

# ENHANCEMENT OF COMMUNICATION ABILITIES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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## Abstract

The article analyzes the peculiarities of developing communicative competence in elementary school students through educational games. It examines the initial level of communication skills and abilities in schoolchildren through experimental research. The article also distinguishes between the concepts of "communicative competence" and "language competence." The analysis highlights the main methods for integrating games into the educational process to foster communicative competence in elementary school students. The impact of educational games on the development of communicative competence is discussed, noting that it involves more than just acquiring language and speech knowledge. It also encompasses the practical use of language in communication, including the ability to choose appropriate communication strategies and apply relevant skills. The process of forming communicative competence in elementary school students includes developing verbal and nonverbal communication skills, enhancing both dialogue and monologue speech, mastering oral and written language culture, and acquiring the ability to navigate various communicative situations.

**Keywords:** Elementary school student, educational process, communicative competence, language competence, educational game.

## Introduction

The process of forming communicative competence in elementary school students includes developing verbal and nonverbal communication skills, enhancing both dialogue and monologue speech, mastering oral and written language culture, and acquiring the ability to navigate various communicative situations.

The importance of forming communicative competence in elementary school students is determined by the current demands for organizing the educational process in high schools. Today, pedagogy emphasizes the selection of student-centered teaching methods and forms that cater to the child's interests, creative potential, and abilities. The elementary school age is particularly advantageous for developing communication skills, as children at this stage are highly receptive to learning. They easily develop listening skills and articulation, enjoy acquiring new words and phrases, master linguistic structures, and are eager to communicate, quickly gaining experience in speech.

The analysis of psychological, pedagogical, and methodological literature led to the understanding of communicative competence in elementary school students as an integral



personality trait. This competence is defined as the ability to establish a motivational and value-based foundation for communication, acquire and apply language skills, build and maintain relationships with others using various forms of interaction, work effectively in groups, and assume different social roles.

To clarify the concept of communicative competence, it is important to define the term "competence." We align with the analysis conducted by I. Cherezova, who points out that a competent person is one who possesses sufficient knowledge in a specific field—someone who is knowledgeable, intelligent, and qualified, with the necessary authority to solve problems with expertise. Competence, according to Cherezova, refers to the scope of issues in which an individual is well-versed.

Therefore, the process of developing communicative competence in primary school students includes:

- Mastering the skills and abilities to use verbal and nonverbal communication; developing both dialogic and monologue speech.
- Acquiring the culture of oral and written communication.
- Learning the norms of speech etiquette in both educational and everyday communication contexts.
- Developing skills to navigate a variety of communicative situations.
- Enhancing the ability to engage in constructive communication in daily life.
- Gaining experience in group work, team collaboration, and developing skills for educational interaction and cooperation.
- Forming the ability to critically evaluate the opinions and actions of others.

Thus, communicative competence involves not only the acquisition of language and speech knowledge but also the development of practical language usage skills in speech. It reflects the level of an individual's communicative abilities, the capacity to choose appropriate communication strategies, and the application of relevant skills.

It is important to note that elementary school is a crucial period for personality development, where ease and proficiency in communication, as well as the ability to establish contacts, can significantly influence a student's future success in school, work, and life in general. During this period, children also learn responsibility, the importance of making and fulfilling promises, and how to build relationships with others.

To develop communicative competence, it is beneficial to:

1. Utilize basic vocabulary during language and reading lessons, which not only helps expand students' active vocabulary and speaking skills but also enhances their comprehension of the theoretical content being studied.
2. Incorporate tasks that encourage creative thinking and problem-solving among students.
3. Teach students how to use reference materials and additional literature effectively.
4. Foster a positive and comfortable classroom environment that promotes interaction, cooperation, and collaboration.
5. Identify and nurture students' learning motivations.
6. Create opportunities for success to boost students' confidence and enthusiasm.



7. Implement modern interactive technologies, as creativity in teaching is essential for nurturing creative students.

Games play a crucial role in developing the communicative competence of elementary school students.

It is widely recognized that play is a key activity for young learners. It helps break down psychological barriers in communication, boosts initiative and engagement, stimulates positive emotions, has a beneficial impact on the brain, and fosters a lasting interest in language learning.

Educational games (didactic, cognitive, intellectual) aid in reinforcing vocabulary and grammar by encouraging repeated exposure and application of the material. They also promote motivated use of language in new, game-based contexts. Through play, children develop essential communication skills and social qualities needed for interacting with peers.

However, when using didactic games, the following principles should be observed:

1. Games should align with the students' age, individual characteristics, and specific educational and language needs.
2. The game's form and content must be pedagogically and didactically sound.
3. Efforts should be made to involve as many children as possible in the game.
4. Games should support the development of all types of speech activity.

In primary education, teachers incorporate didactic games in the following ways:

- Verbal formats
- Combinations of words with real objects
- Integration of words with educational materials
- Pairing words with actions

I also suggest several games that can be used during morning meetings and when studying the integrated course "I Explore the World," which further contribute to developing communicative competence in primary school students:

• **Game "Presentation"**: The objective of this game is for students to perform for an audience, such as grandparents, by showcasing their work or reciting a poem. This game helps students gain the confidence to speak in front of others and overcome the common fear of public speaking.

• **Game "What's Going on in the Picture?"**: In this game, students describe in detail what they observe in a picture, including colors, people, actions, and more. This activity enhances communication skills by encouraging detailed verbal expression.

• **Game "Finish the Story"**: The teacher begins a story, and the students are asked to complete it. This game aids in expanding students' vocabulary and creative thinking.

• **Game "Improvisation"**: Students pick topics written on pieces of paper placed in a box and improvise on the selected topic. This game encourages spontaneous thinking and verbal expression.



- **Game "Create a Story"**: Students are shown illustrations from a book and are told the story's content. They are then tasked with arranging the pictures in the correct order and retelling the story using the visuals. This game helps develop narrative skills.

- **Game "Emotional Charades"**: Emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger, and fear are written on cards. Students pick a card and, without speaking, act out the emotion. This game is especially helpful for children who may have difficulty recognizing emotions through facial expressions.

- **Game "Leader Change"**: A child plays the leader in the center of the circle, performing simple actions such as clapping or stomping while expressing an emotion. Everyone in the circle must follow the leader's actions. The leader then signals a change, and the new leader continues the game. This game helps students focus on nonverbal cues and emotional expression.

- **Game "Phone"**: A classic communication game where children form a circle. The first player whispers a phrase to their neighbor, and the phrase is passed around the circle. At the end, the first player compares the original phrase with what the last player heard, often leading to humorous misunderstandings, which promotes listening and communication.

- **Game "Twenty Questions"**: In this game, one student sits in the center and thinks of a person, place, or object. The other players ask up to 20 yes-or-no questions to guess what it is. If they cannot guess after 20 questions, the student in the center wins. This game encourages asking precise questions and thinking critically.

These educational games effectively support the development of communicative competence in elementary school students. Their implementation is grounded in key principles such as humanization, the democratization of the educational process, and replacing authoritarian methods with a more tolerant and inclusive pedagogy.

The development of communicative competence is closely linked to the careful selection and use of teaching methods that align with the educational topic, as well as to the overall activation of the learning process. This can be achieved by incorporating various tools and games into the teaching strategy, particularly those that focus on enhancing primary school students' communication skills. These activities help to address the age-specific needs of children, foster initiative, and cultivate an atmosphere of freedom, independence, and creativity, while also providing opportunities for self-development.

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