ONLINE GAMES ARE BECOMING HANDY TOOLS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS TO EXPLAIN NEW VOCABULARY FOR BOTH ADULT AND YOUNG LEARNERS

Abstract. It is undeniable that the wide spread of the Coronavirus (can be officially called COVID-19 previously known as "2019 novel coronavirus") caused innumerable replacements in how learners are taught around the world. School, high educational institution closures mandated by governments in an attempt to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Educational and governmental officials in Uzbekistan weighed the benefits of in-person schooling against the risks posed by COVID-19 spread. "Due to coronavirus, all higher education institutions' students, schoolchildren and children of preschool education institutions of Uzbekistan were closed on vocation starting March 16, 2020" stated at the meeting held by the Prime Minister of Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Education, school, Coronavirus, government, knowledge, learners, vocabulary, students, online platforms, distance learning.

РЕЗЮМЕ
Нельзя отрицать, что широкое распространение коронавируса (можно официально назвать COVID-19, ранее известный как «2019 нового
The coronavirus pandemic sweeping around the world, posed unexpected challenges and requirements for education. In Uzbekistan, since March 16, after the detection of the first case of coronavirus infection, the traditional educational process in schools has been temporarily suspended. Students were transferred to distance learning. Virtual learning minimized the advantages of face-to-face learning as there are great limitations in interaction between the teacher and students.

One essential component in language learning is vocabulary knowledge. The importance of vocabulary can be felt in the stages where students have to convey meanings in communication. As Oxford (1990) stated "strong vocabulary knowledge will enable students to acquire and apply their knowledge in the language. Unfortunately, English teachers faced problems in the application of the methods that are for vocabulary explanations in quarantine period in Uzbekistan.
The reason is that almost all teachers strongly relied on face-to-face methods that definitely magnified vocabulary basis of the students.

One feasible suggestion given to traditional teachers is to consult with professors in abroad to exchange valuable methods in teaching vocabulary virtually to learners. The reason is that teachers in abroad have a wide experience in virtual teaching as it has been common for decades because of high teaching technology resources and requirements of students around the developing word.

Prior to boosting new era’s modern applications in teaching vocabulary online, as an author I want to highlight the weak sides of traditional vocabulary teaching method that are still been found in Uzbek classrooms. If we take, repetition, drilling and chorus as techniques, they are considered to be old methods goes to several centuries ago. Simply, making students to drill the words they learnt will definitely not give any enhancement in vocabulary knowledge. The reason is there is no any engagement or interest from the side of the learners. Harmer states (1991) “Traditional technique that was quintessential in previous era of teaching should not be used for too long or too frequently in modern teaching” (p.92). Additionally, Brown (1994) celebrates the fact that “Nowadays, thankfully, we have developed teaching practices that make only minimal- or optimal use of such drilling” (p.138).

As an author I opt the view that if drilling and another traditional teaching techniques are combines with online games they without doubt show high results in the memorization of new words in learners.

**Great vocabulary Games, Apps and Sites**

Building vocabulary through online lessons depends on students getting early, frequent and sustained exposure to words that expand their horizons. Teachers should opt useful, time savvy apps and sites that are found to be totally learner
friendly. Most applications designed to teach word definitions, uses and meanings to learners and feature tech-enabled supports, customable flashcards, adaptive instruction and clear gameplay. Teachers alternatively can craft various activities depending on their students’ needs and wants. Moreover, focusing on lesson type teachers can alter the type of app or site and create more effective lessons with needed activities. There is no limit in the selection of applications as each of them serve for different purposes. Importantly, teachers can create special assessment in the vocabulary applications to check students’ progress through the course. Vocabulary assessments also help to keep students’ vocabulary skills on track.

The demonstration of the best 2020’s Vocabulary Applications

1. Kahoot. (https://kahoot.it/) This teaching vocabulary and practicing it online platform helps teachers to engage learners in vocabulary learning. The benefits of this platform is wide as it has individual and group work features for students to compete in various online tours. Energetic sound system and background music motivate learners to be in energetic mood to find correct word choice and phrases in tests. Another good point for teachers is that there are ready test questions prepared before hand for teachers use. Teachers can make changes in them or decorate test questions with illustrative pictures or videos.

2. Quizlet (Quizlet.com) This application provides subject related quizzes, tests, flashcards and games for classroom to work in groups to practice vocabulary online. It is competitive online platform in which students make points to win another rival group. The features of the app such as (individual/ group work, time limit for each answer, number of points gained) can be selected by the teacher. Groups are given funny applauds and audio
cheers by the app for each correct answer. This is a teacher friendly app as it has subject related ready made questions from beginner to advanced level.

3. **Jeopardy** This platform comes from a real show game played by American players on TV. This game can be played in groups or individually. Players should pick a category and a point value and click on the chosen bod for the hidden question. Teacher can optimize the game and add time limit for the students to give a clear answer. To check student’s answer player should click the question for the second time. If the question is right player will receive promised score from the game. Next player will click “Back to Board” button to continue the game. Player with the most points wins the game.

4. **Puzzle juice.** This game is the combination of Tetris+Boogle+ word learning+ ultimate language fun. Puzzle juice offers learners a fun challenge in both classroom and out of it that incorporates logic and language. This app teachers word definitions, uses, synonyms, antonyms and word combinations within context.

5. **Beck and Bo.** Current application provides the best opportunities in vocabulary learning in context. As Nation states (2013) “teaching vocabulary in context is rather difficult in comparison with other teaching methods”. Beck and Bo game platform gives learners a chance to discover real adventures online and learn new words through it. This game enhances learners’ creativity and logic and definitely word basis.

**Conclusion.**

In conclusion, online platforms and games are the requirements of today’s education in vocabulary teaching. Platforms mentioned above should replace the traditional ways of vocabulary teaching and make this process funny and enjoyable
for the learners. The benefits for the teacher are uncountable as teachers can control over the program or can make various modification and change features of the program depending on students’ needs and wants. Teachers will not face difficulties in assessing students’ progress as each application calculates points of students and announces gained points at the end of the game. Students’ motivation and enthusiasm will grow significantly as online games, websites and applications are designed specially for learners in different age groups and levels. Online vocabulary games and applications are handy tools for learners as they can check the pronunciation of the word without leaving the application. As an author I recommend above mentioned applications for Uzbek teachers to put in practice in their online lessons.

References:


