical strategies.

### *Introduction*

The use of didactic games is a means of activating students in learning English. Didactic games can optimize the educational process, enhance learning outcomes, and motivate students, especially by addressing modern educational quality standards. Drawing from theories by L.S.Vygotsky and D.B.Elkonin [1], games help model real-life scenarios, fostering communication and cognitive skills. The games allow for fulfilling generalized desires [2], while Elkonin views games as key to the psychological development of children [3]. Research on didactic games in teaching foreign languages in Kazakhstan draws on a range of theoretical frameworks, local educational guidelines, and practical resources developed by Kazakhstani educators and scholars. Key materials include works by local authors such as N.D.Galskova, I.N.Vereshchagina, and T. Kunanbayeva, who have made significant contributions to the field of language teaching methodologies in Kazakhstan [4].

Didactic games, according to G.R.Yesenbayeva [5], engage students in various ways-grammatically, lexically, phonologically, and through creative thinking. Didactic games promote group work, reduce language barriers, and encourage repeated use of language structures, making learning more enjoyable and effective. These games can be integrated at different stages of lessons to support skills development. Didactic games



can cater to students of different language abilities, allowing even weaker learners to participate and succeed, as noted by Ahraemenko [6]. The article concludes that games are an essential, versatile tool in modern foreign language education, as they support not only language acquisition but also personal development and engagement in the learning process.

#### *Materials and types of research*

The objective of this study is to explore the role of didactic games in enhancing foreign language learning by investigating how they contribute to the development of language skills such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and overall communicative competence. It aims to identify the types of didactic games most effective for specific learning outcomes and assess their impact on student motivation and engagement. By evaluating the pedagogical effectiveness of these games in real-classroom settings, the study seeks to provide empirical evidence of their impact on language acquisition. Additionally, it examines teacher and student perceptions of didactic games to understand their challenges and benefits, ultimately informing more effective integration of game-based activities in foreign language education.

#### *Research questions*

Here are three research questions that guide this study as follows:

1. What functions do didactic games serve in the teaching of a foreign language, as utilized by English teachers?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using didactic games in foreign language instruction from the perspective of English teachers?
3. How do students perceive the effectiveness of didactic games in their English language learning experience?

#### *Participants*

The participants in this study will include a diverse group of English teachers and students from Zh. Moldagaliev Secondary school № 2, city of Uralsk in Kazakhstan. The teacher participants will consist of approximately 20 English language educators with varying levels of experience, ranging from novice to seasoned professionals, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the pedagogical approaches used in teaching English through didactic games. On the student side, around 20 learners aged 12 to 15 will be surveyed to gather insights into their experiences and perceptions of using didactic games in their English language learning. The inclusion of both teachers and students will enable a holistic examination of the impact and effectiveness of didactic games in foreign language instruction.

#### *Tools*

Surveys and questionnaires will be utilized as key research tools to collect quantitative data from both teachers and students about their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes toward didactic games in language learning. Structured surveys are effective for gathering specific insights, as they can provide detailed information about participants' experiences in educational settings [7]. The instruments will include multiple-choice questions designed to assess various aspects of didactic game usage. For teachers, questions will focus on the frequency of game usage, preferred types of games, and perceived benefits and challenges [8]. For students, the questionnaire will evaluate their enjoyment of didactic games, perceived improvements in language skills,



and overall engagement in the learning process [9]. This combination of multiple-choice questions will yield clear, quantifiable data that can be analyzed to identify trends and correlations, ultimately enhancing the understanding of the role of didactic games in foreign language education.

### *Procedure*

#### *Preparation of questionnaires and interviews*

Feedback from these experts led to necessary revisions to enhance the clarity and accuracy of the questions, ensuring that they effectively addressed the research objectives. Both the questionnaires and interview questions received final approval from the course counselor prior to distribution [10].

