

Pedagogy

**THEORETICAL PRECONDITIONS FOR THE
FORMATION OF FOREIGN PHONETIC COMPETENCE
IN CHILDREN OF UPPER-KINDERGARTEN AGE BY
MEANS OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS**

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The question of effective learning of the English language in institutions of preschool education is especially relevant nowadays, all basic skills, including phonetics, are laid. Changes in the nature of education are more and more clearly oriented towards "free human development", creative initiative, independence of learners, competitiveness, mobility of future specialists. It is known that the goal of foreign language education is the formation of foreign language communicative competence, which in turn includes language, speech, linguistic, sociocultural and strategic competences. The study of foreign language should form a personality capable and willing to participate in intercultural communication. But such communication will be impossible without a formed phonetic competence.

The issue of developing learners' foreign phonetic competence has been extensively explored in the research of I. Bekh, S. Honcharenko, I. Kozlovska, S. Klepko, A. Kolomiets, V. Ilchenko, O. Rudnytska, O. Savchenko, S. Tkachenko, among others. The specifics of using authentic materials in foreign language lessons have been the focus of both Ukrainian and foreign scholars, including E.V. Nosonovich, R.P. Milrud, A.G. Nedilko, J.G. Gebhard, and J. Harmer.

It is important to emphasize that working with authentic materials provides the most effective foundation for developing foreign language competence. Engaging learners in the study and analysis of real-life speech samples not only facilitates accurate pronunciation but also allows them to access and internalize the cultural and experiential knowledge accumulated by humanity across various fields. This approach

enhances intellectual growth, fosters creative thinking, and contributes to the overall educational process by teaching, developing, and nurturing learners.

Building on the research of the aforementioned scholars and seeking to optimize the development of phonetic competence in preschoolers, we believe it is essential to expand and diversify the use of authentic materials in English language lessons for them.

Teaching foreign languages to preschool children is part of the **variable component** of the State Standard of Preschool Education. Children can learn a foreign language either in the family or in a preschool educational institution.

However, it is essential to consider the following prerequisite: Only when the teaching process is based on scientifically grounded approaches will it contribute to the timely socialization of the child's personality, the development of their personal culture (through acquaintance with the language and culture of another people), and the enhancement of cognitive mental processes (such as thinking, memory, attention, imagination, sensations, and perception).

The specifics of preschoolers' acquisition of a foreign language are closely linked to their direct perception, openness to communication, and a certain spontaneity in mastering new knowledge.

It is well-known that the age from birth to 6 (7) years is a **sensitive period** for the speech development of a growing and developing individual. Numerous studies by psychologists, linguists, and educators indicate that during this age, children learn to speak almost effortlessly. This applies to both their native language and a non-native (second) language [4].

In the structure of phonetic competence, the following components are distinguished: phonetic knowledge, phonetic skills, and phonetic abilities. According to the new curriculum for preschool education institutions, the formation of English phonetic competence begins at the age of five. Working with phonetic material is not a separate element detached from the lesson but is an essential part of it, integrated into the communication process.

To compensate for the lack of a natural language environment and to work on phonetic material, it is advisable to use audio and audiovisual teaching aids. For preschoolers, this may include recordings of rhymes, short poems, songs, rhythmic dialogues, situational micro-dialogues, rhythmic tales, and stories performed by native speakers, which serve as authentic samples of foreign speech [1, p. 15].

Introducing children to the sound system of a foreign language should be based on imitative and play-based technologies within communicative situations. These situations comprise a set of linguistic and non-linguistic conditions necessary and sufficient for performing speech actions.

Teaching phonetic competence involves using a wide variety of authentic materials to master and practice all components of phonetic competence. The practice of these components is carried out not only through phonetic exercises but also through phonological exercises, phonetic dialogues, rhythmic rhymes, jazz chants, and poems.

An emotionally positive attitude toward learning phonetic competence is encouraged by incorporating rhythmic rhymes, jazz chants, and poems into the learning

process, which enrich the lesson emotionally, diversify its course, and change its pace. This ensures practical usage of phonetic competence components and contributes to their development.

These authentic materials facilitate the automatization of authentic language patterns and establish a solid pronunciation foundation for combining and independently using these patterns in new contexts.

The language presented in authentic materials serves as a means of real communication, reflecting the actual linguistic reality, the features of the language's functioning as a tool for communication, and its natural environment.

There are several different approaches to forming the foundations of English phonetic competence:

- Analytical (or articulatory) approach
- Imitative (or acoustic) approach
- Analytical-imitative (or combined) approach

From the perspective of organizing the learning process, the system of exercises should ensure:

1. The selection of exercises that correspond to the nature of phonetic competence.
2. The determination of the necessary sequence of exercises.
3. The arrangement of teaching materials and their correlation.
4. The interconnection of different types of speech activities.

The sequence of phonetic skill formation, as a key component of phonetic competence, is relatively flexible and depends on the textbooks, which may choose different sequences for presenting sounds and intonation patterns. The general didactic principles of teaching serve as a guideline: from familiar to unfamiliar, from easy to difficult, from simple to complex, and so on.

A well-founded approach to forming phonetic competence, and hence phonetic skills, is the progression from reception to (re)production, with the parallel and interconnected development of auditory-pronunciation and intonation skills [3].

According to S.Y. Nikolaeva, teaching foreign language sounds begins with introducing students to a new sound of the foreign language (using the analytical-imitative method). After this, the teacher should organize the automatization of students' actions with the new sound [2].

In conclusion, the theoretical prerequisites for the formation of foreign language phonetic competence in preschool educational institutions through authentic materials emphasize the interconnected nature of knowledge, the developmental needs of children, and the crucial role of authentic materials in fostering a deeper understanding and practical application. By implementing these prerequisites in teaching practice, educators can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of phonetic knowledge acquisition during foreign language learning.

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