



## GAME TECHNOLOGIES AS A MEANS OF DEVELOPING VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AND COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITY IN PRIMARY FOREIGN LANGUAGE LESSONS

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**Abstract:** *The article analyses the use of game technologies as a means of developing vocabulary acquisition and communicative activity among primary school pupils in foreign language lessons. The study combines a focused review of recent research with pedagogical modelling. The aim is to determine how game-based tasks can move pupils from passive recognition of words to active use of lexical units in short communicative situations. The methods include analysis of studies on educational games, gamification and digital game-based language learning, as well as the construction of a classroom observation framework. The results are presented as a practical model consisting of game types, lesson stages and assessment indicators. The article finds that game technologies are most effective for vocabulary learning when they provide repeated exposure, visual support, peer interaction and immediate feedback. For communicative activity, the most productive tasks are role-play, information-gap games, pair challenges and team games with distributed speaking roles. The article concludes that game technologies should be used not as additional entertainment, but as an organized methodological tool integrated into lesson aims and assessment.*

**Keywords:** *vocabulary acquisition, communicative activity, game technologies, primary school pupils, foreign language lesson, IMRAD, pedagogical modeling*

## ИГРОВЫЕ ТЕХНОЛОГИИ КАК СРЕДСТВО РАЗВИТИЯ УСВОЕНИЯ ЛЕКСИКИ И КОММУНИКАТИВНОЙ АКТИВНОСТИ УЧАЩИХСЯ НАЧАЛЬНЫХ КЛАССОВ НА УРОКАХ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА

**Аннотация:** *В статье анализируется использование игровых технологий как средства развития усвоения лексики и коммуникативной активности учащихся начальной школы на уроках иностранного языка. Исследование сочетает целенаправленный обзор современных научных работ и педагогическое моделирование. Цель исследования заключается в определении того, каким образом игровые задания способны перевести учащихся от пассивного распознавания слов к активному использованию лексических единиц в кратких коммуникативных ситуациях. Методы исследования включают анализ работ, посвящённых*



образовательным играм, геймификации и цифровому игровому обучению иностранным языкам, а также разработку системы педагогического наблюдения на уроке. Результаты представлены в виде практической модели, включающей типы игр, этапы урока и показатели оценивания. Установлено, что игровые технологии наиболее эффективны для усвоения лексики при наличии многократного повторения, визуальной поддержки, взаимодействия между учащимися и немедленной обратной связи. Для развития коммуникативной активности наиболее продуктивными являются ролевые игры, информационно-дефицитные задания, парные соревнования и командные игры с распределением речевых ролей. В статье обосновывается, что игровые технологии должны использоваться не как дополнительное развлечение, а как организованный методический инструмент, интегрированный в цели урока и систему оценивания.

**Ключевые слова:** усвоение лексики, коммуникативная активность, игровые технологии, учащиеся начальной школы, урок иностранного языка, IMRAD, педагогическое моделирование

## BOSHLANG‘ICH SINIF O‘QUVCHILARINING XORIJIY TIL DARSLARIDA LUG‘AT O‘ZLASHTIRISHI VA KOMMUNIKATIV FAOLLIGINI RIVOJLANTIRISHDA O‘YIN TEXNOLOGIYALARI

**Annotatsiya:** Maqolada chet tili darolarida boshlang‘ich sinif o‘quvchilarining leksikani o‘zlashtirish va kommunikativ faolligini rivojlantirish vositasi sifatida o‘yin texnologiyalaridan foydalanish tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot zamonaviy ilmiy manbalarni maqsadli tahlil qilish va pedagogik modellashtirishni o‘zida birlashtiradi. Tadqiqotning maqsadi o‘yin asosidagi topshiriqlar o‘quvchilarni so‘zlarni passiv tanib olishdan qisqa kommunikativ vaziyatlarda leksik birliklarni faol qo‘llashga qanday olib o‘tishini aniqlashdan iborat. Tadqiqot metodlari ta‘limiy o‘yinlar, gamifikatsiya va chet tillarini raqamli o‘yin asosida o‘qitishga bag‘ishlangan ilmiy ishlarni tahlil qilish, shuningdek, dars jarayonini pedagogik kuzatish tizimini ishlab chiqishni o‘z ichiga oladi. Natijalar o‘yin turlari, dars bosqichlari va baholash ko‘rsatkichlarini qamrab olgan amaliy model shaklida taqdim etilgan. Aniqlanishicha, o‘yin texnologiyalari leksikani o‘zlashtirishda takroriy qo‘llash, vizual tayanch, o‘quvchilar o‘rtasidagi hamkorlik va tezkor qayta aloqa mavjud bo‘lgan hollarda eng samarali hisoblanadi. Kommunikativ faollikni rivojlantirish uchun esa rolli o‘yinlar, axborot almashishga asoslangan topshiriqlar, juftlikdagi musobaqalar va nutqiy rollar taqsimlangan jamoaviy o‘yinlar eng samarali vosita sifatida baholanadi. Maqolada o‘yin texnologiyalari qo‘shimcha ko‘ngilochar vosita sifatida emas, balki dars maqsadlari va baholash tizimiga integratsiyalashgan tashkiliy-metodik vosita sifatida qo‘llanishi zarurligi asoslab beriladi.