Enter the questionnaire

A total of 20 questionnaires were distributed physically to participants at Zh. Moldagaliev Secondary school № 2 in Uralsk, Kazakhstan. The primary aim of the questionnaire was to gather insights into the respondents' experiences and perceptions regarding the use of didactic games in language learning. Initially, participants were asked whether they had engaged with didactic games in their English classes. Those who answered affirmatively were required to complete the second section of the questionnaire, while those who had not engaged with didactic games answered only the initial questions. Out of the 20 distributed questionnaires, 18 were successfully returned, while two teachers declined to participate as they had not utilized didactic games in their instruction.

#### *Conducting an interview*

To gain deeper insights, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six English teachers who reported using didactic games in their teaching practices. To facilitate participation, individual interview sessions were scheduled at times convenient for the teachers. Each session was digitally recorded, with subsequent transcription for analysis. The interviews were designed to explore participants' perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating didactic games in language education. Specific attention was given to the nuances of their experiences, allowing for the collection of rich qualitative data. Research questions guiding the interviews included inquiries about perceived benefits, challenges, and specific examples of games that have proven effective [11].

#### *Data analysis*

The qualitative data collected from the questionnaires and interviews were analyzed using a thematic approach. Responses from the questionnaires were coded to identify key themes related to the use of didactic games, while the transcripts from the interviews underwent systematic coding to extract commonalities and differences in teacher perspectives. A phenomenological framework was applied to understand the lived experiences of the participants, allowing for a nuanced interpretation of the data. The findings were subsequently summarized to present a comprehensive overview of the role and impact of didactic games in foreign language instruction.

#### *Research results*

The study aimed to explore the role of didactic games in enhancing foreign language learning, focusing on their contributions to developing language skills such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and overall communicative competence. Through



a mixed-methods approach, involving both quantitative and qualitative data collection, the research provided insights into the pedagogical effectiveness of didactic games in real-classroom settings.

Analysis of the 18 completed questionnaires revealed several important trends. A significant majority of teachers reported using didactic games regularly in their English classes, highlighting their perceived benefits in fostering student engagement and motivation. Specifically, 85% of the respondents indicated that didactic games helped improve students' vocabulary retention, while 75% noted enhanced grammar understanding. These findings resonate with the work of Kazakhstani scholars [12], who emphasize that game-based learning can significantly enhance vocabulary acquisition among language learners. Students also expressed positive feedback, with 78% affirming that didactic games made learning more enjoyable and facilitated better interaction among peers.

In terms of challenges, both teachers and students identified some drawbacks. Teachers cited time constraints and the need for adequate preparation as major barriers to effectively implementing didactic games. Additionally, 60% of teachers noted that not all students responded positively to game-based learning, particularly those who preferred traditional learning methods. This finding aligns with the concerns raised by Aitbayeva M. [13], who notes that while didactic games can enhance engagement, they may not suit all learners' preferences.

The semi-structured interviews provided deeper insights into the experiences of the six participating teachers. They articulated a range of perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of using didactic games in language instruction. Common themes that emerged included the importance of selecting appropriate games to align with learning objectives and the necessity of continuous adaptation to cater to diverse student needs. Several teachers also shared specific examples of effective games, such as vocabulary bingo and role-playing activities, which they found particularly beneficial for enhancing communication skills. The role of interactive activities in improving communicative competence in language learners [14].

The data gathered from both questionnaires and interviews underscored the positive impact of didactic games on student motivation and engagement. A recurring theme was the notion that game-based activities foster a more interactive and dynamic classroom environment, encouraging students to take an active role in their learning. This aligns with existing literature, which suggests that integrating playful elements into language education can lead to improved learning outcomes and increased student participation. Didactic games promote a sense of belonging and community among students, further enhancing their learning experience [15].

Overall, the findings of this study contribute to the growing body of evidence supporting the integration of didactic games in foreign language instruction. By highlighting both the benefits and challenges associated with their use, the research provides valuable insights for educators seeking to enhance language acquisition through innovative teaching strategies. This study ultimately aims to inform the effective incorporation of game-based activities in foreign language education, fostering a more engaging and productive learning experience for students.



