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Using interactive teaching methods in English lessons

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Abstract. Learning foreign languages, in particular English, which is widely spoken internationally, is an important and compulsory part of the educational process in all types of educational institutions. A particularly relevant issue is using modernised teaching tools that can improve the efficiency of the foreign language learning process. The purpose of the study was to identify effective approaches to implementing interactive methods of teaching English. The study uses several methodological tools, namely: analysis, synthesis, comparison, abstraction, and deduction. A survey was conducted among students in grades 2-11 to test the attitude of students to interactive forms of learning and the effectiveness of these new approaches. As a result, it was established that the interactive approach to organising the learning process is the most effective when compared to other methods, as it both accelerates the process of teaching a foreign language, including English and increases its effectiveness. It is proved that interactive teaching methods can be divided into several categories, depending on the actors who implement them and the ways they are used. The study identified that this approach to the learning process ensures the quality development of students' speaking, writing, reading and listening skills. It demonstrates the systematic nature of the interactive approach and the possibility of using it to teach various subjects. The survey identified the level of students' readiness and interest in interactive foreign language learning. The practical value of the research is that it can be used by teachers in preparation for English language classes, and the development of educational plans and programmes at schools

Keywords: educational process; school; game; students; educational interaction; foreign language learning

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INTRODUCTION

In the modern conditions of society's development, which are caused by the processes of informatisation, the need to learn foreign languages is pronounced. There is no doubt about the priority of mastering such skills and using them in everyday life. By acquiring and improving communicative competence, learners will be able to acquire a level of English that will enable them to use their knowledge in a variety of activities. Particularly relevant are studies based on the analysis of modern methods of organising the process of learning English, including the method of interactive learning (Shridhar *et al.*, 2020; Khan *et al.*, 2020).

The problem of this research is to establish the specific features of the educational process based on interactive tools. This issue is not new in the scientific doctrine, as it was caused by a sharp change in social relations, the spread of information technology and the reform of the educational environment (Quadir *et al.*, 2022). To this day, it remains relevant among scholars and practitioners. For example, N.V. Kirylenko (2022) proved in her study that learning a foreign language allows a person to meet a wide range of needs, including professional, personal and business ones. In addition, she emphasises the possibility of self-education based



on alternative learning tools. Thus, in her scientific work, she managed to identify the significance and practical value of the English language knowledge acquired by students.

J.M. Dewaele and L.M. Pavelescu (2021) identified the conditions under which the process of learning a foreign language can be effective. In their opinion, a logical combination of conventional methods of education and modernised interactive approaches is a mandatory factor in the educational process. The latter is focused on the effective interaction of students with both the teacher and each other. This conclusion is important as it allows identifying the advantages of using interactive learning in the educational process and demonstrating the dynamics of increasing the activity of the subjects learning activities. D. Djamas and V. Tinedi (2021) explored the importance of interactive learning. It means that the educational environment and process are implemented in a way that involves all students in the process of learning. In their opinion, the interactive method of teaching excludes the possibility of domination by a narrow circle of people or a teacher. This conclusion allows disclosing the nature of the interactive approach to the educational process, which is based on friendliness and mutual assistance.

In turn, S.F. Alattas *et al.* (2021) described one of the approaches to the implementation of an interactive teaching methodology. The researchers analysed the “Talk Show” method, which involves students working in groups of 3-5. The essence of the game is to organise a discussion exclusively in English, which allows students to use their knowledge of a foreign language to express their position. P. Chen (2022) explored the vectors influenced by interactive learning in her research. In her opinion, using this approach to learning English helps students to repeat the vocabulary they have learnt, expand their vocabulary on various subjects, effectively consolidate perfect articulation skills, develop attention and memory, and improve their speaking skills. The results obtained by the researcher will help to establish the specific features of the impact of foreign language skills on the learner’s consciousness through interactive tasks in the learning process.

