

THE IMPORTANCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODOLOGY IN PRESCHOOL PREPARATORY GROUPS

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Abstract; This article explores the significance of foreign language teaching methodology in preschool preparatory groups. The focus is on the psychological, pedagogical, and linguistic foundations of teaching a second language to children aged 5–7. The paper highlights how age-appropriate, playful, and interactive methods contribute to effective language acquisition, cognitive development, and communicative competence in young learners. The integration of songs, games, storytelling, and visual aids is emphasized as a core part of the methodology. The role of the teacher's language input and the learning environment are also discussed as crucial factors in motivating and engaging preschool children in the language learning process.

Keywords: foreign language, preschool education, early learning, language acquisition, teaching methodology, preparatory group, interactive learning, communicative competence

In today's globalized world, the early introduction of a foreign language in preschool settings is gaining increasing relevance. Language learning during the early years is supported by children's natural ability to absorb new sounds, patterns, and vocabulary with relative ease. This makes the preschool preparatory stage — particularly for children aged 5 to 7 — an ideal period for laying the foundation for foreign language acquisition.

The significance of effective methodology in teaching a second language at this stage cannot be overstated. At this age, children are highly active, curious, and emotionally sensitive. Therefore, traditional instructional methods are often ineffective. Instead, child-centered, play-based, and emotionally engaging approaches have proven to be more successful. These methods not only help children develop basic vocabulary and pronunciation, but also enhance their memory, attention, and social interaction skills.

Moreover, teaching a foreign language in preschool does not mean formal grammar instruction; rather, it involves creating a language-rich environment where children are exposed to the target language through games, songs, simple instructions, routines, and visual materials. When properly implemented, such methodology fosters not only language development but also positive attitudes toward learning and intercultural understanding.

This article aims to analyze the pedagogical importance of foreign language teaching methodology in preschool preparatory groups, discuss effective strategies, and examine their influence on children's holistic development.

This study employed qualitative research methods to explore effective foreign language teaching methodologies in preschool preparatory groups. The primary data collection techniques included classroom observation, structured interviews with preschool teachers, and analysis of lesson plans and instructional materials.

Classroom observations were conducted in four preschool preparatory groups in urban kindergartens over the course of six weeks. The researchers focused on how children aged 5–7 responded to different teaching strategies, such as songs, role-playing, flashcards, storytelling, and physical movement games (TPR – Total Physical Response).

Interviews were held with 12 experienced preschool educators who regularly teach a foreign language (mainly English) to preparatory group children. The interviews were designed to gather insights on which methods are most engaging and effective, what challenges teachers face, and how they adapt their lessons to children's developmental levels.

Lesson plans and learning materials were also reviewed to determine how visual, auditory, and kinesthetic tools were incorporated into teaching. Particular attention was paid to how linguistic input was presented and how interaction was encouraged in the classroom environment.

The results of the study revealed that interactive, play-based teaching methods are significantly more effective in foreign language instruction at the preschool level. Children demonstrated greater engagement, better vocabulary retention, and more confidence in speaking when the lessons included songs, movement-based activities, and storytelling.

Teachers reported that using realia, flashcards, gestures, and familiar routines helped children grasp foreign language phrases faster. For example, daily phrases like “stand up,” “sit down,” and “what’s your name?” were quickly learned when taught through repetition and physical movement.

It was also found that the most effective classes maintained a low-anxiety, playful atmosphere where making mistakes was seen as part of learning. Children were more willing to speak in the foreign language when they felt encouraged and not pressured.

Moreover, the use of short, focused activities (5–10 minutes each) aligned well with children's attention spans. Teachers noted that visual aids, puppets, and music especially increased interest among shy or quiet children.

Overall, the findings support the view that developmentally appropriate methods—particularly those involving active participation and sensory engagement—play a crucial role in successful foreign language acquisition at the preschool preparatory stage.

The findings of this study reinforce the idea that young children acquire a foreign language most effectively in environments that are rich in interaction, emotional safety, and sensory engagement. At the preschool age, cognitive development is still closely linked to

physical and emotional experiences. Therefore, language learning must be approached holistically, blending movement, music, visuals, and social interaction.

One important insight from the research is that foreign language instruction at this stage should not be focused on grammatical accuracy or rote memorization. Instead, it should prioritize comprehension and oral communication through meaningful, enjoyable experiences. When children sing songs, listen to stories, and play games in a second language, they absorb vocabulary and sentence patterns naturally—similar to how they acquire their first language.

The role of the teacher is also critical. Teachers who use expressive body language, visual aids, and consistent routines tend to create a more engaging and supportive classroom atmosphere. The presence of a routine in foreign language classes (e.g., greetings, calendar talk, weather discussion) helps children form expectations and feel more secure, which boosts their willingness to participate.

Furthermore, parental involvement and continued exposure outside the classroom significantly reinforce what children learn in school. Simple at-home activities, such as watching age-appropriate videos or practicing phrases, can further strengthen a child's second-language abilities.

Overall, the discussion highlights that foreign language learning at the preschool level must be child-centered, dynamic, and embedded in meaningful contexts that resonate with young learners' interests and daily experiences.

Foreign language teaching in preschool preparatory groups is most effective when guided by child-centered, playful, and interactive methodologies. The use of songs, stories, games, visual aids, and total physical response activities creates a rich learning environment where children are motivated and emotionally engaged.

This early exposure not only develops basic communicative competence but also strengthens children's memory, concentration, and self-confidence. Moreover, it fosters positive attitudes toward language learning that can continue into primary education and beyond.

Educators must therefore be equipped with the appropriate pedagogical tools and training to implement these methods effectively. When supported by a positive classroom environment and parental involvement, foreign language learning becomes an enjoyable and impactful part of a child's holistic development.

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