

## **Some techniques to enhance excitement for non-major students in learning English at Tan Trao University**

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### **Abstract**

Nowadays, foreign language has become one of the compulsory subjects in colleges and universities. Foreign language is also a challenge with many students. This sets the requirement for foreign teachers that how to make their teaching lessons more effective and motivate learners. This also requires the teachers to be competent not only in the professional level but also in teaching methods. The article gives readers a look about the importance of excitement in learning foreign language; it also offers some methods to inspire students in learning English at Tan Trao University.

**Keywords:** excitement, foreign language, competence, methods

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## 1. Introduction

As teachers who teach English as a second language, with the task of imparting knowledge, perhaps the biggest concern is how to engage learners in a positive and effective way. Finding effective methods to arouse and maintain interest in people is a matter of concern not only for teachers but also for educational administrators. What teachers want to know is that how to make the lesson more exciting, attract the attention of students to the content of the lesson. In order to arouse the activeness and self-discipline of learners, excitement is the core of the problem. Although excitement is not a new concept, we should look back at the importance of excitement from the perspective of researchers' analysis for foreign language learning, thereby constantly purifying and creating innovative methods, new tricks engage learners in each activity, each lesson in the most effective way.

## 2. Content

### 1. Concept of excitement

According to the Vietnamese encyclopedia: " excitement is a form of emotional expression and cognitive need of people in order to be excitedly aware of the purpose of the activity, in order to learn more deeply, understand more fully. Excitement improves concentration, attention, and ability to work. When working in accordance with their excitement , despite having to overcome difficulties, people still feel comfortable and achieve high results.

Pham Minh Hac - Le Khanh - Tran Trong Thuy also affirmed “When we are interested in something that is always conscious of us, we understand its meaning for our life. Moreover, we have a special affection for it, so the excitement attracts us towards its object, creating a psychological desire to het it.

Around the world, psychologist I.PH. Shecbac has commented that " Excitement is an inherent attribute of human beings, it is expressed through human's attitude and feelings to a certain object”

### 2. The importance of excitement in learning Language

Excitement is mental, but it affects the whole body. When a person is excited, their emotions become more powerful and can affect their decision-making abilities. Excited people are more likely to make a decision.

Excitement in learning in general and learning foreign languages in particular is very important, the necessity of excitement in learning not only means that the student listens attentively to lectures but also shows the meaning. When learners are interested in a certain field, it will become easy and even bring excitement, passion, and enjoyment for them to learn that subject.

There have been many studies showing a significant role of excitement in learning. According to P.A. Rudich, in learning and research activities, the appearance of excitement is especially important. In that case, excitement is defined as an individual's tendency to be accompanied by good feelings in the process of satisfying a need for new information, primarily and primarily through intellectual sensations. such as surprise, anticipation, clarity, confidence. According to Hidi, (1990) said that excitement is a factor that promotes the learning process, so learners achieve better learning results. Many studies have shown that personal excitement helps learners increase concentration, recall knowledge, patience for assigned tasks and efforts to achieve goals (Ainley, Hidi & Berndorff, 2002; Hidi, 1990; Hidi & Renninger, 2006). According to Merian-webster, interest in English learners is a state of desire to learn more knowledge or to participate in

skill-training activities. In essence, it captures your excitement and makes you interested in learning more or engaging in certain activities.

It is clear that both domestic and foreign researchers agree that excitement is a very important factor, motivating people to have a desire to approach objects, thereby promoting positive and effective actions.

When looking at the language learning motivation of learners, Cole and Chan (1994) mentioned two main motivations: extrinsic motivation and internal motivation. Extrinsic motivation refers to factors outside the classroom. Factors outside of the classroom may be due to learners' needs to achieve personal goals such as to communicate effectively, to facilitate the job application process or to be considered for a higher position in the workplace. .... At the same time, the factor outside the classroom is also the attraction from the culture of the language-using community that learners are aiming for. Learners are excited to learn and integrate into that culture.

