

# *Research on the Application of Game Activities in Early Education*

**Li Jie**

*Xianyang Normal University, Xianyang, Shaanxi, China*

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**Abstract:** The early education stage is mostly carried out in kindergartens, which is the basic stage to promote the development of young children. In the early education stage, the physical and mental development characteristics of young children make them more inclined to participate in play activities. This requires kindergartens to pay attention to the development of high-quality play activities and promote the comprehensive growth of young children from the perspective of their developmental needs. Based on this, this paper firstly analyses the value of using play activities in early education, and finally puts forward several strategies around how to apply play activities in early education with high quality to promote the development of young children.

## **1. Introduction**

The cognitive ability and understanding ability of young children of different ages have great differences, and early education activities can apply educational activities with enlightenment and guidance to enable young children to obtain all-round development. At the same time, the Guidelines for the Development of Children Aged 3 to 6 also point out that early childhood educators should pay attention to the overall development of young children. In this context, early education should pay attention to the development of young children in the fields of health, language, society, science and art, and through the design and optimisation of play activities, on the basis of stimulating young children's interest in participation, develop their cognitive abilities and achieve the purpose of early education.

## **2. The value of using game activities in early education**

### **2.1 Developing young children's cognitive ability**

In traditional early education, early childhood educators are more inclined to adopt the primary school education mode to develop young children's thinking ability and enrich their knowledge content. This leads to the fact that traditional early education activities do not meet the developmental characteristics and cognitive level of young children, and it is difficult to enhance the educational value of early education. The use of play activities in early education not only meets the interests of young children, but also promotes the growth of young children in play activities from the perspective of their cognitive level and cognitive ability development. Through the use of

play activities to connect children with the world of life, so that children have a basic perception and cognition of life, and thus enhance the cognitive level of children. Meanwhile, in play activities, children need to abide by the rules and requirements of the game. In play activities, children can form a sense of rules and develop social skills, thus effectively promoting the overall development of children.

## **2.2 Enhance children's sense of participation**

Early education activities are more inclined to promote the intellectual development and thinking ability of young children through the application of enlightening and guiding educational activities. The use of games in early education not only enriches the content of early education, but also stimulates children's interest in learning. For example, in role-playing games, construction games and other game activities, young children can feel the sense of achievement brought about by peer co-operation, so that young children to form the ability to unite and collaborate, and then inspire young children's sense of participation in the game [1].

## **3. Strategies for early education using game activities**

### **3.1. Tap into the characteristics of young children, put the game materials**

Early education under the stage of young children's thinking ability and cognitive development is weak, this stage of young children prefer fresh activities or things, such as brightly coloured toys, new game activities can effectively attract the attention of young children. However, due to the lack of development of children's attention span, children are more likely to be disturbed and influenced during play activities, which makes them unable to concentrate effectively during the activities. For example, in the process of the activity, unexpected loud noise or other children's movements will affect children's concentration. In this context, early childhood teachers should improve children's concentration in play activities by using interesting play materials from the perspective of children's characteristics and growth patterns.

Firstly, they should put in play materials related to the content of the play activities and keep the attractiveness of the play materials. By giving full play to the functions and roles of the play materials, children's attention and eyes can be focused on the play activities, and children's bodies and minds can be fully engaged in the play activities. For example, by analysing the content of the game activities, teachers choose game materials with distinctive images, bright colours and obvious features, which can not only stimulate children's interest in participating, but also enable children to express their emotions in the process of applying the game materials and enhance the value of the game activities.

Second, take the cognitive ability and cognitive level of young children as the starting point to explore appropriate play materials. Due to the developmental characteristics of young children and their activities, putting in too difficult game materials will often make young children fearful, and putting in less difficult game materials will make it difficult to give full play to the value of the game activities. Therefore, teachers should analyse children's cognitive ability and cognitive level and put in game materials with appropriate difficulty level. For example, when designing a performance game based on the theme of pulling out carrots, teachers can deepen children's understanding of the story of pulling out carrots by designing hand puppet performances. At the same time, by putting in headdresses, decorations and other play materials, the children will choose their roles in the story of pulling out carrots in small groups, and choose decorations such as white scarves and white eyebrows according to the characteristics of their roles. With the help of such interesting role-playing materials, not only can they be distinguished from the building area, art area,

science area and other play materials, but also effectively stimulate children's interest in participation and give full play to the value of play activities.

### **3.2. Analysing children's personality traits and optimising game content**

The use of games in early education can provide children with vivid and rich game content, and cultivate their hands-on ability, imagination and sense of innovation and creativity. In order to improve the quality of play activities, early childhood teachers should optimise the content of play activities from the perspective of children's personality traits, enhance children's sense of experience in play activities, and cultivate children's intelligence, creativity and other cognitive abilities on the basis of traditional play activities [2].

For example, when teachers of young children design game activities with the theme of rainbow colours, the traditional content of the game activities is to organize young children to know the rainbow pictures, to know the rainbow colours, and to express the rainbow in the hearts of young children through the way of painting. The content of this kind of game activity is relatively single, and it is difficult to promote the comprehensive development of children. At this time, teachers can innovate the content of the game activities and design action games with the theme of rainbow colours. First of all, the teacher will show pictures and videos related to rainbows, and the children will know how many colours there are in a rainbow and what colours there are when they watch the pictures and videos. Then the teacher will show the children common objects with rainbow colours, such as rainbow umbrellas. Teachers design a rainbow circle with the content of the game, and paint the rainbow colours on the rainbow circle in a fan shape, and children observe the position of the rainbow colours on the rainbow circle. When the teacher gives a colour command such as red, green, etc., the children have to stand on the colour position of the rainbow circle as fast as possible. Through this kind of game activities, not only can deepen children's cognitive ability of colours, but also cultivate children's body coordination ability through action games.