**Kalit so‘zlar:** *leksikani o‘zlashtirish, kommunikativ faollik, o‘yin texnologiyalari, boshlang‘ich sinf o‘quvchilari, chet tili darsi, pedagogik modellashtirish*

## INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary acquisition is one of the central tasks of foreign language teaching in primary school. A young learner cannot build even a simple utterance without a sufficient lexical base. At the same time, vocabulary is not acquired only through memorization. Pupils need to hear, see, repeat, choose and use a word in a situation. This process requires time, but primary school lessons are short, and pupils' attention changes quickly. Game technologies help the teacher organize repetition in a form that does not feel monotonous.

Communicative activity is another important problem. Many primary pupils are ready to repeat after the teacher, but they hesitate when they need to speak independently. They may know the word 'apple' or 'book', yet they do not always use it in a question or short answer. Games can help because they create a reason to speak. A pupil asks for a card, finds a partner, guesses an object, gives instructions or takes a role. The utterance is short, but it is functional. This is a modest beginning of communicative competence.

The relevance of the article is connected with the need to organize game technologies in a measurable way. In practical lessons, games are often evaluated by general impressions: pupils liked it, the lesson was active, the class

was cheerful. These impressions are useful, but they are not enough for research. The teacher and the researcher need to know whether pupils remembered more words, whether they used them more actively and whether quieter pupils were included in speaking tasks.

Recent studies support the importance of game-based approaches in language education. Saleh and Althaqafi (2022) used a quasi-experimental design with young learners and found that educational games supported engagement, knowledge absorption and retention in vocabulary learning. Zhou (2024) found that digital game-based learning enhanced enjoyment and positive L2 self-perception among EFL learners. Reviews on gamification also emphasize engagement but recommend broader evaluation beyond motivation alone (Ramirez Ruiz et al., 2024). These findings are important for primary school methodology because young learners need emotional involvement and visible progress at the same time.

The purpose of this article is to develop an IMRAD-based pedagogical model for using game technologies to improve vocabulary acquisition and communicative activity in primary foreign language lessons. The research question is: how can game technologies be organized so that they support both



lexical retention and elementary oral interaction?

## Methods

The article uses a focused review and pedagogical modelling design. It does not report fabricated classroom statistics. Instead, it develops a research-ready framework that can be applied in a master's dissertation or a school-based pilot study after actual data are collected. This methodological choice is important because the effectiveness of game technologies should be measured with real pupils, not with invented numbers.

The literature analysis focused on four groups of sources: studies on educational games for young learners, research on digital game-based language learning, systematic reviews on gamification and works on school engagement. The selected studies were examined according to three questions. First, what learning outcomes are usually connected with game technologies? Second, what game elements appear most useful for vocabulary learning and communication? Third, what methodological limitations are mentioned in the research?

The pedagogical modelling stage included the construction of a lesson algorithm and an observation rubric. The model is designed for primary school pupils learning a foreign language at beginner or elementary level. It can be used in English lessons, but the structure is flexible enough for other foreign languages. The model includes four lesson stages: presentation of vocabulary,

controlled game practice, communicative game practice and reflection. Each stage has its own task and assessment indicator.

The proposed observation rubric includes five indicators: number of correctly recalled lexical units, number of oral attempts, accuracy of short phrases, participation in pair or group interaction and emotional readiness to continue the task. The indicators are qualitative, but they can be transformed into a numerical scale for empirical research. For example, oral attempts may be counted during pair work, and vocabulary recall may be measured through pre-test and post-test tasks.

## Results

### 1. Game types for vocabulary acquisition

The analysis identifies four game types that are especially useful for vocabulary acquisition in primary foreign language lessons. The first type is a matching game. Pupils connect words with pictures, objects or actions. This task is useful at the recognition stage because it creates a visual association. The second type is a memory game. Pupils find pairs, recall hidden cards or reconstruct a word set. This type supports retention because it requires repeated return to the same lexical units.

The third type is a classification game. Pupils group words according to categories such as food, animals, school objects, colours or actions. Classification helps pupils organize vocabulary semantically. The fourth type is a movement game. Pupils move to the



correct picture, bring a card, follow an instruction or stand in a group. Movement is useful in primary school because it connects language with physical response and reduces passive sitting.

These games are effective when the teacher controls the number of new words. For primary pupils, too many lexical units in one game may create confusion. A reasonable set is usually small, especially at the first stage. It is better to practise six or eight words several times than to present fifteen words and leave them at the level of recognition.