Based on the above, the purpose of the study was to identify approaches that can be used to introduce interactive teaching methods into the process of teaching English to students. For this purpose, the study has set several tasks, namely: to define the meaning and essence of interactive learning; to describe common forms of interactive work; to provide examples of the implementation of interactive methods of learning English.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method of analysis was used to divide the general object of the study, namely the process of teaching English, into components for the purpose of their study. One of them is learning approaches, including interactive ones. This method was used to identify their essence and characteristic properties. The method of synthesis in this research allowed combining the separated parts, which allowed describing the ways of using interactive tools in conven-

tional teaching, in particular, teaching a foreign language.

The comparison method allowed comparing different types of interactive tools. Based on this, their significance and essence, and ways of implementation are disclosed. In addition, the comparison method allowed identifying the most effective ones and describing their practical value for students and teachers. The method of deduction led to the knowledge of the specific features of interactive methods based on knowledge of the general process of teaching and learning English. It involved an analysis of the general features of learning activities, which allowed exploring the specific content of interactive learning tools. The abstraction method allowed for a mental separation of the object from other elements. In this research, it was used to explore the category of “interactive learning” separately. This method allowed identifying certain features of this concept without considering the peculiarities of the process of teaching English in schools.

In addition, a survey was conducted with 50 respondents. They were students of grades 2-11 of Yaroslav Mudryi Specialised School No. 301 with in-depth study of English, namely 25 girls and 25 boys aged 7 to 16. The survey was conducted to assess the interest of schoolchildren in using interactive methods when learning English. The respondents were asked the following questions: “Do you like using games in your English classes?”; “Do interactive methods help you express your thoughts in English?”; “Do you actively participate in activities organised by your English teacher?”. In addition, the following question was asked: “Which interactive methods do you like the most?”, the answer options were: “changing fours”; “carousel”, “microphone”, “situational modelling”. The survey results were presented in percentage terms.

All procedures conducted in research involving people complied with ethical standards, did not violate the honour and dignity of respondents, and considered the age characteristics of the respondents. In the course of the survey, the interviewer followed the recommendations on the ethical aspect of conducting pedagogical research developed by reputable organisations, including the American Educational Research Association (2011) and the British Educational Research Association (2018). The results are published anonymously.

RESULTS

Considering the current conditions underlying the development of Ukraine’s international relations with other countries, notably, they determine the urgent necessity of reforming approaches to learning foreign languages, including English. It is explained by the specific features of such spheres of social life as political, socio-economic and cultural, in each of which the role of English is constantly increasing. In the process of learning a foreign language, a person should rely on didactic and psychological methods. Such learning activities have four vectors, namely: practical, educational, educational, and developmental (Dewi *et al.*, 2022; Nengsih *et al.*, 2022).

Admittedly, for the effective implementation of the above-mentioned areas of educational and cognitive work, namely learning English, it is necessary to consider several objective and subjective factors. The former include changes in society that are largely driven by digitalisation and informatisation. The second is the reform of the role of the teacher in the educational environment and the attitude of students to a foreign language. It necessitates changing approaches to the process of learning English to improve its quality. And the interactive method of teaching is becoming the leading one, which is becoming especially relevant in the modern learning environment. Its implementation involves a logical combination of the process of communication between students and the acquisition of theoretical knowledge. Both the teacher and the students play an active role in the classroom. Thus, interactive learning is often referred to as dialogue learning, and its significance is disclosed in effective communication between the subjects of the learning process.

Based on this, it is possible to define the concept of “interactive learning” as a special approach to cognitive activity, which has clearly defined tasks that involve the development of high-quality conditions of the educational environment, in which each subject of the educational process can discover their individuality and intellectual capacity. Using an interactive approach in the English language classroom allows students to think independently about a certain range of issues related to the discipline, organise a discussion or suggest ways to solve a learning problem. For this purpose, various types of work are performed, such as individual, pair or group work. In addition, research projects are conducted on a specific subject, according to the curriculum. Role-playing games, interaction with documents and other types of information resources play an important role (Moro & Stromberga, 2020).

Based on this, it is possible to define the principles of an interactive teaching method. These include: simultaneous interaction of all pupils; rational allocation of time by the teacher to work with each child; and pupils completing individual tasks. Interactive teaching methods can be implemented in the form of discussions, simulation games, and press conference lessons. The approach allows for the simultaneous development of both personal and collective skills. It increases the level of socialisation of students and provides them with the opportunity to freely express their ideas and opinions, including in English.

