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Hry se zaměřením na gramatiku ve
výuce angličtiny pro dospělé
Games Focused on Grammar in
Teaching English to Adults

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Anotace

Bakalářská práce zkoumá úspěšnost na gramatických her, které mohou být využity ve výuce anglického jazyka pro dospělé. Teoretická část se soustředí na řádné vysvětlení používaných termínů a na různé aspekty, které by učitel neměl opominout při vybírání či při přetváření hry. Dále pak představuje i teorii mnohočetných inteligencí jako jeden aspekt výběru her. Praktická část pak nabízí tři konkrétní příklady na dvou skupinách studentů s mnohočetnými inteligencemi.

Klíčová slova: hra, gramatika, mnohočetné intelligence

Annotation

This bachelor's thesis explores the successfulness of grammar games that can be used when teaching English to adults. The theoretical part concentrates on thorough explanation of the terms used and on different aspects that the teacher should not fail to use when choosing or altering a game. Furthermore the thesis introduces the theory of multiple intelligences as one of the aspects for the choice of games. The practical part then offers three specific examples practiced with two groups of students with multiple intelligences.

Key words: game, grammar, multiple intelligences

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1. Introduction

This Paper focuses on the utility of games in teaching language to adults. Games in language teaching are mainly connected with educating children. However, more and more teachers are implementing games in their adult classes to teach or practise the students' receptive and productive skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking. (Harmer 2006, 199-202)

Games should be an entertaining as well as a productive part of the lesson and they should not be used as “a time-filler or, worse, a time-waster“(Rixon 1990, 1).

This thesis is divided into two parts. The first part concentrates on the theoretical aspect of grammar games and the second part on the practice of these games in a class. The theoretical part describes the key terms of *grammar* and *game*. It introduces Garndner's theory of multiple intelligences and talks about what suits one type of intelligence but may not be appropriate for a different type. This part also explains how to choose a game and what aspects the teacher should bear in mind when doing so.

The practical part shows three examples of grammar games played by two slightly different groups of students with about the same multiple intelligences. The games were chosen according to the findings in the theoretical part and were also changed to suit the students' needs as much as possible.

Each game is described in detail and shows the aim, the materials needed for the activity, the changes made to suit the needs of the students, the procedure and the reflection. Every activity is also followed by an exercise that checks the students' understanding of the subject and comments on the mistakes made by the learners.

The main reason for writing this thesis is to point out that teaching is not only about

transmitting information from one point to the other point but more about the students. Students of different ages have different needs, interests and problems. The games can then help us to give students an opportunity to relax and to teach them at the same time in a very natural way.

2. Theoretical part

2.1. Defining basic terms

2.1.1. Game

“A game is an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun” (Hadfield 2003, 4).

According to Hadfield we can divide games into two basic categories: competitive games and cooperative games. Competitive games involve a race among the participants as they try their best to be first. On the other hand, cooperative games test the players' ability to work together.

Furthermore, language games can be split into two more categories: linguistic and communicative games. Linguistic games concentrate on the correct use of language with the means of grammar whilst communicative games assign importance to completing a given task more than to the accuracy of the linguistic aspect. (Hadfield 2002, 4)

2.1.2. Grammar

The term *grammar* is difficult to define. This notion can be viewed from many different aspects. We can hear it when talking about generative grammar, transformational grammar, structuralist grammar etc. And the only thing they share is language. (Greenbaum 1988, 20)

Also we may define grammar of a language as a collection of different ways to combine words that carry a meaning. Every language has its own rules for combining linguistic

elements together and in all languages it is essential to know these rules. “Grammar communicates meanings – meanings of a very precise kind.”(Thornbury 1999, 3).

So the sequences of words sent by a speaker transmit a certain message in any communication process to the recipient and the message should be understood by the recipient in the same or a very similar way. The speaker knows that it has been understood by the feedback given by the receiver of the message. So if the speaker says *I would like some water, please.*, the recipient of this message should understand that the speaker is asking him for a glass of water and is not asking him to water the flowers for example.(Müllerová 2001, 10-12)

And finally from the student's point of view grammar often means a large book covered in dust about something very confusing and unnecessary, or “a cluster of prohibitions that make people worry about whether they speak their own language properly.” (Swan 2005, 3)

But for the purpose of this thesis the term grammar will be defined as “the set of rules that allow us to combine words in our language into larger units. Another term for grammar in this sense is syntax.” (Greenbaum and Nelson 2002,1) It tells us that in English some combinations of words are possible to use and others would be classified as unacceptable. (Greenbaum, Nelson 2002, 1)

2.1.3. Multiple Intelligences

The theory of multiple intelligences was first propounded by Gardner (1983), who claimed that there were more than only logical-mathematical, linguistic and spatial intelligences for which tests were made at that time. He argued that a child who did not excel in solving mathematical problems could most likely predominate in a different field and should not be proclaimed unintelligent. Another good example would be a

quote by Albert Einstein: “Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.” (Goodreads 2013)

Therefore, Gardner also identifies intrapersonal, interpersonal, logical-mathematical, linguistic, musical, spatial and bodily-kinaesthetic intelligences. (Puchta, Rinvolutri 2010, 7)