### **3.3. Innovative role-playing games to develop children's social skills**

In the early education stage, the social development of young children is the key to early education. When applying game activities in early education, teachers can carry out role-playing activities in which children independently play the role of a story, and express their impressions through creative expressions, body movements and other representations, so that children can realise the development of their social abilities through mutual cooperation and communication in role-playing activities. At the same time, due to the character development characteristics of young children, it is difficult for them to form a sense of cooperation or sharing on their own. Through innovative role-playing activities, we encourage young children to communicate and cooperate with each other, and stimulate their sense of cooperation.

For example, in the role-play activity of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, the fairy tale has the advantages of rich storyline and distinctive characters, which can fully stimulate children's interest in role-play activities and effectively develop children's social skills. Firstly, before the role-play activity is carried out, the teacher should tell the story in the children's own words through the way of storytelling. Secondly, after understanding the content of the story, the children analyse which characters are in the fairy tale, what characteristics the characters have, and try to think about how to express the character traits of the characters with body movements and facial expressions. Once again, the teacher groups the children according to their character traits and personality traits, and the children rehearse their role-playing in small groups. It is worth noting that the teacher should intervene and provide timely guidance during the group role-play rehearsal process. For example, some of the children will appear to compete for the role of the phenomenon, then the teacher should

intervene in a timely manner. By analysing the content of the children's role play and encouraging other children to participate in the evaluation process, the teacher will select the children who perform better. In the process of role-playing, children will reproduce the character traits of the story characters by imitating real people through real characters and real interpersonal situations. In this process, teachers should respect the children's interest and desire to perform, so that the children can give full play to their own strengths in the role-playing activities, and then improve the children's teamwork and social skills [3].

### **3.4. Integration of local resources, deepening the connotation of play activities**

In early education, we pay more attention to the education concept of life is education, through the excavation of the connection between natural life and early education, and the integration of local resources to innovate game activities, not only to give young children more adequate space for game activities, but also to innovate the connotation of game activities. It can break through the limitations of traditional play activities and effectively promote the development of young children.

First, develop local play materials. Through the development of locally adapted play materials, we can explore the interests of young children and adjust the structure of play activities. Kindergartens can develop local resources and introduce interesting and vivid rural materials into early education play activities to enhance the fun of play activities. For example, kindergarten teachers can bring used objects into the play activities, and the children can use their imagination and creativity to redevelop the used objects to create interesting play materials. Encouraging children to engage with their creativity and imagination can be achieved through the integration of local resources in game activities. For instance, when children are given a cardboard box as a material, they may use tools such as scissors and glue to transform it into various creations. Some children may choose to craft a car by splicing the cardboard box, while others may opt to cut and paint it to make a jigsaw puzzle. Moreover, children may experiment further by cutting the cardboard box and using bamboo to construct a bamboo dragonfly. By encouraging such activities, children are not only enhancing their intellectual abilities but also experiencing the enjoyment of hands-on engagement with the depth of game activities. This approach enables children to unleash their creativity and create engaging game materials, fostering a rich learning experience.

Second, penetrate the local folk games. In early education, early childhood education should recognise that young children play in life and live in play. This encourages early childhood teachers to explore the game resources in life, and through the penetration of local folk games, children can achieve comprehensive development under the infection of folk games. Folk games, as a product of a specific period, not only contain the life wisdom of the ancients, but also their attitude towards life. The penetration of folk games into early education games not only enriches the content of the game activities, but also effectively exercises the comprehensive ability of children. For example, in the field of health, we can carry out folk games such as rope skipping and rope turning to improve children's muscle strength and body coordination through walking, jumping, running and other forms of activities to improve the physical quality of children. Or in the day-to-day life of young children, there are often children waiting in line or static time, when the teacher can penetrate the folk games, not only can give full play to the educational value of the scattered time, but also to achieve the static and dynamic alternation. Teachers can infiltrate folk games into the scattered parts of the day's activities, such as rock-paper-scissors, jumping checkers and other folk games integrated with the day's activities, to enhance the children's day-to-day life interesting.

### **3.5. Optimise the form of outdoor activities to improve children's physical quality**

Outdoor play is an important part of early education, and the Child Development Guidelines for

Children Aged 3 to 6 also clearly put forward the need to ensure outdoor activity time for young children. In this context, early education should also optimise the form of outdoor play activities to improve the physical quality of young children and develop their comprehensive perceptual ability [4].

Teachers can make full use of the openness advantage of the outdoor activity area to design or game activity content, such as the eagle catching chickens, shuttlecock, hide-and-seek and other game activity content, and at the same time, teachers should also combine with the age characteristics of young children to innovate the form of game activities. Take the outdoor game activity of eagle catching chickens as an example, in this game, teachers should be fully aware of the cognitive ability development characteristics and physical quality development characteristics of the middle class children. In the middle class, children have a certain degree of self-consciousness, and at this time, teachers should ensure the fairness of the game, and the children choose the roles of the outdoor game by guessing. At the same time, teachers should observe the children's performance in time to avoid friction in the process of the game.

#### 4. Conclusion

In general, the use of play activities in the early education stage can promote the holistic development of young children from their perspective. When using play activities, early childhood educators should explore the developmental characteristics and personality traits of young children, optimise play materials and game content, and innovatively apply role play, local game resources and outdoor play activities to enrich the content of play activities, while young children can achieve physical and mental enjoyment and physical exercise in play activities, and effectively promote the holistic development of young children.

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