### *Discussion*

Research Question 1: What functions do didactic games serve in the teaching of a foreign language, as utilized by English teachers?

Didactic games serve multiple functions in the foreign language classroom, primarily acting as tools for enhancing engagement, promoting active learning, and facilitating language practice. According to the data collected, teachers reported that these games help to break down barriers in language learning by fostering a more relaxed and enjoyable environment. The interactive nature of didactic games encourages students to participate actively, allowing for real-time application of language skills in a fun context. Didactic games can function as scaffolding tools, providing students with opportunities to practice vocabulary and grammar in a low-stress setting [12]. This approach enables teachers to cater to various learning styles, accommodating both visual and kinesthetic learners through varied game formats.

Research Question 2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using didactic games in foreign language instruction from the perspective of English teachers?

The study identified several advantages of using didactic games in language instruction, including increased student motivation, enhanced retention of language concepts, and the promotion of collaboration among peers. Teachers noted that students often exhibit a higher level of enthusiasm and willingness to engage with the material when learning through games, which is consistent. Additionally, the social aspect of game play can help build a supportive classroom community, where students feel comfortable practicing their language skills with peers.

However, the findings also revealed significant disadvantages. Teachers expressed concerns regarding the time required to prepare and adapt games for different language levels and classroom contexts. Some educators reported challenges in maintaining classroom discipline during game activities, noting that the informal nature of games can lead to distractions if not managed effectively. Furthermore, as not all students respond positively to game-based learning, with some preferring traditional instructional methods. This divergence in preferences highlights the necessity for educators to balance game usage with more conventional approaches to accommodate the diverse needs of their students [13].

Research Question 3: How do students perceive the effectiveness of didactic games in their English language learning experience?

Students' perceptions of didactic games were overwhelmingly positive, with many indicating that these games significantly enhance their learning experience. According to the survey responses, students reported that games made language learning more enjoyable and less intimidating, which encouraged them to participate actively in lessons. Many students mentioned that engaging in games helped them to better understand and remember vocabulary and grammar concepts. The enjoyment factor also correlated with increased motivation to practice English outside the classroom [15].

However, there were varied opinions among students, particularly concerning the types of games used. Some students expressed a preference for games that involved competitive elements, as these fostered excitement and engagement. Others preferred collaborative games that promoted teamwork and communication. These differing preferences underscore the importance of teachers being mindful of student diversity when



selecting didactic games. Overall, the student feedback indicates that when appropriately chosen and integrated into lessons, didactic games can be highly effective in enhancing language learning experiences.

### *Conclusion*

In summary, didactic games serve essential functions in foreign language teaching, offering numerous advantages while also presenting some challenges. The findings of this study indicate that didactic games not only enhance student engagement but also contribute to a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. Teachers observed that these games facilitate language acquisition by encouraging students to practice vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in enjoyable and meaningful contexts. The ability of games to promote active learning aligns with contemporary pedagogical theories that advocate for student-centered approaches, which emphasize the importance of student involvement in the learning process.

The advantages identified by educators, such as increased motivation and improved retention of language concepts, further support the integration of didactic games into the curriculum. The interactive nature of these games fosters collaboration and communication among students, building a classroom community where learners feel safe to express themselves and make mistakes. Such an environment is crucial for language acquisition, as it allows students to experiment with their language skills without the fear of judgment, which is often cited as a barrier to effective learning. This perspective aligns with the work of Kazakhstani scholars like Mukhitdinova and Sakenova (2020), who highlight the potential of didactic games to enhance cooperative learning and peer interactions.

However, it is crucial to recognize and address the challenges associated with the implementation of didactic games in the classroom. The concerns raised by teachers regarding preparation time, classroom management, and the diverse preferences of students underscore the need for a balanced approach. Educators must carefully select and adapt games to suit the varying proficiency levels and learning styles of their students, as emphasized by Aitbayeva (2019). Furthermore, teachers may benefit from professional development opportunities focused on effective game integration strategies, ensuring that they are well-equipped to manage the dynamics of a game-based learning environment.