2.1.3.1. Intrapersonal intelligence

Intrapersonal intelligence is an ability of a person to recognise his/her emotions, to understand them and to control them. A person with higher intrapersonal intelligence can, for example, speak very calmly even though he/she feels upset or nervous, he/she knows about his real feelings but does not want to show them. (Gardner 1999, 260)

2.1.3.2. Interpersonal intelligence

On the other hand interpersonal intelligence is directed at other people and it “is the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals and, in particular, among their moods, temperaments and motivations and intentions.”(Puchta and Rinvolutri 2010, 8) People possessing this intelligence excel at professions such as teaching and counselling because they can empathize with others very easily. Because they are able to concentrate on what the others say and what they mean by that rather than on what the recipient of the message thinks. (Gardner 1999, 261) A good example of this may be a husband talking to his wife. The husband says that he would like to go out with his friends to have a men's night out. The wife as the recipient of this message possesses highly developed interpersonal intelligence and understands it as e.g. *My partner would like to entertain himself with his friends and I completely understand it, because he needs to speak with men about interests that I or any other woman would not enjoy discussing.* However, if the wife had lower interpersonal intelligence she may

comprehend the message as e.g. *My husband desires to go out with his friends, because he does not want to spend time with me. I think he does not love me.*

2.1.3.3. Logical-mathematical intelligence

Logical-mathematical intelligence “can be associated with “scientific“ thinking.“ (Puchta and Rinvulcri 2010, 8). Therefore people with strong logical-mathematical intelligence excel at reasoning, recognizing patterns, analyzing diverse problems and usually enjoy talking about abstract ideas. (Gardner 1999, 160-165) So these individuals would surpass others in jobs such as accountants, mathematicians, scientists or in jobs connected to information technologies, etc.

2.1.3.4. Linguistic intelligence

Among the aspects that define a person with developed linguistic intelligence is creativity in written expressions. These people manage to use many linguistic units to describe one thing or idea, moreover he/she narrates using colourful phrases and formulations. Furthermore “for a person with a strong linguistic intelligence, ambiguity, and a tricky relationships between signifier and signified, can be exciting.” (Puchta and Rinvulcri 2010, 9) Owing to this fact, a joke like *What is on TV tonight, dear? Flowers and some trinkets as always* would be more likely to make somebody possessing linguistic intelligence smile. Because the expression *what is on TV* means different things when said in different situations. The message of *what is on TV* may be comprehended as either a question about the programme or, less likely, a question about the position of objects on the TV. It may be then hardly understandable for somebody who cannot put these two different meanings together in comparison. However a person with predominant logical-mathematical intelligence may find this joke rather stupid because he/she would focus on the content of the sentences and not on “the relationship between form and content.“ (Puchta and Rinvulcri 2010, 9)

2.1.3.5. Musical intelligence

“A person with a well-developed musical intelligence benefits from being in a world of beat, rhythm, tone, pitch, volume and directionality of sound.” (Puchta and Rinvolucris 2010, 9) So these people can play various musical instruments and sing but also they may enjoy learning foreign languages. Because the language includes as well as the written aspect the phonological aspect which can attract people with strong musical intelligence.

2.1.3.6. Spatial intelligence

Spatial intelligence deals with the ability to visualize objects and space in our mind. A person with higher spatial intelligence ideates a place he/she has visited without any difficulties and can even recall the smells, colours, sounds, feelings, etc. “Gardner presents spatial intelligence as being principally dependent on our ability to see” (Puchta and Rinvolucris 2010, 10), so this would mean that a blind person does not possess any spatial intelligence. However they perceive the space around them by touching objects in their surrounding area. Therefore we could extend Gardner's statement to include the somatosensory system as well.

2.1.3.7. Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence

“Characteristics of this intelligence is the ability to use one's body in highly differentiated and skilled ways, for expressive as well as goal-directed purposes.” (Puchta and Rinvolucris 2010, 11) This also covers the capacity to work proficiently with objects. (Gardner 1999, 230) For example a tennis player needs to coordinate the movement of his body as well as the movement of the racket. When the ball comes to his left side he/she sets in the backhand position using his/her whole body and the racket as an extension of his/her arm to return the ball.

Gardner also asserts that “intelligence is a potential, the presence of which allows an individual access to forms of thinking appropriate to specific kinds of content” (Gardner 1999, 97). The owner of an intelligence may be somehow restricted from using his/her potential, because he/she, for example, does not know about his/her capacity, or he/she may be aware of that but he/she does not see any possibility to put that into use. (Gardner 1999, 97) For better illustration: a student with highly developed logical-mathematical intelligence learns English at an elementary school but struggles to learn the grammar rules by heart. But if the student, his parents or his teacher knew more about his learning potential, they could have the student deduce the grammar rules instead of learning them by heart.

2.2. Grammar

2.2.1. What does learning grammar involve?

Learning grammar is not only about learning the structure but also understanding it. Every language consists of many different grammatical structures, which cause problems to students of foreign languages. “The sheer variety of all the different structures that may be labelled 'grammatical' is enormous.” (Ur 1988, 5) Some structures can be replaced by exact parallels found in the native language while others have nothing in common with the mother tongue of the learner. Some also consist of a fairly simple structure and some may seem rather complicated for an ESL learner. (Ur 1988,5)

2.2.2. What is grammar for?

As it has already been discussed, the term *grammar* can mean different things to different people and therefore it is very complicated to define it. “The best way to

understand what grammar is, what it does, and why it is necessary, is in fact to try to imagine language without it.” (Swan 2005, 4) And to illustrate it better, we can imagine creating a new language.