## 2. Game types for communicative activity

The analysis also identifies game types that support elementary communication. Role-play is one of the most useful forms. In a shop game, pupils ask for an object. In a family game, they introduce a character. In a classroom game, they give and follow simple instructions. The role protects the pupil psychologically. The child speaks not

only as himself or herself, but as a shop assistant, visitor, teacher or cartoon character. This detail sometimes makes speaking easier.

Information-gap games are also productive. One pupil has a picture or card that another pupil does not see. To complete the task, pupils must ask and answer simple questions. The language is controlled, but the need for communication is real. Team games with distributed roles are useful when the teacher wants to include quieter pupils. One pupil asks, another records, a third checks, a fourth presents the result. In this structure, every pupil has a defined contribution.

The strongest communicative games are not necessarily the loudest ones. A pair dialogue with picture cards may create more language practice than a fast team competition. The key point is the number and quality of oral attempts. If each pupil says the target phrase several times, the game has methodological value.

Stage	Teacher action	Pupil action	Assessment focus
Presentation	Introduces 6-8 target words with pictures, gestures or real objects	Listen, repeat, connect word and image	Recognition and pronunciation
Controlled game practice	Organizes matching, memory or classification game	Choose, match, repeat and recall words	Vocabulary recall and accuracy
Communicative game practice	Provides role-play, pair task or information-gap game	Ask, answer, request, describe or guess	Oral attempts and phrase use
Reflection	Asks pupils what words and phrases were practised	Name easy and difficult items, repeat useful phrases	Awareness and readiness for reuse



### 3. Lesson algorithm

The proposed model includes the following lesson algorithm.

The model is simple, but it prevents a frequent problem in lesson planning. Teachers sometimes begin with a communicative game before pupils have enough lexical support. As a result, only stronger pupils speak. The proposed algorithm moves from recognition to controlled practice and then to short communication. This sequence gives weaker pupils more chances to participate.

### 4. Observation indicators

The developed observation framework includes both language and behavioural indicators. Vocabulary acquisition can be evaluated through correct naming, correct matching, delayed recall and use of words in short phrases. Communicative activity can be evaluated through oral attempts, pair participation, willingness to ask a question and ability to respond to a classmate. Emotional readiness can be observed through eye contact, voluntary participation and reaction to mistakes.

For future empirical work, these indicators can be converted into a five-point scale. A score of 1 may mean that the pupil avoids the task or cannot recall the word. A score of 3 may mean that the pupil recognizes the word and uses it with teacher support. A score of 5 may mean that the pupil uses the word independently in a short communicative phrase. Such a scale is not difficult to apply, but it requires careful observation.

The teacher should not evaluate only the fastest pupils.

### DISCUSSION

The results of the modelling process are close to the findings of contemporary research. Digital game-based language learning is often associated with motivation, vocabulary development and contextualized practice (Chowdhury et al., 2024). Educational games with young learners can support engagement and retention when compared with repetition-based methods (Saleh & Althaqafi, 2022). At the same time, systematic reviews warn that gamification should be evaluated more broadly than through motivation alone (Ramirez Ruiz et al., 2024). This is why the proposed model includes vocabulary, communication, cooperation and reflection.

A practical issue concerns the teacher's role. A game-based lesson does not reduce the teacher's responsibility. On the contrary, it increases the need for planning. The teacher chooses the target words, controls the rules, distributes roles, notices errors and gives feedback. If the teacher simply gives a game and observes from outside, active pupils may dominate. A well-organized game lesson is therefore not less structured than a traditional lesson. It is structured differently.

Another issue concerns assessment. In many primary foreign language classrooms, assessment of games remains informal. The teacher may say that pupils worked well, but such a comment does not provide enough research material.



The proposed observation indicators can help turn a game lesson into a source of pedagogical data. A researcher may compare the number of oral attempts before and after a series of game-based lessons. Vocabulary recall can be checked immediately after the lesson and again after several days. This delayed check is important because a game may create quick excitement but not long-term retention.

There are also limitations. The model needs empirical testing with real pupils. It should be adapted to class size, language level, school timetable and available materials. Digital games require technical access and teacher readiness. Non-digital games require cards, pictures and time for preparation. These limitations do not weaken the model, but they remind us that game technologies are not magic tools. They work through careful integration into the lesson.

## CONCLUSION

Game technologies can support vocabulary acquisition and communicative activity in primary

foreign language lessons when they are organized as purposeful pedagogical tasks. For vocabulary acquisition, the most useful games are matching, memory, classification and movement games. They provide repeated exposure, visual support and active recall. For communicative activity, role-play, information-gap tasks and pair games are especially useful because they create a reason to speak and reduce fear of error.

The article proposed a lesson algorithm and observation framework suitable for master's research and classroom practice. The model links presentation, controlled game practice, communicative game practice and reflection. It also defines indicators for evaluating vocabulary recall, oral participation, phrase accuracy, cooperation and emotional readiness. The next stage of research should be a small-scale pedagogical experiment with real pre-test and post-test data. Such data will make it possible to measure the pedagogical effectiveness of game technologies more precisely.

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