Intrinsic motivation refers to factors inside the classroom. This motivation plays an important role in determining students' learning attitudes. A student who has no external motivation to learn can still have a positive learning attitude and achieve good results in school. Intrinsic motivation is influenced by four main factors: the first is the physical condition of the classroom, teaching and learning equipment, surroundings and class size; the second is the teaching method – a decisive factor for students' interest in the subject; the third is the teacher's personality, knowledge and enthusiasm; Finally, the success of students in learning.

The results of many studies have shown that learners have the ability to learn a surprising amount of knowledge about what appeals to them; our brain has the ability to absorb a special amount of knowledge when we are interested in learning a certain field; This is also why students need to have an excitement in learning.

### **3. Some techniques s to motivate students to learn English at Tan Trao University**

#### **3.1 Warm- up**

If we start the lesson attractive, students will be interested in the lesson from the first minutes of the lesson. These first impressions will follow students throughout the lesson. Therefore, the teacher should note some following points:

- + Student's level: If most students are good, we can choose activities with higher difficulty and challenge instead of choosing activities that should be simpler and easier for not very good students

- + Some ways to warm up, introduce the topic of the article.

- Question and answer: the teacher asks questions and students answer to exploit the students' existing knowledge about the problem and ask what the students want to know more about.

- Using pictures and illustrations to ask and answer information between teachers - students, students - students to develop speaking skills and expand students' understanding.

- Story telling: The teacher prepares stories which relate to the lesson.

- Songs: The teacher can sing or play the videos songs which relate to the lesson.

For example: To lead into the Unit 10, part vocabulary( Life lines Intermediate), the teacher plays the video of the song “What's the matter” for students to listen to, then asks students to answer questions about the song's content.

What's the matter with the boy? - He has a bad cough

Did he go to school? - No, he didn't

Where did his mother take him to? The doctor  
What did the doctor say? - He should stay in bed and shouldn't drink cold water

Lead in the topic of the lesson: Medical term

### 3.2 Praise students when they do well:

We should pay attention to students' moods because: A reward is always more effective than a punishment. So any good answer deserves praise. Sometimes it's just one. Nod, a smile, or a compliment. Even a partially correct answer shows contribution and effort. So why are we afraid that we do not express our satisfaction and approval by gestures, facial expressions, gestures, or words. Students, even as adults, will still be excited and happy when we recognize their contributions. A timely compliment will make students see teachers as highly sensitive to the learning process and they will be excited to study.

On the contrary, we need to try our best to avoid threatening and disparaging attitudes when students make a mistake. That does more harm than good because it makes them shy, not dare to speak boldly anymore, negatively affecting the atmosphere of the whole class.

### 3.3 Understand students and create good relationships with students.

The golden key to understand students and behave well with all students. In a class, there are many personalities and different levels. Teachers need to understand the characteristics and levels of students, especially student with special circumstances and special students. When the teacher understands each of them, the teacher will know how to prepare the lesson. The teacher should group the questions into categories: easier questions are for weak students, and better students will answer more difficult questions, and inferential questions that must use new data to answer are for good students. In this way, all students will be able to contribute to the construction of the lesson, and students will feel that they are cared for and noticed, that they are meaningful and that they have contributed to the lesson and achieved good results. Students will promote their abilities, intelligence, creativity and excitement in learning.

There are many different ways to understand students: at the beginning of the term, we can ask the information from the head teacher or the teachers who taught last term. While teaching process, the teacher will classify students with different levels of difficulty, then combine observation and assessment to see how the students' receptivity is. From there, there are methods and techniques to get the target.

The first thing that a teacher should do for the first time is to make a good impression and win the hearts of students by understanding them with sincere feelings and compliments or encouragement. The teachers should encourage students to exchange information. Then students will always feel happy. They love the teachers and love to study subjects.