First we would start naming objects that we use the most using different names and sounds. During the initial stage every single object would acquire a different sound or group of sounds to the stage where it would be almost impossible to remember them. Then the simplifying phase would take place, and we would start using one word for *the tree next to my house* and *that tree in the forest* by calling them *tree*.

“And with an important mental leap, you realize that words can refer not only to people and things, but also to their shared characteristics”(Swan 2005, 5), like *small*, *blue* etc. and to the situations or changes that happen, like *eat*, *fall* etc. At this point we can start combining words and have, nearly created a new language.

However, we are still limited because even though we are able to put words together it may vary the original meanings. When saying *bear big cave* it may not be very clear to the speaker if there is a big bear in a cave or if there is a bear in a big cave. So we should establish a way to connect words that we make ourselves clear when explaining and describing a subject. It requires rules that would indicate the order of words, the way of expressing relationships and a way of representing our utterances – statements, questions etc. (Swan 2005, 5-6)

2.3. Grammar games

When playing a grammar game with the students, the teacher should bear several aspects in mind. "An effective user of games in the language classroom is not necessarily the teacher who has a long list of them in his head, but someone who has really thought about them and knows their ingredients..." (Rixon 1990, 1) And among

the ingredients are, for illustration: the teacher's knowledge, the placement of a game in a lesson, students' motivation and the correct choice of game.

2.3.1. Grammar and grammar games – teacher is expected to know

To be able to play grammar games with the students the teacher first has to master the language itself. Of course the language is not only vocabulary but also grammar that connects the words together, so they make sense and create sentences. (Quirk 1985, 11)

Not only knowing the use of grammar rules in a language is required from a language teacher but more importantly he/she has to master the rules. Thereafter, the teacher can manage the games involving grammar much better for his good understanding of the subject, especially when questions emerge. For that reason, “non-native English-speaking teachers were found to be more insightful than native English-speaking teachers“ (Celce-Murcia 2001, 437) who have never studied linguistic features of their mother tongue, because native speakers can struggle when asked during their lesson about e.g. the present perfect simple. (Celce-Murcia 2001, 436-441)

The teacher should be able to explain the rules clearly and keep them as simple as he or she can so that the learners can have a stable base which they can build on. And then, if needed or desired by students, more details, including different exceptions and more complex descriptions, may be introduced. (Quirk et al. 2000, 13) For an illustration, when a teacher starts describing the present perfect for the first time to a group of students, he/she should choose the simplest and shortest explanation. He/she may choose:

“1. To describe actions beginning in the past and continuing up to the present moment (and possibly into the future): I've planted fourteen rose bushes so far this morning.

2. To refer to actions occurring or not occurring at an unspecified time in the past with some kind of connection to the present: Have you passed your driving test?“ (Harmer 2001, 16)

And for curious or advanced students the teacher may select more complex explanations by Murphy.

“1. When we use the present perfect there is always a connection with now. The action in the past has a result now.

2. We often use the present perfect to give new information or to announce a recent happening.

3. You can use the present perfect with just, already and yet.

4. We use the present perfect with today/ this morning/ this evening etc. When these periods are not finished at the time of speaking.

5. Note that we say 'It's the first time something has happened.’” (Murphy 2002, 14-16)

2.3.3. Place of grammar games in the lesson

The place of grammar games in the lesson depends absolutely on the teacher and his/her style of teaching. There are three main positions of the games in teaching a language.

a) Before presenting a given structure that principally serves as a useful detector of what the group already knows, or also helps to present the topic, so the students may later deduce when to apply it.

b) After a grammar presentation, which helps the students to practice what they have just learnt and it also aids the teacher to observe if the students have grasped the problem or if further explanation is required.

c) As revision of a grammar area to check if students still remember and are able to actively use it. (Rinvoluceri 1992, 3)

Games “can be integrated with teaching so that they become a positive part of it rather than a time-filler or, worse, a time-waster.” (Rixon 1990, 1) When the teacher does not know what to do with the students and has not prepared any extra activities for practising the vocabulary or grammar presented in the class, the students may get bored, start thinking less of the teacher's organisational abilities or even his/her language knowledge. It also degrades the status of the game and the students may get rather discouraged by this approach and may then disagree or not cooperate when a game is presented the next time. (Rixon 1990, 1-10)

2.3.4. Grammar games not only as a reward

Games are for most of the students a nice and relaxing way to practice a foreign language without even realising that they are absorbing new vocabulary or new language structures.

Also when students are asked to play a game, they are willing to participate more than when asked to listen to new syntactic rules or fill in exercises concerning that rule. The majority of people, children, teenagers and even adults, associate games with their free time and joyful activities. On that account their attitude towards them is positive and also from a psychological point of view it may lead to better, quicker and natural comprehension. (Wright et al 2001, 1-2)

“The dice-throwing and arguing about different topics also lightens and enlivens the classroom atmosphere in a way that most people do not associate with the grammar part of a course.” (Rinvoluceri 1992, 4) which they probably experienced when attending classes at elementary or high school. Because usually the teachers in many countries do

not have time to play games or entertain the children all the time. It also becomes much more difficult to do so when a teacher has more than 20 children in a class, children with different abilities and learning styles.