The most common forms of interactive work in general secondary education institutions in Ukraine are the following: common for the whole class; targeted (in pairs); opposite (involves division into teams); interdependent (due to the interaction of the entire class); competitive. Their implementation involves using several training tools and organising special educational events. First of all, it is necessary to note interactive technologies of cooperative learning. They involve consolidating learning material in the course of pair or group work. They can be used both immediately after the teacher has presented new information, in particular,

at the beginning of the next lesson, and in a specially organised classroom session. Significantly, interactive cooperative learning technologies do not involve polling, and therefore can only be implemented in the form of discussions or debates (Amayri *et al.*, 2020; Cao & Brown, 2020).

The next method of interactive learning is using swapping fours. It involves dividing the class into groups of four, if possible. The teacher assigns the same task to all foursomes, usually on a new subject. Students analyse and evaluate new material in depth and collaboratively. The essence of grouping is that individuals first solve the proposed task and present their results to the other teams. The latter can ask questions, which generates discussion among the students. The role of the teacher in this process is extremely important, as the teacher must evaluate both the team's solution and their responses to counter-arguments, and their ability to defend their position using English language skills.

In addition, group methods of interactive foreign language learning include a carousel and a microphone. The first involves the synchronous involvement of all students in collaborative work. There is a simulation of a chain in which one student complements the thought of the previous one, thus using creative and logical thinking. The second method allows each student to express their position on a general question posed by the teacher to the class. In this process, the student uses English speaking skills, can engage in a dialogue with another student, and develop their question. The implementation of the described methods can be based on the teacher's templates, such as “During our lesson, the most important discovery for me was...” or “This decision was reached because...”. It allows students to learn to express themselves freely using their theoretical knowledge of English.

Another method of interactive learning is the technology of situational modelling. Its advantage is the ability of the teacher to develop different situations in which students will play a certain role. It is important that these newly established conditions should be completely different from the general features of conventional schooling. In the course of implementing this approach, students' intellectual activity is maximised. For example, schoolchildren can be transformed into doctors, policemen, instructors, cooks, waiters. It contributes to increasing the volume of vocabulary by learning special words that are specific to particular areas of activity. In addition, such games significantly increase students' interest in learning a foreign language and the learning process in general (Hanlin & Okemwa, 2021).

To explore the spread of the above-mentioned interactive methods in Ukrainian educational institutions, a survey was conducted among students in grades 2-11 of Yaroslav Mudryi Specialised School No. 301 with in-depth study of English. It involved determining the level of interest of schoolchildren of different ages, from 7 to 16, in using interactive learning tools when learning English. The first question asked of the respondents was: “Do you like using games in your English classes?” As a result, 47 pupils (94%) chose a positive answer, and 3 pupils (6%) – a negative answer.

The next question was about the practical significance of the interactive approach and its impact on the student's English language learning. The question was as follows: "Do interactive methods help you express your thoughts in English?". 45 students (90%) indicated a positive impact of this approach on their level of foreign language proficiency, while 5 students (10%) indicated no impact.

Next, the survey identified students' interest in completing interactive tasks in English classes. The respondents were asked the following question: "Do you actively participate in activities organised by your English teacher?"

41 students (82%) are active participants in the classroom, while 9 students (18%) are passive participants.

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked a question to identify the most common interactive methods for learning English. It was in the following form: "What interactive methods do you like the most?" 20 students (40%) prefer tasks that involve dividing the class into roles; 14 students (28%) expressed interest in organising discussions; 9 students (18%) chose group work; 7 students (14%) indicated interest in independent work, the results of which involve a joint discussion. The results are presented in Figure 1.

