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STORY-ROLE-PLAYING GAMES AS A METHOD OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

Problem Statement and Relevance. In the modern world, knowledge of foreign languages is a crucial component of successful socialization and professional development. Early foreign language learning is becoming particularly relevant, as the preschool period is a favorable stage for the intensive development of a child's speech, during which they actively grow and refine their communication skills [1:68].

Modern methods of teaching foreign languages in preschool age focus on the use of interactive and play-based approaches that promote natural language acquisition. One of the most effective methods is story-role-playing games.

The relevance of the study is driven by the need to explore effective teaching approaches that align with the cognitive and psychological characteristics of preschool children.

The aim of the article is to justify the effectiveness of story-role-playing games as a method of teaching foreign languages to preschool children and to develop recommendations for their use in the educational process.

To achieve the goal, the following tasks were set:

1. To analyze the theoretical foundations of using story-role-playing games in teaching foreign languages to children.
2. To identify the advantages and disadvantages of this method.
3. To provide recommendations for organizing the educational process using role-playing games.

Analysis of Research and Publications. The methodology of game-based learning is studied by many domestic and foreign researchers. For example, the Swiss educator J. Piaget emphasized the importance of play in children's cognitive and language development. His concept of active learning through play was further developed by modern researchers, particularly D. Wood and J. Bruner, who explored the role of play in the process of social learning [2:98].

Research by P. Lightbown and N. Spada demonstrates that interactive methods facilitate natural language acquisition through immersion in the language environment [3:7].

The issue of game-based methods in preschool education was studied by N. Havrysh, who asserts that children acquire language more easily when the learning process is based on communicative games. During play, a child naturally absorbs the learning material without perceiving the process as mandatory education. They easily remember new words and comment on their own actions, which positively influences speech development [4:4].

Presentation of the Main Research Material. Thus, story-role-playing games are

an effective method of teaching foreign languages to preschool children, as they take into account the psychological characteristics of children's development, the pedagogical principles of communicative learning, and the linguistic aspects of language skill formation.

The literature analysis allows us to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of using role-playing games in teaching foreign languages to preschool children.

One of the main advantages is the natural acquisition of the language. Children learn a foreign language in the same way they learn their native language – through play, without pressure or stress [4:5].

But what makes this process even more effective? Motivation. Play is a natural activity for preschoolers. When they are interested, they engage in the process as if becoming a part of a fairy tale or an exciting adventure [5:19].

In addition, role-playing games promote the development of communication skills. They create a favorable environment for the active use of language, which helps children overcome the language barrier. Children engage in real dialogues, ask questions, and answer them, which contributes to the development of spoken language. The roles in the game encourage children to actively use the language, rather than just repeating words.

But play is not only about language; it's also about interaction. Preschoolers learn to work in a team, make agreements, share roles, and listen to one another. That is why role-playing games develop social skills, helping children become more confident in communication.

Moreover, learning through play allows children to better remember new words, as they use them in context. In this way, new language structures become part of living communication [6:50].

But the benefits of role-playing games are not limited to speech alone. They also contribute to the development of cognitive skills. Children remember new information, develop attention, and train their thinking [7:16].

Another important advantage is the involvement of all types of activities. During play, children don't just speak. They move, use gestures, listen, and see visual cues. When a child doesn't know a word, they compensate with facial expressions or movements. In this way, learning occurs at all levels: through hearing, sight, and physical activity.

And of course, play helps children feel confident. In a regular situation, a child trying to say something in a foreign language for the first time might be afraid of making a mistake, but in play, this fear disappears. Children perceive play as a fun adventure, and therefore, they are not afraid to experiment with language. This motivates them for verbal self-expression and creativity in communication.

Like any teaching method, role-playing games have not only advantages but also certain drawbacks.

The first of these is that the game requires preparation. If the teacher does not explain the roles in advance, familiarize the children with the necessary vocabulary, and prepare materials, the game can become chaotic and ineffective [8:112].

But even if everything is well-prepared, there are children who do not want to play. This applies to shy children who may be afraid to speak in a foreign language or simply

do not feel comfortable in the game.

Another challenge is controlling the complexity of the game. If the game is too simple, the children will get bored, and if it is too difficult, they may become confused.

Additionally, in role-playing games, children often communicate intuitively, without a deep understanding of grammar. They may make mistakes in sentence construction or pronunciation.

Another point to remember is that the game does not cover all aspects of language. Since the main focus is on speaking, reading and writing are often left out of the attention.

To enhance the effectiveness of learning and reduce the negative impact of drawbacks, the following recommendations can be made for implementing role-playing games in the process of learning foreign languages in preschool education:

1. The teacher or parents should plan the game scenario in advance, select the vocabulary material, and prepare the props.

2. It is important to gradually involve shy children through encouragement and the example of their peers.

3. The level of the game should be adapted according to the children's knowledge.

4. Teachers should gently correct mistakes and provide the correct language model.

5. For the best results, this method should be used in combination with other approaches, such as listening to songs, reading books, and developmental exercises.

To ensure the game is as effective as possible, its organization should occur in several stages [9:341].

In the first stage, it is important to determine the theme of the game according to the level of knowledge and the age characteristics of the children. For example, the themes could be "At the store," "A trip to another country," and so on. After selecting the theme, it is necessary to prepare the required materials and props to make the game more realistic.

Before starting the game, children should be introduced to the new words and phrases they will use during the game. This can be done using flashcards with images, songs, poems, or interactive exercises.

In the next stage, children receive roles according to the theme of the game. Although a basic script can be prepared for the game, it is important to leave space for improvisation and creativity from the children.

After the game is over, it is important to summarize and reinforce the knowledge gained. This can be done in the form of a group discussion where children share which new words they have learned and what they enjoyed the most.

O. Oliynyk emphasizes that the organization of role-playing games for preschool children should be based on three key principles. First of all, in order for the children to acquire the necessary gaming skills, the teacher should actively participate in the game with them. The second principle suggests that the teacher should be involved in the gaming process at all stages of preschool age, but each time the game should evolve, helping the children master more complex actions and language structures. The third principle is based on the idea that it is important not only to develop gaming skills but also to simultaneously guide the child in understanding the meaning of their actions and statements, explaining them to their peers and adults [8:97].

We share the opinion of researchers and believe that the pedagogical influence on play should be aimed at developing play skills that will promote the children's independent creative activity. As a result, preschoolers will be able to freely implement various content in the game, use language material with ease, and actively interact with their peers in small play groups.

Conclusions and prospects for further research in the defined direction.

Role-playing games are an effective method of teaching foreign languages to preschool children. They create a natural environment for language practice, increase children's motivation, and contribute to the rapid acquisition of language material. They promote the development of not only language skills but also social interaction, cognitive abilities, and creative thinking.

However, despite all the advantages of role-playing games, it is important to understand the potential challenges: the need for preparation, supporting shy children, balancing simplicity and complexity, correcting language mistakes, and supplementing games with other types of educational activities. If all these aspects are considered, the game becomes not only an entertainment but also a powerful tool for effective foreign language learning.

Further research may be focused on developing specific scenarios for role-playing games, assessing their effectiveness at different age stages, and integrating digital technologies into the educational game process.

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