2.3.5. Choosing the games

Before the teacher starts choosing any activity for his/her lessons, he/she should consider some aspects to find an activity that would suit his/her group of students the best. The tutor should think about who his students are (bearing in mind the age, health, interests), how old they are, what will be needed, how much time the game will take and what the students will achieve. (Harmer 2009, 159)

Level

One of the most important aspects that we have to take in account when choosing a grammar game is the level of the group that we teach. The aim of the game is to motivate students to learn more. It cannot be achieved by presenting a game that suits a lower level, where nothing new and challenging for the students appears, because it loses the learning and the fun factor of the game. And additionally the motivation cannot be fulfilled by introducing an activity that is too difficult, because when the challenge is just too high for a lower level student it becomes discouraging, for it is not within the student's power to finish it successfully. Therefore the teacher should check the level of language used in every part of a chosen activity. Because “some of the activities use texts that are pitched at a certain level, but a different choice of text would make the activity suitable for another level altogether.” (Thorbury 2005, 9)

Time

“Some activities which, at first glance, look very imaginative end up lasting for only a very short time.”(Harmer 2009, 158-159) It is of great importance to plan all the activities very carefully, so the students can finish the task during the lesson and will not be interrupted in the middle or just before the end of the work, which may irritate them and also lower the learner's trust in the teacher. Furthermore; the same situation may occur when the game does not last as long as the teacher expected and he/she has not prepared additional materials to continue with. No absolute prevention of these problems exists but the teacher may try to eliminate them by his/her own estimation of the duration of the planned activity based on his experience and knowledge of the class. (Harmer 2009, 158-159)

Aims

Before introducing any game or activity to the students, the teacher should decide about the outcome he/she wants to achieve. The main aim might include e.g. learning the use of the construction of conditional sentences, enlarging or practising vocabulary, bettering listening skills, etc. But “there is nothing wrong with deciding to do an activity simply because we think it will make students feel good.”(Harmer 2009, 158)

Materials

The teacher should check what he/she needs for the realization of the game he/she has prepared for the students. It can include the white board, markers, paper, different pictures, a CD player, etc. The teacher should also bear in mind the physical environment of the classroom, as it might affect the running of the game. (Harmer 2009, 159)

Age

“Adult classes often include students ranging in age from 18 to 80 or more. Students may feel they have little common ground among them.” (McKay 2009, 4) Younger students may feel that older learners acquire information much more slowly and in addition to that they may seem rigid compared to younger students. On the other hand the older students may perceive the younger students as irresponsible and carefree. So the teacher should find an activity that would suit the majority of the students in his/her class.

In addition to that, age brings all sorts of health and memory difficulties. So, especially the older students may have problems concerning their hearing, eyesight and memory. (McKay 2009, 4-5)

Individual differences

All people are of different characters and therefore should be approached individually. Some people excel at maths, others can play many musical instruments well and some paint amazing pictures. It is therefore essential for the teacher to spot these differences and direct his activities in such a way that would suit the majority of the students in his/her class. Because of that Gardner started talking about multiple intelligences. “If we accept that different intelligences predominate in different people, it suggests that the same learning task may not be appropriate for all of our students.”(Harmer 2006, 46)

2.4. Teaching Adults

2.4.1. Adult Learners

Adult learners differ from young learners in many ways and a good teacher should be aware of this fact and consider that mainly when preparing his/her lesson plan. Adults' learning characteristics involve their ability to engage abstract thinking, so it gives the teacher the room for grammar descriptions. Grown-ups have also collected a range of life experience. This background knowledge may give the teacher a base to build on and develop the student's knowledge. (Harmer 2006, 4)

In addition, adult learners can also tell their tutor about their learning styles. “Some feel comfortable learning by watching and listening, whereas others feel they cannot learn unless they take down notes and analyse rules.” (McKay and Tom 2009, 3) Many students may also favour learning through different senses: touching, hearing, smelling tasting and seeing. This information can be exploited not only by the teacher but also by the students who may then broaden the range of the learning styles by being engaged in new ones. (McKay and Tom 2009, 3-4)

Unlike teenagers and young learners adults tend to be more disciplined and therefore they are usually willing to pay attention despite boredom.

Most of the adult learners “often have a clear understanding of what they are learning and what they want to get out of it”(Harmer 2006, 40), which is one of the crucial factors in successful learning. Most of their motivation also happens to be intrinsic¹ because in comparison to younger learners they are no longer motivated by getting good grades and they do not have to attend the classes. So they ought to find motivators that

¹ “Intrinsic motivation concerns behaviour performed for its own sake in order to experience pleasure and satisfaction such as the joy of doing a particular activity or satisfying one's curiosity.” (Dörnyei 2007, 11)

they value to support their interest in learning. However, some students when they have reached the desired communicative level of language may stop cooperating with the teacher because they do not see the need of learning new structures any more. (McKay and Tom 2009, 4)

Additionally, certain problems may appear that can make the teaching problematic. Since the students have already experienced some methodological styles, they may become hostile to the replications of what they previously did not enjoy. Moreover, the vast majority of students have previously suffered criticism and failure at school that can give rise to anxiety about learning English. And finally, "many older adults worry that their intellectual powers may be diminishing with age." (Harmer 2006, 40) A lot of adult learners worry about their ability to learn, they are concerned that their capability to master a foreign language has decreased.