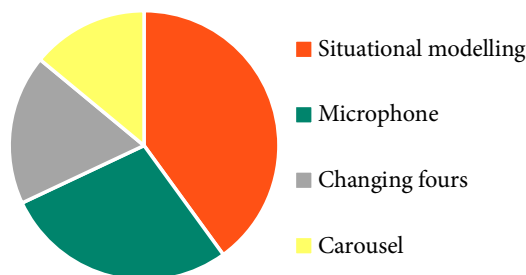


Figure 1. The most common interactive activities among students

The survey demonstrates that the number of people who want to use interactive methods when learning English is high. Therewith, their participation in such events is low, which affects the effectiveness of using an interactive approach to organising the learning environment. It indicates the priority of using the methods described in this paper, but with the condition that more students are involved in joint activities.

DISCUSSION

Particular attention is devoted to the organisation of educational activities in the scientific doctrine. The most common studies are those that focus on improving approaches to learning in the light of the modernisation of society. The positions of scholars have both common and distinctive features, which allows for a discussion of this issue. X. Xia (2021) paid attention to the specific features of the historical design and development of interactive learning. In her work, she explored the sources of such an interactive approach to the organisation of educational activities. She managed to prove that this form of education is not new. For example, Socrates taught classes with the purpose of students' self-determination of the "truth" by formulating special questions and answers. Plato was an advocate of this approach, which involved providing children with an education based on various games, fairy tales, dialogues or songs. The researcher proved that despite the lack of digital and information opportunities, students could choose the content of a lesson or a subject several centuries ago. They were able to study the material by category and section. The approach involved using auxiliary tools, cards and other graphic materials to help students complete written or oral tasks. It can be argued that the researcher's position is consistent with the results obtained in the course of this study.

It is reflected in the fact that despite certain risks, such as the development of rivalry in the learning environment, interactive learning remains a priority form of education. The development of individual traits and the ability to use free time rationally is ongoing. These findings indicate that interactive learning contributes to expanding the boundaries and meaning of the classroom.

Contrary to the previous researcher, G. Alvarez-Guerrero *et al.* (2021) analysed the importance of the interactive learning method in the current social context. They managed to prove that this approach is based on communication. Thus, the purpose of interactive learning is didactic. As a result of the successful organisation of this form of education, students are able to solve problems, including through communication. It enables them to find possible solutions to critical issues. The researchers emphasised that this type of training ensures not arbitrary communication, but rather a qualitative exchange of thoughts and ideas between students. As a result, students' intellectual activity develops, and they can put their theoretical knowledge into practice, i.e. in everyday life. Frequently, interactive learning makes it easier for students to master a particular subject. It is due to the combination of their knowledge and skills from other fields. The results of this study are similar, involving both the acquisition of new skills and their use, and the consolidation of the child's responsibility for the decisions they make.

S. Kiyko and V. Smaglii (2022) identified the challenges of interactive learning at school. In their research, they proved that the implementation of such teaching methods is based on three vectors, namely to teach, educate, and ensure the development of the individual's personality. They classified them into two categories, according to the way in which such training is conducted. The former includes

such methods as organising lectures with free discussion, developing discussions, and conducting question-and-answer sessions. The teacher plays a special role in this process, as they are responsible for organising such events. The second includes a round table, group projects, role-playing and didactic games. In this case, students play a key role, as their activities are used to implement interactive learning methods. Such a classification of approaches to interactive education is not common in scientific doctrine, therefore, it is somewhat inconsistent with the results of this study, as it involves their separate analysis.

Special attention should be paid to the position of A.A. Amsal *et al.* (2021), who comprehensively examined the role and impact of interactive learning. They explored its implementation in the course of learning various academic disciplines, including mathematics, science, and language. As a result, they were able to conclude that using interactive learning methods can improve the quality of education and the level of knowledge of students. It is reflected in the fact that they acquire the skills to plan their activities effectively. Teamwork skills are developed, for example, when a group of schoolchildren completes a joint project. It is essential, particularly in the upper grades, to acquire knowledge and skills in evaluating the results obtained and the success of independent activities. Based on this, the student can identify existing problems and search for ways to solve them. Such conclusions are consistent with the results of this research work, as they disclose the process of personal development of schoolchildren based on interactive teaching methods.

