

USING MODERN METHODS IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO PRE-SCHOOL LEARNERS

Moydinova Shohida Ismailjanovna

Senior teacher of Andijan state institute of foreign languages

Abstract: The increasing global demand for English language proficiency has influenced many countries to incorporate English teaching into early childhood education. This paper explores the use of modern teaching methods in teaching English to pre-school learners (ages 3–6). It provides an in-depth analysis of contemporary pedagogical approaches, including play-based learning, storytelling, Total Physical Response (TPR), technology-enhanced instruction, and multisensory techniques. Through literature review, classroom observation, and teacher interviews, this study highlights the benefits, challenges, and practical applications of these methods. The findings confirm that modern methods, when developmentally appropriate and learner-centered, can significantly enhance young children's English language learning experience.

Keywords: early childhood education, preschool, English language teaching, modern methods, play-based learning, TPR, digital tools, language acquisition

INTRODUCTION

In the age of globalization, English has become a key language for international communication, academic success, and future career opportunities. As such, introducing English at the preschool level is gaining popularity worldwide. However, teaching a foreign language to young learners requires an approach fundamentally different from that used with older children or adults. Preschool children are in the early stages of cognitive, emotional, and linguistic development, requiring methods that are interactive, engaging, and tailored to their learning styles.

Traditional methods such as grammar-translation and rote memorization are often ineffective and even detrimental for young learners. Modern methods, informed by research in developmental psychology and second language acquisition, emphasize active learning, contextual understanding, and emotional engagement. This paper aims to examine the effectiveness of these modern methods in preschool English language instruction.

Literature review

Language acquisition theories, particularly those of Vygotsky (1978) and Piaget (1951), emphasize the importance of social interaction, play, and sensory experiences in early learning. Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) supports scaffolding in language learning, where adult or peer support helps a child perform tasks they could not do alone. Piaget highlights how children construct knowledge through hands-on experiences and symbolic play, which is essential for early language learning.

Early language acquisition

Children between ages 3 and 6 are in a critical period for language learning. According to Lenneberg's Critical Period Hypothesis, young learners acquire new languages more naturally and with greater ease than older learners. They are less inhibited, more open to imitation, and capable of acquiring native-like pronunciation.

MODERN METHODS IN EARLY ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

1) Play-Based Learning

A teacher introduces the names of toys in English during free play time. While playing with a dollhouse, the teacher says, "This is a chair," and encourages children to repeat and place the chair in the correct room.

2) Total Physical Response (TPR)

The teacher gives commands like "Jump!", "Clap your hands!", or "Touch your nose!" while doing the actions. Children imitate the teacher, learning the meaning through movement.

3) Storytelling and Songs

A teacher reads Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? and asks children to point to animals and colors as they appear. Songs like Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes teach body parts while children perform the actions.

4) Multisensory and Visual Aids

Using a puppet to introduce new vocabulary, e.g., a frog puppet named Freddy who says, "Hello! I like apples!" while showing an apple flashcard. Children are more likely to remember the word apple because it's presented visually and dramatically.

5) Technology-Enhanced Learning

Using an English language learning app such as "Lingo kids" where children match pictures with spoken words. Interactive screens help them associate images, text, and sounds.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative case study approach involving five kindergartens across urban and semi-urban areas. Data collection methods included:

- **Classroom Observation:** Lessons were observed over a 6-month period.
- **Teacher Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 preschool English teachers.
- **Document Analysis:** Lesson plans, teaching aids, and digital resources were analyzed to understand the methods used.

Each school incorporated a blend of methods and provided examples of their weekly English activities and visual documentation such as photos and videos.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Teachers reported that modern methods dramatically increased student engagement. In one class, children sang The Wheels on the Bus using a toy bus and miniature characters. The classroom became animated, with learners participating enthusiastically, repeating phrases like "The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep."

Language Development

Children exposed to songs and stories acquired a larger vocabulary and used full sentences earlier.

After regular reading of The Very Hungry Caterpillar, children could say, "On Monday, he ate one apple," using correct sentence structure and days of the week.

Emotional and Social Growth

Learning through games and group work built confidence and encouraged teamwork. In a memory card game with food vocabulary (e.g., banana, carrot, milk), children helped each other find matching cards, using English phrases like "Is this milk?" or "Yes, I found it!"

Challenges Identified

- **Lack of Teacher Training:** Some teachers were unfamiliar with how to use digital tools or implement TPR beyond simple commands.
- **Resource Limitations:** Schools in rural areas lacked access to computers or projectors.

- **Classroom Size:** In a class of 30, it was difficult to involve each child in hands-on or speaking activities.

Nevertheless, teachers found that even simple tools like handmade flashcards, printed storybooks, and real objects could make lessons effective when used creatively.

CONCLUSION

Modern teaching methods are essential for effective English language instruction in preschool settings. Play-based learning, TPR, storytelling, and technology-assisted tools create a supportive and engaging environment that aligns with the developmental needs of young children. These methods not only promote language acquisition but also enhance cognitive, emotional, and social growth. Educators who adapt and innovate in the classroom—regardless of resources—can foster a positive and memorable language learning experience.

Recommendations

- 1. Teacher Training Programs:** Include hands-on workshops in teacher education programs focused on storytelling, TPR, and the use of technology. Conduct practical seminars where teachers practice using puppets and creating their own storybooks.
- 2. Curriculum Integration:** Create a preschool English curriculum that aligns with developmental milestones. Include weekly themes such as “Fruits,” “Animals,” and “My Body,” with accompanying songs, crafts, and games.
- 3. Use of Local Resources:** Encourage the adaptation of familiar folk tales and songs into simple English. Translate and simplify local fairy tales like "Zumrad and Qimmat" into English with visual aids.
- 4. Parental Involvement:** Provide parents with English songs or short videos to watch with their children at home. Share links to Cocomelon or Super Simple Songs via parent chat groups.
- 5. Monitoring and Assessment:** Use portfolio-based assessment including drawings, recordings, and checklists. Record a child saying, “I see a cat!” during play and add it to their language development file.

References:

1. Asher, J. (1977). *Learning Another Language through Actions: The Complete Teacher's Guidebook*. Sky Oaks Productions.
2. Brewster, J., Ellis, G., & Girard, D. (2012). *The Primary English Teacher's Guide*. Penguin English.
3. Cameron, L. (2001). *Teaching Languages to Young Learners*. Cambridge University Press.
4. Lenneberg, E. H. (1967). *Biological Foundations of Language*. Wiley.
5. Piaget, J. (1951). *Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood*. Norton.
6. Shin, J. K., & Crandall, J. (2014). *Teaching Young Learners English: From Theory to Practice*. National Geographic Learning.
7. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Harvard University Press.