3. Practical Part

In the practical part I concentrated on choosing games for two different groups of students. All the games introduced a piece of grammar and they aimed to teach its future users to apply it correctly and with ease.

3.1. Description of tested classes

Two small groups agreed to participate in the practical part of the project. The students were all adults and their average age was 45. The first group will be called *Group 1* and the second *Group 2*.

Group 1 consists of four slightly slower learners, who have been learning English for two years and their average age is 50. These students are A2 level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and they only need to master the present perfect and the 1st conditional.

Group 2 comprises three learners of average speed in foreign language acquisition, that may be due to the fact that the average age of group two is 40. This group has achieved the B1 level of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages; however, it struggles with the usage of the same grammar points that has not been taught to Group 1. So they have learned the present perfect and the conditionals, but they fail in using it.

3.2. Multiple Intelligence test

Both groups work in a building draughtsmen company and took a Multiple Intelligences test on Birmingham Grid for Learning website to ascertain which intelligence they use the most and to help me with the choice of games that may improve their language knowledge. Surprisingly, the findings showed that all of the students developed more the kinaesthetic than the visual intelligence. Which, with regard to their jobs, was not

expected. But knowing that they all are very passionate athletes and like talking about different sport activities, it is very likely to be true.

3.3. Games

This part concentrates on the games and describes them in detail. All the descriptions of the games follow the same structure: aim, materials, description, instructions, reflection section and checking activity.

- a) The Aim describes the target of an activity that wants to be achieved through the game.
- b) The Materials show the necessary things and objects to be able to play the game or to make the game.
- c) The Description connects the theoretical and the practical part by introducing the changes made to the activity to suit the students' needs.
- d) The Instructions describes thoroughly the procedure of the game saying what the teacher and the students should do.
- e) The Reflection section displays what actually happened during the games in both groups separately, what was expected, not expected, students' reactions and possible changes to avoid problems that arose during the games.
- f) The checking activity aims to make sure that the students have understood the grammar taught through the games and points out failures and successes in completion.

Furthermore, all three games concentrate on the usage of the present perfect but each game focuses on the practice of a different aspect of this tense.

3.3.1. Game 1: The Present Perfect – board game (see Appendix, Picture 1,2)

Aim: to learn the use of the present perfect structure

Materials: 40 large cardboard squares, 40 pieces of coloured paper of the same size as the cardboard squares, 40 punched pockets, a marker, scotch tape, a pair of scissors

Description:

This game was inspired by a board game found on www.esltower.com focusing on the practice of the sentence structure of the present perfect. The activity was changed to suit the students' needs, to integrate the kinaesthetic and visual intelligences and to fit their vocabulary knowledge.

To integrate the kinaesthetic intelligence I decided to make the board game life size, so the students would also play the role of the figures and would get to move around the class instead of the usual sitting on their seats. Moreover, the students were supplied with a big plastic foam dice because it would seem rather unnatural to play a life size board game using ordinary dice.

To include the visual intelligence I used coloured paper for the given clues and tasks, because the students, when learning and working, are accustomed mainly to black and white paper colours. So this change might stimulate their brain and they may remember more than if white paper was used.

Furthermore, when creating the content of the squares it was essential to decide what and where to put in each square for example, *be-America* at the beginning and *how many time-climb-Ještěd* at the end, as it is more challenging. Because when learning anything pupils start with something easy and then can move onto another level that appears to be higher than the previous one or they may move onto a different subject.

So the first half of the game consisted of making fairly simple questions and answers e.g. *Have you ever kissed a frog? Yes, I have.* And the second part then focused on the construction of slightly different and more complex present perfect structures including the question words e.g. *How many times have you climbed Ještěd? I have climbed Ještěd three times.* or more challenging irregular past participle forms and expressions that may not be used by the students much e.g. *Have you ever fallen in love at first sight? Yes, I have.*

Instructions:

1. The teacher first spreads the playing squares around the class, so they follow a certain order (as mentioned above) and then he/she may explain the rules concerning the students.
2. T: *Roll the die to decide who starts the game. Whoever gets the highest number may begin by rolling the dice again and stepping next to the card Start, the others line up in the order as they rolled their first numbers. One student may roll the dice only once per round even if he gets a six (as in many board games the players are allowed to roll the dice again, but in this game's aim is to practice as much as they can).*
3. T: *Make questions and answers using the present perfect depending on what square you step on. For example if you step on a square with BE – AMERICA, you will say: Have you ever been to America?, and then they answer the question. Yes, I have. or No, I haven't. If you step on a square saying GO BACK 4 SPACES or GO FORWARD 5 SPACES follow the instructions and do what the card tells you. Then when standing on a new square make a present perfect question and answer using the words given.*

4. T: *Whoever steps on the FINISH card first wins the game.*

Reflection section

The only disadvantage of this game may be that it is not suitable for small classrooms because it demands and takes up a lot of the room. The teacher may also need to adjust the room by moving the tables, chairs and everything else that may get in the way when playing the game. To prevent any discomfort for the students, the teacher should try setting it up first before the start of the lesson, try walking around the squares, and when he/she finds that something lies in the way, he/she can move it aside.

