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TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES AT PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Мақолада мамлакатда мактабгача бўлган таълим муассасаларида чет тилиларни ўқитишни ривожлантириш масалари кўриб чиқилади. Давлат ва ота-оналар ишончини оқлаш учун жалб қилинган томонлар миллий стратегияни ривожлантириши керак бўлади. Қуйида ушбу масала борасида мулоҳазалар мавжуд.

В статье рассматриваются проблемы совершенствования преподавания иностранных языков в дошкольных учебных заведениях страны. Чтобы оправдать ожидания правительства и родителей, заинтересованные стороны должны содействовать национальной стратегии в области изучения иностранных языков. Некоторые идеи по этому поводу излагаются ниже.

This article discusses the issue of improving teaching foreign languages in the preschool educational Institutions in the country. To meet the expectations of government and the parents the stakeholders will have to facilitate the national strategies. There are some ideas about this below.

Калит сўзлар: Тил ўзлаштирилиши, равонлик, аниқлик, грамматик қолиплар, барқарорлик, ўйин дарслар, ёндашув, ихтисослашган ўқитувчилар.

Ключевые слова: овладение языками, свободное владение, беглость, точность, грамматические структуры, устойчивость, игровые уроки, бихевиористский подход, подготовка учителей.

Key words: languages acquisition, fluency, accuracy, grammatical patterns, Sustainability, gaming lessons, behaviorist approach, specialized teachers.

After the promulgation of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan ” On Measures for Further Improvement of Foreign Languages Learning System” teaching and learning languages, mainly English, are started with the first grade of secondary schools in the form of gaming lessons and in the form of lessons on speaking but without teaching alphabet, reading and teaching grammar though teachers are supposed to pay special attention to the norms of pronunciation.

But the abovementioned Decree has initiated another very useful step in popularization of foreign languages, especially English, in pre-school educational Institutions, i.e. in kindergartens. Actually all the parents whose children attend the pre-school educational Institutions insist on teaching foreign languages to their children. This issue is very much connected with training teachers, developing special course books, providing the kindergartens with modern ICT and so an. The training of teachers needs working out special approaches in languages acquisition by children that attend preschool Institutions. This issue has long been thought of as a process of imitation and reinforcement. It is thought that children learn foreign languages by copying the speech heard around them. It has also been thought that the children’s knowledge were strengthened by the repetitions, corrections provided by the adults. Though this way of understanding may partly be accepted there are many other reasons that this approach cannot explain all the details of languages development in children. It is well-known that children do imitate in developing pronunciation and vocabulary of foreign languages. But one cannot say the same about their grammatical ability.

Very often we become a witness when children use irregular grammatical patterns. Most often it happens when we encounter irregular formation of verbal tense forms like “goed”, “meeted” or when they use regular plural of nouns instead of irregular ones like “foot”-“foots”, “goose”- “gooses”. It is evident that children think that grammar is something fixed, regular and thus produce grammatically wrong forms of words in their everyday life. In the beginning they think that grammatically forms are regular which is known in science as the principle of analogy. According to which young language learner does not create new grammatical patterns, they extend the range of grammatical patterns which exist in the system of languages.

These facts prove that “language acquisition by children must be viewed within the context of a child’s intellectual development. Linguistic structures will emerge only if there is an already-established cognitive foundation, for example, before children can use structures of comparison (e.g. This car is bigger than that), they need first to have developed the conceptual ability to make relative judgments of size” (D. Crystal -1993). According to Jean Piaget the emergence of linguistic skills of children depends on the cognitive development, i.e. on “Sensori-motor” intelligence, in which children construct a mental picture of a world of objects that have independent existence (Jean Piaget: 1896-

1980). Today the only alternative to the cognitive approach is the behaviorist view. The main aim of this approach is to form or to teach new, correct linguistic habits through intensive practice, eliminating interference errors in the teaching process, trying to use similar language structures that will serve as facilitators in second language acquisition.

When teaching foreign languages to children in kindergartens it is important to take into account the language used by adults to children. Parents usually do not talk to their children in the same way as they communicate with adults. Usually their utterances are shorter, the patterns of sentences are restricted in range, their meanings are concrete and they usually repeat them many times, the speed of speaking is much slower than they communicate with adults.

The general facts mentioned above about language acquisition by children must be taken into account in teaching foreign languages in preschool institution. In teaching at preschool Institutions much depends on the professional qualification of trainers. Materials choosing must be based on a passionate belief in the creative capacity of children. They must be given encouragement and appropriate guidance. The activities must be carefully selected to give maximum opportunity and chance to children within a structured framework, thereby building confidence in their own creative output. The teachers have to do their best to develop children's creativity because children cannot apply fully their intelligence if they are not given the opportunity and encouragement to be creative with the language they are learning. As has already been mentioned, a special attention must be given to the accuracy. As A. Wright writes "accuracy and fluency need not be in conflict. Interesting and relevant ideas need to be clearly expressed, and correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation are part of this" (1997). Since in our country we pay that much attention to foreign languages we shall have to be aware of the ways of designing special course-books for preschool children and develop audio-visual materials. In one of his speeches the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan said that "...it is worth mentioning how important is the impact of television and cinematography today. In my opinion it is necessary to create more cartoons, feature films and video films of national character for our children, so that our young generation know not only Walt Disney's characters, but also be acquainted with the Uzbek folk- tales, with our traditional characters and be proud of them" (1995). These words are becoming update. Many films of this type have already been produced, we'll have to translate them into English and maybe to other foreign languages that will help a lot to achieve our goal. It is in this way that we can take into account the positive experiences of both behaviorist and cognitive approaches in acquisition English and other foreign languages by our children, i.e. "L2 input obtained from controlled, formal instruction (Behaviorist approach) and exposure to authentic use of L2 in near -natural situation (Cognitive approach)" (1993)

Classroom activities will have to be structured to serve immediate needs, i.e. they must serve to develop communicative competence of children. And this presupposes that the tasks must be organized and arranged in the way of progression from simple and quicker ones at the beginning to the longer and more complex ones at the end. The materials of such tasks should be described in detail, maybe with proper example to help our preschool trainers. The materials, course books, cartoon and other films must serve to develop listening comprehension, speaking (oral production), pronunciation, and accurate grammar. To achieve this teachers will have to create a situation in which that is natural.

We cannot but mention here education technologies because technology plays a central, very important role in education today in the epoch of globalization and brings both opportunities and challenges at the same time. We shall probably have to develop special projects on implementing computer and other technologies in preschool educational Institutions to support teaching foreign languages to children which will facilitate easier learning to them.

There's another very important issue. Irrespective of the level of knowledge there must be a well-developed, standardized system of knowledge assessment which might serve as a reliable instrument to define the level of knowledge of those who master a foreign language. There are many types of tests today but there's no a well-developed system to measure effectively the knowledge of children which must be integrated it into the educational system that will help the stakeholders to control the progress of children.

Recently the Cabinet of Ministers issued Decree „ Additional Measures on Improving the Professional Qualification of Teachers of Secondary Schools” dated March 25, 2015. According to this decree all the undergraduate students of philological universities will have to listen to 36 hour-course on the topic „The Methodology of Teaching English to the Primary School Children” (2015). These instructions will also be helpful in teaching English to preschool children.

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