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APPLYING THE LATEST INTERACTIVE METHODS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

The teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) has shifted from traditional teacher-centered approaches toward interactive, learner-centered methods. This article examines the effectiveness of modern interactive techniques such as digital tools, role-play, project-based learning, gamification, blended learning, and collaborative activities. Practical examples are provided to demonstrate how these strategies can improve learner motivation, communication, and critical thinking. By analyzing recent empirical studies, this article highlights how interactive approaches contribute to developing communicative competence and preparing students for real-life situations.

Keywords: Interactive methods, English language teaching, gamification, blended learning, role-play, project-based learning, collaborative learning.

Introduction

In the 21st century, English language teaching (ELT) has become increasingly dynamic, shaped by technological innovations and new pedagogical paradigms. Traditional grammar-based instruction, which dominated classrooms for decades, is often insufficient to meet learners' communicative and professional needs (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 22). Globalization, mobility, and the demand for international communication require learners to master not only linguistic accuracy but also fluency, creativity, and intercultural competence.

Interactive teaching methods emerged as a response to these needs, emphasizing active student participation, real-life communication, and problem-solving. They



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create opportunities for learners to engage in authentic tasks, thus enhancing both cognitive and affective aspects of language learning. Scholars such as Johnson and Johnson (2009, p. 367) argue that cooperative and interactive learning strategies improve both academic achievement and interpersonal skills.

This paper investigates six key interactive methods—digital tools, role-play, project-based learning, gamification, blended learning, and collaborative learning—and analyzes their application in EFL classrooms.

Methodology

The methodology of this article is based on a qualitative literature review of recent academic research (2005–2023) related to interactive approaches in English language teaching. Data was collected from peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, and published books. Sources were analyzed to evaluate:

- The effectiveness of interactive strategies in EFL classrooms.
- The impact of these methods on learner motivation, communication, and critical thinking.
- Practical applications and examples of each method.

Comparative analysis was used to identify patterns across studies. This method allowed for a synthesis of empirical evidence to provide a comprehensive perspective on how interactive methods enhance learning outcomes.

Results

The literature review revealed the following outcomes regarding the application of interactive methods in ELT:

1. **Digital tools** such as Kahoot!, Quizlet, and Edmodo improve vocabulary acquisition and grammar retention through gamified quizzes and online collaboration (Wang, 2015, p. 220).
2. **Role-play and simulations** enhance learners' fluency, reduce anxiety, and provide opportunities for practicing real-life dialogues (Ladousse, 2009, p. 15).
3. **Project-based learning (PBL)** fosters critical thinking, teamwork, and research skills, particularly when tasks integrate both content and language objectives (Beckett & Slater, 2005, p. 111).



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4. **Gamification** significantly increases student motivation by incorporating points, badges, and leaderboards, turning learning into an engaging process (Deterding et al., 2011, p. 12).
5. **Blended learning and flipped classrooms** enable students to review theoretical materials online before class, leaving classroom time for practical communication activities (Bishop & Verleger, 2013, p. 8).
6. **Collaborative learning** develops not only linguistic competence but also social and intercultural awareness through debates, group problem-solving, and peer feedback (Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 370).

Analysis and Discussion

Digital Tools and Online Platforms

The integration of digital tools has transformed EFL classrooms into interactive environments. Research shows that applications like Kahoot! increase classroom participation and retention rates compared to traditional drills (Wang, 2015, p. 222). Moreover, mobile applications allow learners to continue practicing outside of class, thereby extending learning opportunities (Godwin-Jones, 2018, p. 12).

Role-Play and Simulations

Role-play activities simulate authentic communication and develop communicative competence. For instance, simulating a job interview allows learners to apply vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatic strategies simultaneously. According to Ladousse (2009, p. 25), role-play also reduces psychological barriers such as speaking anxiety, encouraging risk-taking in communication.

Project-Based Learning

PBL encourages students to work collaboratively on long-term projects, integrating language with real-world issues. Beckett and Slater (2005, p. 113) highlight that projects such as designing an English-language magazine or creating tourism brochures lead to the meaningful use of vocabulary and grammar. Recent studies (Fragoulis, 2009, p. 287) confirm that project work strengthens motivation and learner autonomy.



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Gamification

Gamification is increasingly applied in higher education. Deterding et al. (2011, p. 14) argue that introducing competition elements stimulates intrinsic motivation. In ELT, vocabulary games and grammar challenges motivate learners to practice repetitively without boredom. Hamari et al. (2014, p. 303) provide evidence that gamified platforms significantly improve engagement and time-on-task.

Blended Learning and Flipped Classroom

Blended learning combines digital resources with classroom practice. Bishop and Verleger (2013, p. 9) show that flipped classrooms improve learners' preparation and active participation. For example, students who study grammar explanations at home can spend class time applying grammar in discussions and writing tasks. This model aligns with constructivist principles, where learners actively build knowledge rather than passively receive it.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative approaches—debates, group discussions, peer assessment—encourage learners to co-construct meaning. Johnson and Johnson (2009, p. 371) emphasize that collaborative learning increases not only linguistic skills but also intercultural competence. Studies also suggest that learners engaged in group tasks develop problem-solving and leadership abilities, essential in academic and professional contexts (Gillies, 2016, p. 40).

Conclusion

The findings demonstrate that interactive teaching methods are essential in modern EFL classrooms. Digital tools, role-play, project-based learning, gamification, blended learning, and collaborative learning create dynamic, learner-centered environments that enhance motivation, creativity, and communication. By shifting focus from teacher-centered to student-centered learning, these methods prepare learners for authentic communication in academic, professional, and social contexts. Teachers and curriculum developers are encouraged to integrate these methods systematically, adapting them to specific contexts and learner needs. Continuous



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professional development and research into innovative approaches remain vital for ensuring the effectiveness of English language teaching in the digital age.

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