Reflection on Group 1

Group 1 practised the usage of the present perfect for the first time as it was a new piece of grammar for them. They were also given cards with three example sentences (see appendix, picture 3) of the present perfect to help them in case they were not sure about the correct word order and also to prevent the feeling of anxiety about the new grammar structure.

During the game they were able to use the present perfect correctly and some of the students even included *ever* and *never* in their structures very naturally. The only problem was that students were not able to transform *someone* to *anyone* in questions and with negatives. The students then constructed sentences like e.g. Have you killed someone in your dreams? No, I haven't killed someone in my dreams. I decided not to correct this because I did not want to confuse the students by explaining new rules and interrupting the smooth flow of the game in this way.

In the middle of playing the game all of the students stopped looking at the cards with example sentences and continued without even realising they had been inventing new sentences without any hesitations and difficulties.

From the beginning to the end, this group of students paid attention to all the sentences said by their fellow students and tried creating them in a quiet voice without any encouragement from the teacher to do so. They really took advantage of every opportunity to learn something new.

One of the students was still not sure about the difference between the past simple and the present perfect but by asking about that during the game, it started becoming clearer and clearer not only for him but for the rest of the group as well and it perfectly fit in the game. Everybody seemed to have understood the reason for the use of the present perfect.

Group 2

Group 2 had learned about the present perfect before, but still made unnecessary mistakes in its structure e.g. forgetting the main verb. So the main aim of this game for them was to accustom themselves to the structure, so they would find omitting the main verb or any of the components strange.

Group 2 did not need any helping cards with example sentences but only in case they struggled, they could find help on the white board.

This group seemed very embarrassed when standing near their fellow students and felt uncomfortable being up on their feet, because when near a table or a cupboard they leaned against that to rest and they were not willing to stand near their square even though there was a lot of space.

Checking activity

To find out whether the students understood and learned the structure of the present perfect, they were asked to fill in two short exercises (see Appendix, Picture 4) practising the same types of questions and answers that they used during the game.

The game resulted in a success. The students made almost no mistakes, only one student from Group 1 omitted the main verb, but without even pointing it out, he corrected himself immediately. Because as he commented, the structure he used appeared rather strange to him.

3.3.2. Game 2 - Describing changes

Aim: to learn the present perfect for present consequences

Materials: classroom, different types of objects (e.g. pencils, books and flowers, toys)

Description

This game was inspired by a game by Penny Ur (Ur 1996, 198-202). When following the procedure by Ur, the game employs mainly visual and linguistic intelligence, which was not very suitable for these two groups of students. Therefore, to engage the kinaesthetic and spacial intelligence the pictures were replaced with a real classroom and real things.

For that reason the game was also divided into two parts. The first part of the game employs the kinaesthetic intelligence by moving around the classroom and the second part then concentrates on the spacial intelligence by perceiving the position of different objects only by touching.

Instructions

1. T: *Stand up and look around the class and to try to remember where all the things are. Look at those parts of the classroom that you do not normally use or pay attention to and remember the exact position of those things. (e.g. pictures on the wall, plants in the windows, rubbish bin...).*

2. T: *Please, leave the room and wait for me to call you back. I will change the position of three things in the room and you will try to find them and comment on them using the present perfect tense.*
3. The teacher then changes the place of three objects in the room and calls the students back in the classroom.
4. T: *Please, look for the changes and comment on them using the present perfect as in the example: You have moved my chair. You have hidden my pen. You have erased the sentences on the white board.*
5. The teacher then appoints a student to play the role of the teacher and change the places of things in the classroom. When the students fail to find a change, the student who plays the role of the teacher should give the other students a clue.

When all the students have played the role of the teacher, they sit down and the teacher then explains the second part of the game.

1. The teacher arranges the space in front of them by organising their books, pens, pencils and by adding unusual classroom objects (e.g. a flower, glasses, toys).
2. T: *Please, look closely how everything is organised in front of you and remember the positions of all the things.*
3. T: *Please, close your eyes and do not open them until I tells you to do so.* The teacher then changes one thing in their spaces and ask them to find out what has been moved with their eyes closed.
4. T: *Do not open your eyes yet, but try to spot the difference in positions by touching and when you find the different placement say: You have moved my pen from left to right. You have taken my pencil. You have added a bottle of water in my space.*

5. When all the student have said their sentences, the teacher puts all the things in the order they were at the beginning of the game (it may be easier for the students to spot what has changed, mainly because they still have the picture of the original setting in their minds) and then he/she may repeat the same procedure as many times as he/she considers it appropriate.

Reflection section

This game seems to be very easy to prepare, but still the teacher should bear in mind that the classroom should be well organised for the game to avoid complications during the game, the students may then have problems concentrating on other things.

