

**AGE CHARACTERISTICS OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN AND
PSYCHOLINGUISTIC MECHANISMS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

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Abstract. This article examines the age-related characteristics of preschool-aged children and the psycholinguistic mechanisms of foreign language acquisition, as well as the basic principles of language teaching

Keywords: Preschool age, foreign language acquisition, psychological and physiological characteristics, psycholinguistic principles, pedagogical principles, methodological principles, play motivation, communication skills

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются возрастные особенности детей дошкольного возраста и психолингвистические механизмы усвоения иностранного языка, а также основные принципы обучения языку

Ключевые слова: Дошкольный возраст, усвоение иностранного языка, психологические и физиологические характеристики, психолингвистические принципы, педагогические принципы, методические принципы, игровая мотивация, коммуникативные навыки

Annotatsiya. Mazkur maqolada maktabgacha yoshdagi bolalarning yosh xususiyatlari va xorijiy tilni o'zlashtirishning psixolingvistik mexanizmlari hamda til o'rgatishning asosiy tamoyillari haqida fikr yuritilgan

Kalit so'zlar: Maktabgacha yosh davri, xorijiy tilni o'zlashtirish, psixologik va fiziologik xususiyatlar, psixolingvistik tamoyillar, pedagogik tamoyillar, metodik tamoyillar, o'yin motivatsiyasi, kommunikativ ko'nikmalar

Introduction. Over the past 5-6 years, the number of people learning English has increased dramatically. It has become obvious to almost everyone that knowledge of foreign languages is essential for modern life. The age of learners has also changed. While previously methods were primarily aimed at schoolchildren, parents are now striving to begin teaching their children foreign languages as early as possible. Moreover, psychologists have recognized preschool age as the most favorable period for this type of activity.

Uzbekistan, occupying a prominent place in the global community, places special emphasis on all areas, including the education system. In particular, the teaching of foreign languages from preschool age is of paramount importance.

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Education” addresses issues of continuous education, the use of modern pedagogical technologies, and the development of foreign language teaching. The law recognizes preschool education as the initial stage of a child's intellectual, spiritual, and speech development.[1]

Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PK-1875 “On measures to further improve the system of learning foreign languages” establishes:

- Teaching foreign languages from an early age;
- using interactive methods;
- implementing multimedia and innovative technologies;
- continuing education for teachers.[2]

“State Requirements for the Development of Children of Early and Preschool Age” establishes requirements for the development of children’s:

- Speech development;
- communicative competence;
- listening and pronunciation skills;
- ability to perceive elements of a foreign language.[3]

The State Curriculum “Ilk Kadam” is the main methodological document for preschool educational organizations. The program:

- Develops children's communication skills;
- develops speech activity;
- arouses interest in foreign languages;
- reflects the principles of play-based education. [4]

Classes in the “Elements of English” program in preschool educational institutions are organized based on this program.

Main Part. According to experts, the best time to learn a foreign language is between the ages of 4 and 7, when the child has already mastered their native language and is consciously engaged in the new language. At this age, speech patterns are still few and far between, thoughts can be easily “coded” in new ways, and communication in a foreign language is relatively easy. If the methodological system is adequately designed from a linguodidactic and psycholinguistic perspective, then success in mastering the limited language material offered and creating the necessary prerequisites for further acquisition of any foreign language is guaranteed for virtually all children.

Children aged 4 to 7 are particularly sensitive to linguistic phenomena; they develop an interest in understanding their speech experiences and the “secrets of language.” At this age, a gradual shift in the dominant activity occurs, from play to learning.

Psychologists note that by taking into account the psychological and physiological characteristics of preschoolers during foreign language learning, it is possible to positively influence the child's speech development in their native language. Learning foreign language poetry and songs and engaging them in play activities contributes to the development of communication skills.

However, the issue of choosing a teaching method, organizing the learning process, and preparing methodological materials remains relevant.

Considering the psychological and physiological characteristics of preschool children, several fundamental principles in foreign language teaching are identified [5].

I. Psycholinguistic principles:

- The principle of taking age-appropriate characteristics into account.

The proposed tasks should be appropriate to the child’s age-appropriate abilities, skills, and developmental level. Children are focused on understanding and interacting with the world around them, so play activities should form the basis for teaching a foreign language.

- The principle of gradually increasing the complexity of the material.

At the initial stages, it is recommended to provide children with a role model for listening and imitation. Once these skills have been successfully mastered, students should be motivated to initiate communication and independently construct statements.

- The principle of psychological comfort.

Preschoolers experience the world around them primarily through their emotions, so to create a comfortable environment for the child, a calm teacher's voice, playful techniques, and tactile sensations are recommended.

II. Pedagogical Principles:

- Principle of a purposeful pedagogical process.

The teacher must clearly understand the ultimate learning goal and determine the appropriateness of each proposed task.

- Principle of consistency and sequencing.

Tasks should gradually increase in complexity, building on previously covered material.

- Principle of creativity.

An unusual way of presenting language material and the use of visual aids always generates greater interest in students and better activates their learning and cognitive activity.

- Principle of novelty.

It is necessary to maintain interest in mastering a foreign language. This can be achieved, for example, through a variety of activities or directly through interesting study material.

- Principle of clarity.

When preschoolers learn a foreign language, visual aids, both visual and auditory (audio recordings, educational computer games), are of great importance.

III. Methodological Principles:

- The principle of communicative focus.

To develop speaking skills, present real-life situations from the child's life. This will allow them to become accustomed to foreign speech, learn to distinguish words from speech, and fulfill requests, which should ultimately lead to a desire to become an active participant in the communicative process.

- The principle of oral anticipation.

This principle is based on the idea that language should be acquired through oral communication, which is best suited for preschool age, as children cannot yet write and read in their native language. Thus, preschoolers are introduced only to the sound aspect of speech.

Acquiring a foreign language by preschoolers requires the participation not only of a qualified teacher but also of sensitive parents, who can also assist in foreign language acquisition.

Psychologists and preschool education specialists have developed a system of recommendations for parents, including the following [6]:

- it is necessary to come up with a native speaker, for example, a toy, and use techniques for switching from one language to another;

- play with the baby using a foreign language (modeling, drawing, outdoor games, crafts, home play experiments). This will allow the child to master language material in a natural play environment for the child and create a favorable emotional background;

- gradually add views of cards with inscriptions in a foreign language and voice the names of objects;
- learn with your child to correctly pronounce foreign sounds and play phonetic games;
- begin to teach grammar in the form of simple constructions using the example of children's fairy tales or games;

- arrange the lesson in such a way that the types of activities change every 3-5 minutes.

Childhood is a time of new discoveries, new knowledge; this is the time when material is absorbed faster and less effort is expended. Teaching a foreign language to a preschooler can be considered as a preparatory stage for school, so in the future it will be easier for him to adapt to a heavy academic load. He will have developed communication skills in both his native and foreign languages, developed attentiveness, perseverance, hard work and interest in acquiring new knowledge.

Conclusion. The introduction of early teaching of foreign languages is justified by children's natural disposition to languages and their emotional readiness to master them, as well as the advantage of globally active play motivation of preschool children.

The development of new promising directions in the study of languages, especially in preschool childhood, allows the child to become involved in world culture as early as possible and in the future become a full-fledged member of modern society.

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