

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN A PRE-SCHOOL SETTING

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Abstract: *The article discusses the methods and approaches to teaching a foreign language in kindergarten. It has been argued that in teaching English in kindergarten, emphasis should be placed on oral speech.*

Keywords: *foreign language, preschool, kindergarten, education, communication.*

Introduction

Teaching English in preschool settings has become increasingly significant as early childhood education shifts toward holistic child development. In Uzbekistan, the sociocultural landscape of foreign language instruction transformed with the introduction of initiatives such as Decree No. PP-1875 (2012), emphasizing the integration of foreign language learning at an early age. English language acquisition in preschool not only equips children with communication skills but also nurtures intellectual, social, and cultural growth. The process facilitates cognitive development, including analytical and creative thinking, while also exposing young learners to diverse cultures. In a preschool environment, teaching English prioritizes oral communication through engaging, playful methods such as storytelling, singing, and role-playing. Guided by theories like L.S. Vygotsky's insights on language and thought development, this pedagogical approach underscores the importance of creating a supportive, interactive environment. Such strategies ensure language learning is both effective and enjoyable for young learners.

Literature review

"The sociocultural background of foreign language instruction in Uzbekistan has changed significantly in the early 21st century. Scholars, researchers, and scientists have been studying foreign language instruction in great detail in accordance with Decree No. PP-1875 of December 10, 2012, "On Measures to Further Improve the System of Foreign Language Learning," which was issued by the first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Foreign languages have gained particular importance with the development of a new paradigm for preschool education that places the child at its core. Not only does learning a foreign language help preschoolers develop their communication skills, expose them to different cultures, and promote personal growth, but it also helps them develop intellectually. This includes the development of speech and verbal communication, self-learning skills, a system of thought processes, and creative thinking, as well as the speed of thought processes, which include the ability to compare, recognize, generalize, and draw conclusions. The implementation of a variety of programs that are accessible, versatile, and content-rich, as well as chances for communication and cooperative activities between adults and children, is made possible by a growing educational and subject-spatial environment.

Considering the process of a child's personality development as an organized and purposeful intellectual-cognitive activity, great attention should be paid to creating a conducive environment during English language classes. The selection of the content of the training program is carried out taking into account the communicative and sociocultural approaches to foreign language teaching, the principles of humanistic teaching, and a focus on the development of the child's personality.

In order to help people overcome obstacles to the expression of their creativity, the psycho-pedagogical environment in which development occurs should be challenging, nonjudgmental, contain a certain amount of uncertainty that promotes exploration and transformative activity, and imply acceptance of the individual.

Many people of different ages, occupations, and hobbies have been involved in direct and indirect communication (e.g., through the Internet) as a result of geopolitical, communication, and technical changes in society. As a result, there is a greater necessity to use foreign languages. Teaching language as a communication tool and an introduction to the spiritual traditions of the nations and peoples under study has gained priority significance. It is now very important for preschool institutions to teach both native and foreign languages using an integrative approach.

According to L.S. Vygotsky, the acquisition of a foreign language follows a path directly opposite to that of the development of the native language. A child acquires their native language unconsciously and unintentionally, while a foreign language is acquired starting with awareness and intentionality. Therefore, the scientist put forward the thesis that the opposite directions of mastering speech in the native language are inextricably linked with the simultaneous development of thinking, since a child, mastering the linguistic means of expressing thoughts, simultaneously and inextricably cognizes the surrounding reality. In the course of cognition of the surrounding world, he forms concepts that are reflected by language.

A child who is mastering a second language already has a certain idea about the world around him. For him, the process of language acquisition will be effective if stable connections are established in his consciousness between a new word and its equivalent in the native language.

Language, whether native or foreign, serves as a means of communication, allowing people to interact with each other, to influence each other in the natural conditions of social life. In kindergarten, a foreign language should be taught primarily as a means of communication.

The study of the English language has an aesthetic impact. In class, children enjoy listening to foreign speech. They like to pronounce sounds, words, sentences, engage in conversation, and tell stories in a foreign language. They love to learn poems and read them, and sing songs.

