

**TEACHING ENGLISH TO PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN**

*Supervisor: Ubaydullayeva Baxtigul*

*Student of Andijan state institute of foreign languages*

*Abdulaxatova Navro'zaxon Sharifjon qizi*

**Abstract:** *At present more and more parents want their children to start learning a foreign language (mostly English) before they go to school. In Uzbekistan many kindergartens offer this possibility, some, particularly private ones, offer programmes only in English. But these are just rare cases. Most often kindergartens provide an English course for their children as an extra curriculum activity once a week or once in 14 days. But what in fact is this tuition about? What do the children do during an English lesson? How long should the lesson last? These and many other issues about the teaching of English to pre-school children are the purpose of this article.*

Teaching English to pre-school children became quite a fashionable trend 10 years ago in Uzbekistan and it has been on its rise since. Many kindergartens all over Uzbekistan offer the opportunity of second language learning, particularly English although in the capital city, Tashkent, there are kindergartens providing their tuition also in French or German. However, these are usually international kindergartens and they use language immersion as their main teaching method. Other kindergartens, national state or private ones, offer the possibility of second language learning with the help of different foreign methods. Such classes are usually held once in a week or once in two weeks. The tuition itself is provided either by a kindergarten teacher or by a hired one who possesses a degree in teaching English as a second language. One of the most famous and successful courses in teaching English as a second language to pre-school children in Uzbekistan has been Early English [1;98], which considers teaching English at this age as natural as the acquisition of one's native language. Moreover, also psychologists claim (When to start teaching English to a child) [2;94]



that it is good to start learning a second language as soon as possible because till the age of seven all the percept is stored in the same area of one's brain.

However, after that age each foreign speech has a different network of neurons, which consequently requires switching among individual networks. Therefore, as a proverb goes: The sooner you start learning a foreign language, the better. In addition to that, it has already been scientifically proven that children at this age actually have a strong potential to acquire almost an infinite number of new information, especially when second language learning is concerned [3;74}. Furthermore, it has been proven that children who learn a second language at a very early age (compared to those who do not), have more active brain spheres and later have less difficulties in school subjects other than English.

### ***English lessons in the kindergartens***

As it has been stated above, kindergartens can have their whole programme in a foreign language, nevertheless, most commonly, they run just a few classes in English. Some kindergartens offer these classes of English in the afternoon, some have them incorporated in their morning programme, which is obviously better since children are still alert and therefore their attention and concentration are much higher. The optimal length of each lesson ranges between 20-30 minutes [4;23]. Children are usually divided according to their age; one group are 3-4 years old children (their tuition is predominantly restricted to action-based activities), the second one are 5-6 years old children (their tuition can also include some drama techniques). Sometimes, when just a few children attend the English lessons, children are divided according to their knowledge.

Moreover, Scientists published the Methodological guide of teaching English in a kindergarten I in 2010 [5;67]. This guide suggests that teachers when teaching English should follow natural developmental specifics of children of this age. In addition, the guide contains 10 rules of the things that should be kept when teaching English, which are as follows:

1. ability to understand;
2. exploitation of games and movement;



3. indirect teaching;
4. development of imagination;
5. activation of all senses;
6. changing of activities;
7. reinforcement;
8. individual approach;
9. use of native language;
10. use of positive motivation.

### *Activities during English lessons*

Besides ample Internet sources, there is a great number of pre-school printed teaching materials for teachers to use and apply on pre-school English learning activities. There are, for example, ESL activities and mini-books for every classroom (2001) or Anglictina pro deti (English for Children) – 2003 [6;94]. Children also like to see all different kinds of visuals: posters, flashcards, pictures, videos, picture books, or picture dictionaries for children.

The best is to combine hand-made materials with factory manufactured materials. Children like to be engaged in practical, fun activities and exercises for kids, and participate in making things like or birthday cards.

There are several teaching methods which keep children's attention and concentration at this age. They are as follows:

1. method of practical works;
2. method of drawing and conversation;
3. method of singing and reading poems;
4. method of total physical response.

Probably, the most effective **method is the method of total physical response (TPR)** because one remembers:

- 10% of what one has read,
- 20% of what one has heard,
- 30% of what one has seen,
- 50% of what one has heard and seen,





70% of what one has said,  
90% of what one has done.

English classroom activities often include TPR. The teacher tries to mimic the process during the English lesson and children respond to instructions requiring physical movement. This approach can be used for practising and teaching various things and using it in children's activities is double effective [7;12]. Moreover, it does not really take much for the teacher to prepare TPR-based English language activities because this approach requires basic language, universal preschool lesson themes:

1. Greetings
2. Family members Numbers Colours
3. Animals
4. House
5. Body parts
6. Food
7. Fruit and vegetables
8. Clothes
9. Weather, four seasons

Some of the TPR activities might be songs. For example, when talking about the body parts, teachers can use the song Head, shoulders, knees and toes. While children are singing, they are also pointing at the parts of their body. Or when learning colours, children can touch things of the colour the teacher says. For example, the teacher says: red! And all the children look for the red thing. When they find it, they touch it and say red.

Another TPR activity is a guessing game. The teacher has a bag, full of different kinds of fruit and children repeat after the teacher:

*Hands up, hands down,  
it's big, it's small,  
what is it?*



And the teacher takes out of his bag, for example, a banana, and the child who will guess it, gets a point. S/he who has the most of the points, wins.

However, the most popular game with TPR approach is Simon says. One of the children is Simon. Simon gives instructions and other children do what they are asked to do; for example, Simon says: jump! And all the children jump, and those who do not respond are out of the game

The teaching of English to pre-school children is undoubtedly meaningful if it meets a natural development of a child and it is appropriate to his/her age. Moreover, it is successful if the teacher of English has an adequate knowledge of the target language, masters relevant methodology of teaching English at this stage of education and s/he is enthusiastic about teaching young children (cf. Frydrychova Klimova 2011). Then, it is also an asset for the child since s/he picks up the language in the same way as s/he acquires his/her native language.

#### **REFERENCE**

1. Einhorn, K. (2001). ESL activities and mini-books for every classroom. USA.
2. Frydrychova Klimova, B. (2011). Motivation for learning English at a university level. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 15(1), 2599 - 2603, Elsevier Ltd.
3. Head, shoulders, knees and toes. Retrieved May 6, 2012, from <http://www.nasula.cz/basnicky-a-pisnicky>.
4. Helen Doron Early English. Retrieved May 6, 2012, from <http://www.helendoron.cz/> If you are happy. Retrieved May 6, 2012, from <http://www.nasula.cz/basnicky-a-pisnicky>.
5. Methodological guide of teaching English. (2010). Retrieved May 6, 2012 from <http://www.nasula.cz/pravidla-predskolni-anglictiny>.
6. When to start teaching English to a child. Od kdy začít učit své dítě anglicky. Retrieved May 6, 2012, from <http://www.helendoron.cz/od-kdy-zacit-ucit-sve-dite-anglicky>.
7. Owsianowski, C., & Ryterska-Stolpe, I. (2003). *Anglictina pro děti*. English for Children. INFOA.