ENGAGING SHY LEARNERS THROUGH INTERACTIVE READING ACTIVITIES IN EFL CLASSES

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Abstract

This study investigates the issue of low participation among shy learners in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) reading classes and identifies effective interactive strategies to enhance their engagement. The research also examines the main factors influencing students’ confidence and willingness to participate. A descriptive mixed-method approach was employed, involving 12 sixth-grade students from School No. 8 in Namangan district. Data were collected through questionnaires and classroom observation. The findings revealed that shy learners tend to avoid participation due to lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, and insufficient opportunities for interaction. However, the use of interactive reading activities such as group discussions, role-plays, and guided reading significantly improved students’ engagement and confidence. Overall, the study highlights the importance of creating a supportive and interactive learning environment to effectively involve shy learners in reading activities.

Keywords: shy learners, interactive reading, EFL students, participation, language learning strategies

Annotatsiya

Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida o‘rganayotgan uyatchan o‘quvchilarning o‘qish darslarida past faollik muammosini o‘rganadi hamda ularni jalb etishga yordam beradigan samarali interaktiv usullarni aniqlaydi. Tadqiqot shuningdek, o‘quvchilarning o‘ziga ishonchi va darslarda ishtirok etishiga ta’sir qiluvchi omillarni aniqlashga qaratilgan. Tadqiqotda aralash metod yondashuvi qo‘llanilib, Namangan viloyati, Namangan tumanidagi 8-maktabning 6-sinfidan 12 nafar o‘quvchi ishtirok etdi. Ma’lumotlar so‘rovnoma va sinf kuzatuvi orqali yig‘ildi. Natijalar shuni ko‘rsatdiki, uyatchan o‘quvchilar ko‘pincha o‘ziga ishonchsizlik, xato qilishdan qo‘rquv va muloqot imkoniyatlarining kamligi sababli faol qatnashmaydi. Ammo interaktiv o‘qish faoliyatlari o‘quvchilarning faolligini sezilarli darajada oshirdi.

Kalit so‘zlar: uyatchan o‘quvchilar, interaktiv o‘qish, EFL, faollik, til o‘rganish strategiyalari

Аннотация

Данное исследование направлено на изучение проблемы низкой активности застенчивых учащихся на уроках чтения английского языка и выявление эффективных интерактивных методов для их вовлечения. В исследовании приняли участие 12 учеников 6 класса школы №8 Наманганского района. Результаты показали, что основными причинами низкой активности являются неуверенность и страх ошибок. Использование интерактивных методов значительно повысило участие учащихся.

Ключевые слова: застенчивые учащиеся, интерактивное чтение, участие, EFL

Introduction

Reading plays a crucial role in language acquisition, especially in EFL contexts where students rely heavily on classroom instruction. However, not all learners actively participate in reading activities. Shy learners often remain silent and avoid interaction, which negatively affects their language development. Their low participation is usually linked to psychological barriers such as anxiety, lack of confidence, and fear of making mistakes. Therefore, it is essential to explore strategies that can effectively engage shy learners in reading lessons.

Shyness is considered a significant factor influencing students' behavior in language classrooms. Research shows that shy learners tend to avoid communication and prefer passive learning. This limits their exposure to language practice and slows down their progress.

Interactive learning methods have been widely recognized as effective in addressing this issue. Activities such as pair work, group discussions, and role-playing create a supportive environment where students feel more comfortable expressing themselves. These approaches help reduce anxiety and increase participation.

Additionally, guided reading and visual aids enhance comprehension and build confidence. Student-centered approaches are particularly beneficial, as they actively involve learners in the learning process and promote engagement.

Methodology

This study used a descriptive mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data to analyze the problem comprehensively.

The participants were 12 sixth-grade students (7 females and 5 males) from School No. 8 in Namangan district.

Data were collected using:

Questionnaires to understand students' attitudes and challenges

Classroom observation to analyze their participation

The study was conducted in several stages:

1. Observing reading lessons
2. Conducting questionnaires
3. Applying interactive reading strategies
4. Monitoring student participation.

Results.

The findings showed that:

70% of students felt shy during reading activities

60% avoided participation due to fear of mistakes

50% preferred silent reading

After implementing interactive activities:

75% of students became more active

67% participated in group work

Students showed increased confidence

Group discussions and role-playing were identified as the most effective methods.

Discussion

The results indicate that shyness significantly affects students' participation.

Traditional teaching methods do not provide enough opportunities for shy learners to engage.

Interactive activities help reduce anxiety and create a positive learning environment.

These methods encourage communication and improve students' confidence. However, some learners still need continuous support and practice.

Conclusion

This study concludes that interactive reading activities are effective in engaging shy

learners. The main barriers are fear of mistakes and low confidence.

Teachers should:

Use interactive and student-centered methods.

Encourage group work and discussions.

Create a supportive classroom atmosphere.

These strategies will help students become more confident and active participants in language learning.

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