### 3.4 Teachers can sing English songs

Learning English through songs is one of the most interesting and effective ways to keep students interested in learning English. Students are often shy and timid because of their poor speaking ability, so students always feel afraid to speak. If you cannot speak English, you cannot learn English well. The fact that students love listening to English songs and they want to sing in English. When I teach them a certain phrase, or word. When a phrase or word appears in a song that I know, I will sing that sentence or that paragraph. I see that students like and remember the words or structures very quickly.

Example: When I teach students about:

+ V infinitive with to after question words: how/what/where.....or

+ let sb do st: let someone do something.  
then I can sing a part in the song Hello of Lioned Richie's

“Hello! I’ ve just got to *let you know* cause I wonder where and I wonder what you do. Are you somewhere feeling lonely? Or Is someone loving you? tell me *how to win* your heart for I haven’t got the clue. But *let me start* by saying: I love you”

### 2.3.5 Applying the strategy “Learn to play, play to learn”

Perhaps one of the most exciting ways to engage students is through games. Games and activities are invaluable to the teacher of a foreign language because they provide an opportunity for students to use their language skills in a less formal situation.

Games encourage student participation and can remove the inhibitions of those who feel intimidated by formal classroom situations.

Games can change the role of the teacher from that of formal instructor to that of manager or organizer of activities that students enjoy participating in. This can be useful in reducing teacher-student distance or conflict.

Here are interesting games:

#### 1. If I go to ...

Language point	First conditional ( first person singular )
Skill	Speaking
Level	Elementary and Intermediate
Aids	None
Lexical area	Action verbs and holiday vocabulary

#### Method:

The teacher chooses a foreign country and explains that the students have the opportunity to go there for a free holiday. To show they are worthy of the opportunity they must explain what they will do if they go there. Each student must make a sentence which begins with the previous sentence. The teacher can first discuss what the class knows about the country to ensure that the students have some ideas. Prompt words or drawings can go up on the blackboard.

The teacher then asks a student to begin, prompting if necessary, e.g.

Student 1	If I go to France, I’ll visit Paris.
Teacher	If I visit Paris, I’ll go to the Louvre.
Student 2	If I go to the Louvre, I’ll see the Mona Lisa.

The teacher should pick students as random to make sure that everyone is on their toes.

There are 3 rules:

1. Each sentence must begin with the second half of the previous one.
2. Each student has to produce a sentence within 5 or 10 seconds.
3. If a student gets stuck for ideas or makes a mistake, another student is

chosen.

#### 2. What is it?

Language point	Use of question forms
Skill	Speaking and listening
Aids	None
Lexical area	Open

#### Method:

The teacher explains that the aim of the game is to find out what an object is by asking questions about it. Only *Yes/ No* answers can be given.

A student thinks of an object or is prompted by the teacher. The other students ask questions in turn to try and guess the identity of the object. After 15 *No* answers the

class have lost and the student has won. Another student then takes a turn. If a student guesses correctly he takes the next turn as presenter.

For low levels the teacher should specify a restricted area of vocabulary from which the object should be chosen, such as *building, things to eat, people or things in the school*.

Initially the teacher will probably need to give examples of the sort of (often humorous) question that can be asked, e.g.

Is it heavy?

Has it got a smell?

Can you drink it?

Can I sit on it?

### 3. Guess the question

Language point

Use of question forms

Skill

Speaking and listening

Aids

A set of cards with an interesting question written on each, e.g.

Have you ever eaten frogs?

Have you ever seen a camel?

How do you mend a puncture?

Open

Lexical area

#### Method:

1 student is given a card with a question. He then gives the class a series of possible answers to the question. The class must work out what the question is, e.g.

Question

Have you ever eaten frogs?

Student 1

Yes, last week in Paris.

( with question )

Student 2

Have you seen the Eiffel Tower?

( guessing )

Student 1

Yes, they tasted horrible.

Student 3

Have you ever eaten snails?