The study of English in kindergarten has a great educational function. Children realize what words people use to name objects, phenomena, their properties, qualities, location, how they pronounce them, and much more. The correct use of language means provides the opportunity to understand each other, perceive and transmit thoughts in communication. All this develops children linguistically and enriches them with new concepts. The study of a foreign language develops a child's logical thinking, since mastering a language itself is associated with such operations as analysis, synthesis, comparison, and inference. The study of the English language involves the work of auditory, visual, speech-motor, and motor analyzers. It has a great influence on the development of memory, as the child needs to memorize words and phrases.

A foreign language plays a large role in expanding a child's horizons and increasing their general culture. Introduction to a language is an introduction to the culture of the people who created it, to their spiritual life. Educational functions are also performed by visual materials: albums, slides, films, etc. The study of a foreign language should lead the learner to master the speech skills that realize the communicative essence of language - to serve as a means of communication, to expand horizons, and to develop the child's intellectual abilities. Learning is an active process carried out through the involvement of the learner in various types of activities, and thus makes him an active participant in the formation of his personality.

The teacher's teaching function consists in the fact that he needs to explain, clarify, inform, comment, correct, and thereby enrich the students' knowledge of the language and through the language being studied: increase vocabulary, knowledge of word combinations, expand their ability to use them practically in oral communication, while forming the necessary personality traits. The teacher exercises a controlling function when familiarizing, training, and applying, and it manifests itself in the fact that in the course of familiarizing the child with new material, the teacher establishes whether the learner understood it or not; during

training - whether the actions with the specific educational content are performed correctly or incorrectly, if incorrectly, then what is incorrect.

Methodology

The methodology for teaching English in preschool emphasizes interactive, play-based learning designed to foster communication skills and cognitive development. The approach integrates communicative, sociocultural, and humanistic teaching principles, prioritizing oral communication and active engagement. Key elements of the methodology include the following:

1. **Environment Setup:** A supportive and stimulating psychopedagogical environment is created to encourage exploration, creativity, and active participation. Visual aids, thematic decorations, and interactive materials such as puppets, flashcards, and digital resources are used to make lessons engaging and relatable.

2. **Teaching Strategies:** Activities such as singing songs, reciting poems, storytelling, and role-playing are central to lessons. These activities integrate auditory, visual, and speech-motor stimuli to enhance memory retention and understanding.

3. **Structured Learning:** Lessons are designed to introduce children to new vocabulary and phrases systematically. This includes multiple encounters with linguistic elements through listening, repetition, and contextual usage in communicative-role-playing situations.

4. **Role of the Teacher:** Teachers perform guiding, controlling, and corrective roles. They introduce new content, ensure proper comprehension through observation and interaction, and provide opportunities for students to practice and apply the learned material in creative ways.

This methodology is rooted in fostering a positive attitude toward language learning while ensuring a balance between education and entertainment.

Analysis and Conclusions

The performance by the student of the functions that constitute the essence of learning begins with familiarization with the specific educational content. The

student must understand the form (hear or see it correctly), the meaning (correlate it with an object, phenomenon, action), and the use (how it combines with other language units, in what situations it is used, what communicative tasks can be solved with the help of this material, what to express). Understanding the form, meaning, and use is very important, but this is not enough. Training is necessary, ensuring multiple encounters with the specific educational content, be it a word, phrase, grammatical structure, passing the assimilated material through auditory, speech-motor, and visual analyzers, ensuring the imprinting of the material in memory, its retention in it. Various communicative-role-playing situations are created for training, in which children can apply their knowledge. Teachers, using various techniques of role-playing (puppet and table theater, drawing and transformation, etc.), stimulate the generalization (generalization) of cases in which certain linguistic phenomena are manifested, the studied language expressions are used. The demonstration and role-playing are accompanied by explanation and discussion. Having played his role and set an example of speech action, the adult gives way to the child, who must adopt his speech role. Without training, it is impossible to master a foreign language. And finally, the application of the assimilated material in the act of oral communication".

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