

GAMES AS A TOOL OF TEACHING

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Abstract

With a rapid growth of information and new discoveries, curricula at schools and universities have been massively overloaded in recent years. At the same time, modern technologies, which have accelerated the learning process in many ways, cause a lack of learning through our own experience. A solution to this state can be a game as a means of linking formal and informal learning. The use of a game might be diverse: gamification of a class with simple gaming activities folded into a game story using a scoring system, comprehensive educational games based on role-playing, or using an ICT game as a tool for recognition of the area of student's interest, a tool for asking new questions, and a tool for offering the desired experience. With regard to the knowledge, we have about the learning process, it is clear that experience is still the most effective way of learning, with long-lasting sustainability. So, if we offer experience in an appropriate way, we can make the entire learning and educational process more effective.

Keywords: human culture, ontogenesis, immemorial, phylogeny, RPG, moral quality.

A game is an important tool for learner who are learning languages and a game may take many forms and, therefore, many different definitions. A game has been a part of human culture since time immemorial, and in terms of phylogeny, it has undergone transformations of form, purpose, and style and defined the cultures. Similarly, from the point of view of ontogenesis, a game is closely linked to the child's early age as one of the most basic ways of learning. Although the game gradually changes with adolescence, it accompanies us throughout our lives and has an irreplaceable role. Many researchers have dealt with the role of a game and its importance in human life. To put it simply, we will understand a game as a formal rule-based system in which the player makes an effort to influence the outcome. Because the definition of the game is very universal, it is understandable that there are a number of game classifications and different game typologies. Some sources divide the game into almost 80 categories by number of players, relation between the game and player and between the game and the outside world, or with regard to the fact whether the game is competitive, strategic, sports, computer, social, etc. In most cases, it is not important to specifically classify a game, and it often happens that a game overlaps several categories; therefore, we will not deal with it.

Besides the fact that a game is absolutely natural to us, we often have several other reasons to enjoy it. Sometimes we just need to completely clear our mind to allow our brain to refresh itself and recalibrate all of its functions (we look for simple routine games, often sports games), or we need to escape the everyday reality and we want to be someone else (we look for RPG games or strategy games), we want company or we want to be alone (looking for collective games or single-player games), etc. A game will also allow us to experience a story virtually, to try out other roles, to restructure social hierarchy. Many of today's games will give us space to participate in the process of creating the story. We can test what it would be like to "do something" with the knowledge of safety that our action will not have consequences. The main rule of every game is what happens in the game stays in the game environment, with no real consequences. The vital importance of learning is that it enables living organisms to adapt

to changing conditions of the material and social environment. All living organisms learn, from the first to the last day of life, in all environments (in different ways and things). Human learning is a relatively permanent change in a person's knowledge or behaviour due to experience.

The concept of learning in psychology refers to the process in which changes in behaviour, mental, and personality occur in a person, through new knowledge, new skills, and mainly through experience. As a result of the learning process at the psychological level, there are not only newly acquired information, opinions, and new patterns of behaviour but also changes in emotional experience, changes in cognitive processes (e.g., in the way of perception and thinking), changes in personality traits (e.g., self-concept, motivation, moral qualities, abilities, skills, etc.), and changes in relationships with other people. Changes that occur during the life of a person in his/her psyche, personality, and behaviour are the results of the simultaneous action of both major development processes: biological maturation and learning. Moreover, maturation and learning are a dialectical relationship, interacting and conditioning each other.

Memory processes, as one of the cognitive processes, are often divided into three phases: encoding, storage, and retrieval. During storage, the brain does not store the received information in the same way (even the same kind of information). The way it is stored is likely to be determined by the type of information and its importance to the individual's life. The importance of information is probably judged by the brain according to the following:

Attention that is given to information and interest that the information has generated. We pay more attention to information that is vital or of great interest to us.

Emotional reaction that has been activated by information. More attention is given to information that impresses our emotions and is considered more important.

Repetition, frequency of occurrence of information (or activity).

These findings can be used to increase the learning efficiency by deliberately inducing attention, emotional engagement, and repetition.

Education is usually defined as the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university. Although education and learning are closely intertwined, the basic difference is that while learning is about the person itself, education is connected with other people—usually a teacher and a learner are needed. Any scientific approach we tend to, we can say that education has always been and will always be the synthesis of several entities—school, family, institution of informal education, and society as well. By formal education, we mean a systematic intentional way provided by a trained teacher. Informal education is the part outside the formal education and is realised in a family, peer group, by mass media, and by institution of informal education (museum, library, science centre, etc.).

To sum up, games as tools of learning and teaching can be used in any educational institution, but the effective use of games undoubtedly puts the pressure to the teachers and instructors. Furthermore, games are likely to engage students or learners to the subject that is being conducted.

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