Group 1

Group 1 seemed to have comprehended the idea of the present perfect and even asked questions during the game, if they understand well what the tense represents. The group only struggled when looking for the changes made by one student, because they were very unclear. The main table in the classroom was covered in many papers and therefore discovering different placements caused problems. To avoid this inconvenience we could have cleared the table and left only a few items lying there, so the students would feel more successful in handling the new topic and the game itself.

Group 2

The students enjoyed playing this game, especially because they were able to touch things and change their usual places. They used the present perfect sentences correctly without any visible difficulties. All the things were well organised in the classroom compared to the first group. The students challenged themselves in swapping places of things in the room but they were able to cooperate very well when they could not find the change.

Checking activity (see Appendix, Picture 5)

The following activity was chosen to check the understanding of one of the most common uses of the present perfect, the changes related to the present. Both groups of students trained it in Game 2. The chosen exercise gives the students 6 pairs of pictures where each pair shows the state of before and now. The students were asked to fill in the exercise and then explain why they used the present perfect and not any other tense.

Both groups managed to complete the tasks without any problems and did not struggle to say the reasons for using the present perfect.

3.3.3. Game 3 – The Liar's Game

Aim: to learn the difference between the present perfect simple and past simple

Materials for one student: a black marker, a big piece of cardboard in the shape of an oval (neutral colour), eight pieces of passport sized coloured paper (different colours, so the students can choose themselves)

Description:

This game was inspired by a similar Liar's Game found on *edition.tefl.net*, but it was altered to suit the needs of Group 1 and 2. In the original version of this game the students invent three present perfect sentences using their experience but out of the pieces of information, one has to be a lie and the other students then think about what the lie was.

The altered version includes apart from the linguistic intelligence also the visual and spatial intelligences and the invented lead-up activity employs also the logical-mathematical intelligence.

For this game the teacher needs to prepare big pieces of cardboard in the shape of an oval and many pieces of coloured paper of passport size. The cardboard ovals function here as representations of students' minds and the coloured pieces of papers represent the students' experience.

This activity consists of two parts. The first part (see picture 6) concentrates on the practice of the present perfect. The students have the oval in front of them and the coloured cards lay on the oval in random order and position to show the fact, that when using the present perfect there is no need to know when something happened. The present perfect only emphasizes that the experience has happened e.g. *I have ridden a horse.* (some time in my life).

On the other hand, the second part (see Appendix, Picture 7) focuses on the use of past simple. The students line up their experiences in the order they happened, one after the other and this way the students make an imaginary time axis and learn the difference between the present perfect and the past simple.

Instructions

Part one (see Appendix, Picture 6)

1. T: *Please choose eight coloured cards and I will give you a cardboard oval.*
2. T: *Now imagine, that the cardboard oval represents your mind and the coloured cards your experiences, or at least some things you have done in your life.*
3. T: *Please, draw eight pictures representing your experiences but two of them that have not happened. So six of the pictures will be true and two will be lies.*

4. When the students have finished drawing: T: *Please, now show your cards to all the students and comment on all of the cards using simple sentences with the present perfect like I have been to the top of the Eiffel Tower. I have been to London. But do not say what the lie is. The others will think about the lie.*
5. T: *When you have any speculations, please express them by saying: I think, you haven't lived in a castle. I think, you haven't seen a ghost.*
6. The game finishes when the students detect all the lies. Who uncovers the lying card may keep it as a reward and whoever gets the most cards wins.

Part two (see Appendix, Picture 7)

After all the lies have been detected, the second part comes.

1. T: *Please take all the cards with your experiences and put them in one line. The oldest experience will be on the left, the most recent on the right.*
2. T: *Now, comment on the cards again but mentioning the time when they happened . For example: I went to London when I was a child. I was at the top of the Eiffel Tower two years ago.*
3. Finally the teacher should summarize what the students have just learnt and point out the diverse arrangements of the cards when talking about the present perfect (the cards were spread and were not set in any particular order) and the past simple (the cards were organised in one line according to the time when they happened).

Reflection section

The game fulfilled its aim in both groups, however; Group 1 did not have much fun playing the games, therefore the game for them lost the status of a game because it was not a fun activity, it was just an activity for them. The students knew each other very well and as Rixon explains “a dash of luck in a game can make it more exciting“(1990,4), there was almost no place for the factor of luck. Therefore this game would better suit students that do not know each other that well.

Reflection on Group 1

Group 1 were at first first shocked by the idea of drawing pictures and one of the older students was doubtful about the thought of the upcoming game. The activity seemed very uncomfortable for him at first, and could have been avoided by a broader explanation with more examples written and drawn on the white board. But after providing him with some demonstrations of simple drawings he started participating.

The group did not make any mistakes in the structure of the present perfect, they only hesitated when creating the past simple but eventually they made correct sentences.

However, this game was not very entertaining for the students, they only enjoyed the part when looking at different pictures because some of the images appeared rather unclear and therefore when hearing the explanation, what the picture represented, made the group laugh. But since they all know each other very well, they spotted the lies straight away without any doubts and missed the fun discovering something new and interesting about their classmates.

Nevertheless they seemed to understand the difference between the present perfect simple and the past simple.