(guessing )

Student 1

Yes, the legs were awful.

Student 4

Have you ever eaten frogs?

(guessing )

Score can be kept on the basis of how many possible answers were necessary for the class to guess correctly.

The game can be played by the whole class or in groups or pairs.

### 4. Repeat the sentence

Language point

Sentence building and word order practice

Skill

Speaking and listening

Aids

None

Lexical area

Open

#### Method:

The teacher divides the class into 2 teams. He chooses a sentence, preferably related to current language work. He then says the sentence twice, rather slowly but with normal phrasing breaks, e.g.

My fat Uncle – lives in a big house – in New York – and usually walks to work.

Students chosen in random order from Team A must repeat 1 phrase from the sentence in the correct order, e.g.

Student 1

My fat uncle

Student 2	lives in a big house
Student 3	In New York
Student 4	and usually walks to work

If the student hesitates too long or makes a mistake, Team A loses a point and Team B attempts the sentence. Teams should take it in turns to be given new sentences. For every correct sentence, a team wins 5 points.

The teacher can make the sentences longer and more complicated if the teams get too good. The sentences should also contain specific word order practice elements such as the positioning of time adverbials – *usually*, *often*, etc. The teacher can example of the *ship/ sheep* variety, into the sentences, to test students' comprehension and concentration.

### 5. Words from words

Language point	Vocabulary and spelling practice
Skill	Writing
Aids	None
Lexical area	Open

#### Method:

The teacher chooses a word, preferably not too long and containing at least 2 vowels and a mixture of consonants. The students have to make other words from it, using only the letters it contains. The only rule is that any letter can only be used once, unless it appears more than once in the original word, e.g.

#### Cambridge

bridge, ride, are, am, age, made, bed, came, bad, bird, mad, bread, read, ridge, cab, car, rage, cage, crime, drag.

More difficult words:

bridge, gem, cad, cadge, mace, bid, ram, dram, drab, cram, crab, crib, grim.

To make the game more competitive a time limit of say, 5 minutes can be set. The students can work individually or in pairs or small groups, and their answers can be collected on the board.

For lower level classes a target of perhaps 5 or 10 words will help students. Alternatively, the teacher can provide prompts which students can complete with or without the aid of an English – English dictionary, e.g.

br....	(bridge)
cr....	(crime)
br...d	(bread)

### 6. Mixed syllables

Language point	Word building from syllables
Skill	Reading and writing
Aids	Blackboard or overhead projector and ( optional ) a set of word cards
Lexical area	Open

#### Method:

The teacher writes a two – syllable word on the board and shows how the syllables divide, e.g.

*classroom = class + room*

The teacher then writes up 2 columns of one – syllable words which can be combined to make new two – syllable words. The order of the 2 columns is, of course,



jumbled, so that students have to use their vocabulary knowledge to put the words together, e.g.

hand	pet
for	ice
pup	age
pass	some
hat	in
not	red
rob	tune

Answer: handsome, fortune, puppet, passage, hatred, notice, robin.

#### Alternative

This can also be played as a group card game. Each group receives a pack of cards with 1 of these syllables written on each card. Some of the words can be repeated or new combinations added to make up a large pack.

Each student receives the same number of cards, say 5 or 6. The remainder of the cards is left face down on the table. To play 1 student puts a card on the table, face up. In turn, other students try to put down a second card that will form a two – syllable word. If a student cannot do this he draws an extra card. If a student can make a word he takes the 2 cards and puts them on one side.

This counts as 1 point. He then starts the next round by putting down a card.

### **3. Conclusion and Discussion**

In short, excitement is very important. There is no excitement, there is no attention, there is no learning, and there is no memory. Teaching is really an art, no one is the best. The problem is to have a suitable teaching method for the students. In order to have methodological suitability, besides basic theoretical problems, teachers must master a set of teaching methods and techniques to apply them, and one of the important factors is excitement.

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