

LANGUAGE LEARNING CHALLENGES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Saydivaliyeva Nilufar G'ofur qizi

Chirchik State Pedagogical University Tourism faculty Foreign language and literature

Abdullayeva Zarina Dilshodbekovna

Teacher of Chirchik State Pedagogical University Tourism Faculty

Abstract: Early childhood is widely regarded as one of the most favorable periods for language acquisition due to children's high level of brain plasticity and their natural ability to imitate sounds and patterns. During this stage, children can absorb language intuitively, often without conscious effort. However, despite these advantages, young learners also face several significant challenges that may slow down or complicate the learning process. This article aims to examine the main language learning difficulties experienced by children between the ages of 3 and 7. These challenges include limited attention span, which makes it difficult for children to stay focused for long periods; underdeveloped literacy skills, as many children at this age are not yet able to read or write effectively; and a strong dependence on context and visual support for understanding meaning. Furthermore, emotional and psychological factors such as low motivation, anxiety, or lack of confidence can also influence learning outcomes.

Keywords: Early childhood, language acquisition, young learners, learning challenges, attention span, motivation, emotional factors, teaching strategies, classroom environment.

Аннотация: Раннее детство — один из наиболее благоприятных периодов для изучения языка, поскольку в это время мозг детей очень гибок, и они легко осваивают новые звуки и языковые структуры. Часто дети изучают язык не осознанно, а естественно, посредством слуха и подражания. Однако, несмотря на эти преимущества, дети в возрасте 3–7 лет сталкиваются с рядом существенных трудностей в процессе изучения языка. Цель данной статьи — проанализировать основные проблемы детей этой возрастной группы в изучении языка. К этим проблемам относятся короткая продолжительность концентрации внимания, то есть неспособность детей долго концентрироваться; тот факт, что навыки письма и чтения еще не полностью развиты; и большая зависимость от контекста и наглядных пособий для понимания смысла. Кроме того, эмоциональные факторы, такие как недостаток мотивации, тревожность или неуверенность в себе, также могут негативно влиять на эффективность обучения.

Ключевые слова: раннее детство, усвоение языка, юные ученики, трудности в обучении, внимание, мотивация, эмоциональные факторы, стратегии обучения, классная среда.

Annotatsiya: Erta bolalik davri til o‘rganish uchun eng qulay bosqichlardan biri hisoblanadi, chunki bu davrda bolalarning miyasi yuqori darajada moslashuvchan bo‘lib, ular yangi tovushlar va til strukturalarini oson o‘zlashtira oladi. Ko‘pincha bolalar tilni ongli ravishda emas, balki tabiiy ravishda, eshitish va taqlid qilish orqali o‘rganadilar. Biroq, ushbu afzalliklarga qaramay, 3–7 yoshdagi bolalar til o‘rganish jarayonida bir qator muhim qiyinchiliklarga duch keladilar.

Mazkur maqolaning maqsadi aynan shu yosh oralig‘idagi bolalarning til o‘rganishdagi asosiy muammolarini tahlil qilishdan iborat. Ushbu muammolar qatoriga diqqatning qisqa muddatli bo‘lishi, ya’ni bolalarning uzoq vaqt davomida e’tiborini jamlay

olmasligi; yozish va o‘qish ko‘nikmalarining hali to‘liq shakllanmaganligi; hamda ma’noni tushunishda ko‘proq kontekst va vizual vositalarga tayanish kiradi. Bundan tashqari, motivatsiya yetishmasligi, xavotir yoki o‘ziga ishonchsizlik kabi emotsional omillar ham o‘rganish samaradorligiga salbiy ta’sir ko‘rsatishi mumkin.

Kalit so‘zlar: erta bolalik, til o‘zlashtirish, yosh o‘quvchilar, o‘rganishdagi qiyinchiliklar, diqqat, motivatsiya, emotsional omillar, o‘qitish strategiyalari, sinf muhiti.

Early childhood is often considered a critical period for language learning due to children’s natural ability to absorb new information and imitate sounds. At this stage, the brain is highly flexible, which allows young learners to acquire a new language more easily than adults in some aspects, especially pronunciation. However, despite these advantages, language learning in early childhood is not always simple or effortless. Children between the ages of 3 and 7 face a range of cognitive, emotional, and environmental challenges that can influence their progress. Understanding these difficulties is essential for developing effective teaching strategies and creating supportive learning environments¹.

One of the main challenges young children face is related to their cognitive development. Their attention span is relatively short, which makes it difficult for them to stay focused on one activity for a long time. As a result, they may quickly lose interest in traditional learning tasks, especially those that require repetition without engagement. In addition, children at this age have limited memory capacity compared to older learners, which can affect their ability to retain new vocabulary and language structures. Therefore, learning activities need to be varied, dynamic, and adapted to their developmental level. Another important difficulty is the lack of developed literacy skills. Most children between the ages of 3 and 7 are still learning how to read and write in their first language. This means they cannot rely on written materials as much as older learners do. As a result,

¹ Pinter A. Teaching Young Language Learners. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. 328 p

language learning must focus more on listening and speaking skills rather than reading and writing. This limitation can slow down certain aspects of learning, especially vocabulary acquisition and grammar understanding, which are often supported by written input in more advanced learners².

Emotional and psychological factors also play a significant in early language learning. While young children are generally less afraid of making mistakes than adults, they can still experience feelings of frustration, boredom, or lack of motivation if the learning process is not engaging. In some cases, children may become shy or unwilling to participate, especially in unfamiliar environments or when they do not understand instructions. Positive reinforcement, encouragement, and a safe, supportive atmosphere are essential to help children feel confident and motivated to use the new language. The learning environment and teaching methods greatly influence children's success in language acquisition. Traditional, teacher-centered approaches are often not effective for young learners, as they require active participation and interaction. Children learn best through play, songs, stories, and hands-on activities that make learning enjoyable and meaningful. In addition, exposure to the language outside the classroom, such as through media or interaction with others, is important for reinforcing what they learn. Without sufficient input and practice, their progress may be limited³.

In conclusion, although early childhood offers many advantages for language learning, it also presents several challenges that cannot be ignored. Cognitive limitations, underdeveloped literacy skills, emotional factors, and environmental influences all play a role in shaping the learning process. To support young learners effectively, it is essential to use age-appropriate, interactive, and engaging teaching methods. By addressing these challenges, educators and parents can help children build a strong foundation in language learning and achieve long-term success.

² Bruner J. *Child's Talk: Learning to Use Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983. 144 p.

³ Cameron L. *Teaching Languages to Young Learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 272 p.

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