Reflection on Group 2

The advantages of playing this game with Group 2 included mainly the fact that they do not know each other as well as Group 1 and therefore this game also functioned as an ice-breaker. The students were not afraid to reveal more information about their past activities and curiosities.

Furthermore, the students did not commit any mistakes making sentences using the present perfect and the past simple, the part concerning commenting on the pictures seemed fairly easy for them. And even though there was no visible challenge for them in the game, they stated that they finally grasped the difference between these two tenses.

Checking activity (see Appendix, Picture 8)

Finally, the students were given an exercise to check whether they understood the difference between the present perfect and the past simple that was practised in Game 3. The exercise comprised eight sentences and the students had to correct the mistakes focusing only on the usage of these two tenses.

4. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to gather information about playing grammar games with adult students and to apply this information to two groups of students. The application was done to determine whether the games were successfully designed or changed to suit the needs of the students and whether the games fulfilled all the criteria of a game as Hadfield stated: “A game is an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun” (2003, 4).

For that purpose I chose three grammar games concentrating on the grammar that was introduced in the lessons to be either learned or practiced. One group of students cooperated to learn the new grammar rules and another to revise and understand the grammar better.

The students were also given a test of multiple intelligences that served as a source of information for them on what to concentrate on in their language learning and also it greatly aided the choice of the games and their possible alterations. So all the chosen games were altered according to the test results to match the needs of spatial, visual and bodily-kinaesthetic intelligences.

Altogether the games resulted in success. The students learned the usage of the present perfect and had fun at the same time. They learned and practiced the language without even realising that the main aim of the lessons was grammar. During every game they learned one different aspect of the present perfect in a very natural way. It was visible how the students understood more and were able to use more of this piece of language in each lesson.

However, even though I prepared the lessons and activities very carefully, two problems

arose. In *Game 1: The Present Perfect Board Game* Group 2 felt anxious when standing close to each other and they tended to escape from their places. It may have been caused by the fact that they did not know each other well therefore felt their personal space was intruded upon and the space could have been larger. To prevent this problem, I could have used a bigger classroom not to have the cards so close to each other.

The second problem emerged when playing *Game 3: The liar's game* with Group 1 because it almost lost one of the main qualities of a game – entertainment. The entertainment of the game highly depends on luck (Rixon 1990,4) like in poker. A person never knows who will win until the end of the activity. But the students knew each other too well and therefore there was no fun for them in spotting the lies.

It is not an easy task to choose a game and change it to suit all the students in the class but it is not impossible if the teacher knows his/her students. Most of the games prepared for the purpose of this Paper demanded a lot of time and materials for their completion; nevertheless, the games helped the students to understand the grammar better.

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Appendix



Picture 1: Game 1



Picture 2: Game 1

The Present Perfect

+ I have been to London.

- I haven't been to London.

? Have you been to London?

Picture 3: Game 1 – helping card for Group 1

17.1 You are asking Helen questions beginning **Have you ever ... ?** Write the questions.



- 1 (London?) Have you ever been to London?
- 2 (play / golf?) Have you ever played golf?
- 3 (Australia?) Have
- 4 (lose / your passport?)
- 5 (fly / in a helicopter?)
- 6 (eat / Chinese food?)
- 7 (New York?)
- 8 (drive / a bus?)
- 9 (break / your leg?)

HELEN



No, never.
Yes, many times.
No, never.
Yes, once.
No, never.
Yes, a few times.
Yes, twice.
No, never.
Yes, once.

17.2 Write sentences about Helen. (Look at her answers in Exercise 17.1.)

- 1 (New York) Helen has been to New York twice.
- 2 (Australia) Helen
- 3 (Chinese food)
- 4 (drive / a bus)

Now write about yourself. How often have you done these things?

- 5 (New York) I
- 6 (play / tennis)
- 7 (fly / in a helicopter)
- 8 (be / late for work or school)

Picture 4: Game 1 – Checking activity (Murphy 2007,43)

Look at the pictures. What has happened? Choose from:

go to bed ~~clean his shoes~~ stop raining close the door fall down have a bath

before

now

1



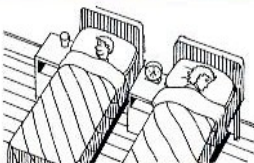
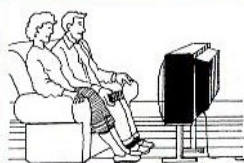
He has cleaned his shoes.

2



She

3



They

4



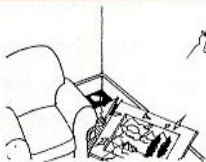
It

5



He

6



The

Picture 5: Game 2 – Checking activity (Murhpy 2007, 39)



Picture 6: Game 3 - Liar's game



Picture 7: Game 3 - Liar's game

20.2 Right or wrong? Correct the verbs that are wrong. (The verbs are underlined.)

1 I've lost my key. I can't find it.

RIGHT

2 Have you seen Ann yesterday?

WRONG: Did you see

3 I've finished my work at 2 o'clock.

4 I'm ready now. I've finished my work.

5 What time have you finished your work?

6 Sue isn't here. She's gone out.

7 Jim's grandmother has died in 1989.

8 Where have you been last night?

Picture 8: Game 3 – Checking activity (Murphy 2007, 49)