S. Abumeeiz and M.W. Johnson (2022) and G. Cerchez *et al.* (2021) consider that interactive education is not universal. Researchers argue that it is impossible to use the same interactive learning approaches in teaching different disciplines. In their opinion, the specific features of the subject and the level of knowledge of a particular study group play an important role. Thus, using interactive methods should be done with the above features in mind. It allows avoiding problems during the teaching of the discipline and improving the level and quality of its learning by students. To a certain extent, this position overlaps with the findings of this study, as it implies individualisation of the learning process.

The discussion allows disclosing the specific features of an interactive approach to the organisation of educational activities. It is established that the scientific doctrine is not homogeneous, and therefore provides for different ways of using interactive methods for teaching English.

CONCLUSIONS

The study allows concluding that interactive methods of teaching English are a priority today. Their use in conjunction with traditional approaches to the organisation of educational activities is the key to the development of high-quality communication competence in students. The research disclosed the meaning of the concept of interactive learning. It allowed identifying its features and distinctive characteristics from other teaching methods. In addition, the study examined the general algorithm for implementing the English language learning process. It allowed establishing that it involves the achievement of four purposes, namely practical, educational, educational and developmental. The study disclosed their meaning and essence, which in turn allowed identifying the main stages and vectors of English language learning at school.

The study identified various methods of practical implementation of interactive learning. Attention was devoted to cooperative learning, variable fours, carousel, microphone, and situational modelling. Within the framework of the study, they were identified and described, which allowed the establishment of how they can be implemented in students' learning activities. In addition, the research was organised and conducted. The participants were students of Yaroslav Mudryi Specialised School No. 301 with in-depth study of English. Respondents answered various questions about using interactive methods of learning English. As a result, it was possible to describe the current level of implementation of this approach within the selected educational institution and to establish that students prefer situational modelling as the most popular method. Using this form of activity encourages children to develop, express themselves freely, and use their English language skills in different situations. Future research should establish the role of digital tools in the process of primary school students' acquisition of foreign language skills. In addition, since the study was limited to only one school and a relatively small number of respondents, it is advisable to conduct similar surveys with a larger number of students, including those from other educational institutions in different regions, and to disaggregate the results by age of respondents: primary, middle and high school.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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Використання інтерактивних методів навчання на уроках англійської мови

Анотація. Вивчення іноземних мов, зокрема англійської, яка має інтернаціональне поширення, – важлива та обов’язкова складова частина навчального процесу в усіх видах навчальних закладів. Особливої актуальності набуває питання щодо використання модернізованих навчальних інструментів, які здатні підвищити ефективність процесу вивчення іноземної мови. Мета дослідження полягала у встановленні ефективних підходів до реалізації інтерактивних методів навчання англійської мови. У роботі використано низку методологічних інструментів, а саме: метод аналізу, синтезу, порівняння, абстрагування, дедукції. Для того щоб перевірити ставлення школярів до інтерактивних форм навчання та результативність цих новітніх підходів, проведено відповідне опитування серед учнів 2–11 класів. У результаті вдалося встановити, що інтерактивний підхід до організації навчального процесу має найбільшу ефективність, якщо порівнювати з іншими методиками, оскільки він дає змогу не лише пришвидшити процес викладання іноземної мови, зокрема англійської, а й також підвищити його ефективність. Доведено, що інтерактивні методи навчання можуть поділятися на кілька категорій, залежно від суб’єктів, які їх реалізують, а також способів їх використання. У дослідження вдалося встановити, що такий підхід до навчального процесу забезпечує якісний розвиток в учнів навичок говоріння, письма, читання та слухання. Це свідчить про системність інтерактивного підходу та можливість використовувати його для засвоєння різних навчальних тем. За підсумками проведеного опитування з’ясовано рівень готовності та зацікавленості учнів долучатися до інтерактивного вивчення іноземної. Практична цінність наукової роботи полягає в тому, що її можуть використати викладачі, готуючись до проведення навчальних занять з англійської мови, а також під час розробки освітніх планів та програм у школах

Ключові слова: освітній процес; школа; гра; учні; освітня взаємодія; вивчення іноземних мов