

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM: WHAT STREET CULTURE, TRAVEL, AND LIFE EXPERIENCE TEACH US

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Abstract

This article analyzes the role and importance of extracurricular education in teaching English. Extracurricular activities allow students to apply the acquired theoretical knowledge in practice, communicate in real-life situations, develop independent thinking and cultural thinking. Through English clubs, theater stages, conversations, trips, and cultural events, students learn the language in a natural environment. The article also highlights the importance of extracurricular education in increasing students' motivation, strengthening confidence in communication, and connecting language learning with life.

Keywords: Extracurricular education, English language, communicative approach, cultural learning, practical skills, motivation, independent learning.

Introduction

Extracurricular education plays an extremely important role in the process of learning English. Because English is not just a science of grammatical rules and word memorization, but a means of communication, a key to understanding culture and broadening one's worldview. During lessons, students mainly acquire theoretical knowledge, but if this knowledge is not applied in life, it is quickly forgotten. Extracurricular activities allow students to test this knowledge in practice and apply them in real situations. When learning English, students feel the language in a natural environment through extracurricular activities, such as conversation clubs, theater scenes, film analysis, online conversations, or participation in cultural events. These activities significantly improve their pronunciation, listening comprehension, and speaking skills.¹

Most importantly, this process takes students beyond textbooks - they learn to use language in life. For example, by watching a film in English or talking to a foreign guest, the reader memorizes new words, hears their pronunciation, and assimilates the intonation of natural speech. Extracurricular education also increases students' self-confidence. In class, many students are afraid to make mistakes and hesitate to express their opinions, but in an informal environment, they speak more freely and correct mistakes through their own experience. This helps to achieve the main goal of the communicative approach - expressing thoughts and communicating through language.

¹ Nunan, D. (2004). Task-Based Language Teaching. Cambridge University Press. pp. 12–210.

Also, such activities teach students to learn independently. They will learn to use a dictionary, write down new phrases, and enrich their knowledge using online resources. Another great significance of extracurricular education is that it awakens students' interest in world culture through the English language. Learning a language is not just a linguistic process, but also an acquaintance with the lifestyle, values, and customs of other peoples. For example, in addition to studying British or American culture in English classes, students can experience this culture in practice by participating in cultural evenings, theater performances, or international festivals. Such experience broadens students' worldview, teaches them tolerance, cultural respect, and global thinking.

Extracurricular education also has great practical benefits. It connects language learning with life. For example, on trips, students see English in a natural context through road signs, advertising banners, airport signs, or restaurant menus. This process is called "real-life learning" - that is, learning the language by seeing and feeling how it is used in its natural state, in life. This contributes to deeper and longer-term language acquisition. In extracurricular education, students can not only converse in English, but also learn English through various games, interactive activities, creative projects, and cultural activities.² In fact, games and live communication are one of the most effective forms of extracurricular learning, as they encourage the student to use language in a natural, free, and enjoyable environment.

For example, students can reinforce new words or learn to apply grammar in practice through language games called "language games." This includes "Word association," "20 Questions," "Role play," "Find someone who..." (questionnaire game), "Charades" (word-finding with gestures), "Guess the word" or "Vocabulary race" (word-finding competition). In these games, students talk to each other in English, ask questions, find answers - and this forms natural communication. Extracurricular education is not just "talking," but a comprehensive learning process that includes play, creativity, teamwork, and life experiences. Most importantly, in such classes, language learning becomes not an obligation, but a delightful activity. Therefore, when teaching English, the teacher should enrich extracurricular activities with games, group assignments, and live communication as much as possible.³

For example, during a group trip to Samarkand, communicating with foreign tourists in English enriches students' language learning process with life experience. Such activity is one of the most natural and effective forms of extracurricular education, since students use language as a real means of communication in this process. During the trip, students will test their theoretical knowledge of the English language in practice. For example, guiding foreign tourists, providing brief information about historical sites, talking about the city's culture, or simply greeting and getting acquainted strengthen

² Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Pergamon Press. pp. 10–125.

³ Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative Language Teaching: An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 5–110.

their English communication skills. In such situations, students use pre-prepared phrases and words, but in the process of communication, they naturally assimilate new words and expressions.

Such trips make students independent, active, and confident communicators. They learn the language not through the rules learned in class, but through live communication, emotions, and life situations. In addition, communication with foreigners is a great source of motivation for students. They will see the benefits of their knowledge in real life and thereby be inspired to learn English more deeply. For the effective organization of the trip, the teacher can conduct a special preparatory lesson for the students in advance. For example, it is necessary to teach phrases, questions, and answers on topics such as "How to talk to tourists," "How to introduce your city," "Useful phrases for travelers." During the trip, students are divided into small groups and receive assignments: some ask for directions, some tell about the sights, and others ask tourists for their opinions about Uzbekistan.

After the trip, it will be useful to conduct a "reflection session" in the classroom - in which students will share their impressions, newly learned words and phrases, difficulties at the meeting, and their feelings in English. This process reinforces the acquired knowledge and teaches the student to analyze their communicative experience. Such an extracurricular trip to Samarkand creates a living laboratory for students to learn English. Through real communication, they reinforce their knowledge using language, learn intercultural communication, and have the opportunity to introduce their national values to a foreign-speaking audience.⁴ This experience is an invaluable tool not only for language learning but also for personal growth, confidence, and the formation of global thinking.

In conclusion, extracurricular education is one of the most effective ways to connect theoretical knowledge with practice in the process of learning English. It allows students to learn to use language in a real-life context, understand a new culture, develop communication skills, and learn independently. In the process of such education, students not only master the language, but also perceive it as a vital need and value. Therefore, extracurricular education is a necessary methodological direction for a teacher in teaching English, which plays an important role in the personal development, creativity, and expansion of the student's cultural worldview.

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⁴ Brown, H. D. (2007). Principles of Language Learning and Teaching (5th ed.). Pearson Longman. pp. 1–347.

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