

INVOLVING YOUNG LEARNERS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract:

The primary school years are known to be the best for learning a foreign language. Imitation abilities, natural curiosity, and a desire for new knowledge all help to overcome the challenges of foreign language learning. A teacher who uses a foreign language introduces younger students to a different culture on the one hand, and fosters respect and tolerance for different lifestyles on the other.

Keywords: ELT, young learners, interactive methods, motivation.

Language teaching in schools has developed dramatically in recent years. English is in high demand in schools, even in the lower primary grades. Teachers must find interesting and enjoyable ways to engage children in the learning process and help them progress, which is not always an easy task. Teaching children to speak can entail providing a variety of learning experiences. Teaching young learners to speak standard English as their native language strengthens their ability to excel in English-speaking cultures. According to the latest researches it was found out that children acquire language much more easily at their infant age. By perception and listening they learn the language naturally. When the children moreover have the chance to read books or magazines for infants, they become familiar with the written form of the language and have no problem to deal with texts and letters later at school. Children are able to understand the language much earlier before they begin to speak. They are accustomed to the sounds of the language and can comprehend the message through gestures, body movement, or facial expressions. When they get to primary school, they have no trouble learning the basics of the language and use their communication skills in all of their schoolwork[1;7]. It is natural for young children to learn to speak in an environment where the language is spoken around them. They have been taught since childhood to express themselves effectively and to speak in a meaningful manner. They learn how to use the language for purpose. Children learn about language use through interaction with others; through conversation they grasp the conventions of spoken language and absorb the values and beliefs through the language used by those around them. They do not just copy the language they



hear, but are active in making meaning Here are some points according to Phillips to consider when teaching young learners:

- The activities should be simple enough for children to understand what is expected of them.
- The tasks should be amusing and within children's abilities, so that the learners can easily reach their goals.
- The task should be stimulating and motivating for learners to feel satisfied with their work.
- Written activities should be used only in a small amount. In the sixth or seventh year of age the children are not yet so good at writing in their native language.
- Mostly the speaking activities should prevail – indeed, with very young children listening activities will take up a large proportion of class time.
- The activities should be simple enough for the children so that they understand what to do and what is expected of them [3].

The kinds of activities that work well are games and songs with actions, total physical response activities, tasks that involve colouring, cutting and sticking, simple, repetitive stories, and simple, repetitive speaking activities that have an obvious communicative value. To help children acquire English, let them hear and experience the language since they are very small [2]. In general it is known that young children are better in learning languages than older people. In spite of this fact we still can doubt whether children can learn more efficiently than adults. Anyway, it depends mostly on teachers how they can help learners to progress rapidly at any level of schooling. The teacher can hence the motivation and interest of children by giving further interesting and attractive information and activities concerning the language and its background. By no means teacher plays very important role in activating children's motivation and there are many factors that influence the learner's determination. Teacher should provide interesting materials that are attractive for children, full of pictures and lively activities. As far as materials are concerned it is better to bring more additional materials to class, so that children do not become bored with just one book. Also praising and rewarding can help. Each child in its early age wants to please the teacher or parents, do its best and achieve the goals successfully. By giving rewards to children they will be elated in doing other tasks.



References:

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