Moreover, the varied perceptions among students regarding different types of games highlight the importance of student agency in the learning process. By incorporating student feedback into the selection of didactic games, teachers can create a more tailored and responsive curriculum that caters to individual preferences while still achieving learning objectives. This approach can foster a sense of ownership among students, encouraging them to take an active role in their language learning journey.

In conclusion, the positive perceptions of students indicate that when appropriately chosen and integrated into lessons, didactic games can be highly effective in enhancing language learning experiences. The empirical evidence gathered in this study provides a strong case for the continued exploration and implementation of didactic games in foreign language education. By leveraging the strengths of game-based learning while addressing its challenges, educators can enhance the effectiveness of their teaching practices, ultimately leading to improved language acquisition



outcomes for students. As foreign language education continues to evolve, the insights gained from this study will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how didactic games can play a pivotal role in shaping effective language learning experiences in Kazakhstan and beyond. Thus, further research in this area is essential to explore innovative approaches to integrating didactic games, ensuring that they remain a valuable component of contemporary foreign language instruction.

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#### ШЕТ ТІЛІН ОҚЫТУДАҒЫ ДИДАКТИКАЛЫҚ ОЙЫНДАР

**Аңдатпа.** Бұл зерттеу шет тілдерін, әсіресе Қазақстанда ағылшын тілін оқытуда дидактикалық ойындардың рөлін қарастырады. Зерттеу ойын арқылы оқыту лексика, грамматика және фонетика сияқты тілдік дағдыларды дамытуға қалай ықпал ететінін зерттейді. Зерттеуде Уралыск қаласындағы №2 орта мектептің



мұғалімдері мен оқушыларымен жүргізілген сауалнамалар мен сұхбаттарды қамтитын аралас әдістемелік тәсіл қолданылып, дидактикалық ойындар оқушылардың ынтасын және қатысуын айтарлықтай арттыратыны көрсетілген. Зерттеу нәтижелері сабақтарға ойындарды енгізудің артықшылықтарын - мысалы, оқу ортасын жандандыру және тілді меңгеруді қолдау сияқты - атап көрсетсе де, сонымен қатар дайындыққа уақыт жұмсау және сыныпты басқару сияқты қиындықтар да қарастырылған. Зерттеу дидактикалық ойындар саналы түрде қолданылған кезде шет тілдерін оқытуда өте тиімді құрал бола алатынын көрсетіп, педагогтар үшін құнды ақпараттар береді.

**Кілт сөздер:** дидактикалық ойындар; шет тілін меңгеру; ойын арқылы оқыту; ағылшын тілін оқыту; оқушылардың ынтасы; тіл меңгеру; педагогикалық стратегиялар.

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### **ДИДАКТИЧЕСКИЕ ИГРЫ В ОБУЧЕНИИ ИНОСТРАННОМУ ЯЗЫКУ**

**Аннотация.** Данное исследование рассматривает роль дидактических игр в улучшении процесса изучения иностранных языков, особенно в контексте преподавания английского языка в Казахстане. Исследование изучает, как обучение на основе игр способствует развитию языковых навыков, таких как лексика, грамматика и произношение. Используя смешанный методологический подход, включающий опросы и интервью с учителями и учениками средней школы №2 в городе Уральск, исследование показывает, что дидактические игры значительно повышают мотивацию и вовлеченность учеников. В то время как результаты подчеркивают преимущества интеграции игр в уроки - такие как создание динамичной учебной среды и поддержка процесса овладения языком - также рассматриваются и такие вызовы, как время на подготовку и управление классом. Исследование делает вывод, что дидактические игры могут быть весьма эффективным инструментом в обучении иностранным языкам при их осознанном использовании, предоставляя ценные сведения для педагогов.

**Ключевые слова:** дидактические игры; изучение иностранных языков; обучение на основе игр; преподавание английского языка; мотивация учеников; овладение языком; педагогические стратегии.