



THE FORMATION OF READING LITERACY OF ELEMENTARY CLASS STUDENTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

This article discusses the issues of forming students' reading literacy, developing text comprehension skills, increasing linguistic competencies, and strengthening communication skills in a foreign language through modern approaches and innovative methods in teaching English in primary grades. It also discusses the factors affecting their fluency in speech, the formation of quick and correct response skills, increasing their interest in knowledge, and thorough preparation for lessons. It also provides recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of learning through interactive and game methods.

Keywords: modern education, innovation, primary education, game methods, educational technologies, interactive methods.

Introduction

In primary school, especially in the first grade, it is important to take into account the age-specific, physiological, and psychological characteristics of students when teaching foreign languages. At this stage, children are naturally curious, active, and capable of quickly absorbing new knowledge. Therefore, in teaching a foreign language, using modern, innovative, and interactive methods rather than traditional approaches increases effectiveness.

Today, teaching foreign languages from an early age is considered one of the important issues in education systems around the world. The process of learning a language in primary school should not be limited to studying grammar alone, but should also be carried out through developing students' communication skills and teaching them to speak freely and confidently. During foreign language learning, it is essential to use game technologies, interactive methods, as well as visual and audio materials in order to make lessons engaging and lively.



This article highlights the issues of developing students' logical thinking abilities, improving fluency, and forming skills of giving quick and accurate answers through modern approaches and innovative methods in teaching English in primary school. In addition, it analyzes methods that serve to increase students' interest in knowledge, develop independent thinking, and foster a creative approach. Recommendations are also provided on how to enhance teaching effectiveness through interactive and game-based methods.

Materials and Methods

In developed countries of the world, starting language learning at an early age, teaching foreign languages along with the mother tongue in primary grades, and applying the most optimal methods of developing reading literacy are among the most important issues. In shaping students into knowledgeable, independent, and inquisitive individuals, acquiring reading literacy from an early age—meaning understanding and comprehending what is read—plays a crucial role. From the very beginning of primary education, developing reading literacy in children helps them to understand, comprehend, and think critically, serving as a strong bridge for mastering other subjects. This skill functions as a lever for acquiring the foundations of natural and social sciences, as evidenced by the experiences of all developed countries.

K.D. Ushinsky once emphasized that since a child already possesses certain language skills, they can learn to speak a foreign language well not over many years as adults do, but within a few months [1].

Psychologist I.A. Zimnyaya also pointed out that children should rely on their mother tongue experience when learning a foreign language, as only in this way can they easily retain foreign words in memory [2].

N.A. Bonk stressed that early education in preschool institutions provides a stimulus for children to deeply study a foreign language, enabling fluency in the future. However, he noted that it is necessary to consider their psychology, since young learners are curious and dislike boredom [3].

Exploring global experiences in language learning and literacy has shown that literacy remains one of the central issues in research carried out abroad. Currently, more than 50 countries worldwide are implementing PIRLS and PISA programs in primary grades, aimed at developing and assessing students' reading literacy and



comprehension skills by the 4th grade [4]. Assessing outcomes at the end of primary education (Grade 4) is indeed appropriate. However, given that the process of forming reading literacy and comprehension skills begins in Grade 1, it is now universally recognized that these skills must start being developed from the very first days of school (and even from preschool age).

Reading literacy and comprehension skills are gradually formed and developed step by step. As noted earlier, the age characteristics of students themselves necessitate this process. Improving reading skills means not only reading correctly and fluently but also understanding the meaning of words, sentences, and texts, which in turn saves time and creates conditions for effectively mastering the selected educational material. Combining reading with comprehension—that is, teaching students to grasp what they read—enables them to express their thoughts fluently and develop deeper thinking abilities. Of course, given the specific features of different languages, the development of reading skills requires varied approaches. At the same time, universal principles, the use of international experience, and the implementation of a continuous education system all contribute to enhancing reading literacy. One of the key skills in language learning for primary school students is expanding their vocabulary in the foreign language.

Discussion and Results

This process requires thorough methodological preparation from the teacher and consideration of students' age-specific characteristics. In conducting vocabulary work, it is advisable to use various methods and tools, apply computer technologies, and study foreign experiences. Ensuring students' active participation and creating conditions for their independent work are of great importance. The experience of foreign countries shows that systematic and innovative approaches are necessary for conducting effective vocabulary work. Indeed, effective vocabulary work in primary school serves as a foundation for mastering a foreign language in the future.

It is well known that in enriching vocabulary in a foreign language, reading and listening skills play a crucial role. However, vocabulary work is not limited to rote memorization of new words. Students encounter new words through reading different texts and listening to audio materials, learning their meanings and usage. During the reading process, students acquire knowledge about spelling,



grammatical forms, and contextual meanings of words. Research has shown that students can independently acquire 5–15% of unfamiliar words in the texts they read. This is often hindered by the abundance of unfamiliar grammatical forms in the selected materials, incomplete understanding of the text content, and the fact that reading tasks are mostly limited to correct reading exercises [5].

It should be emphasized that today the global educational community is paying special attention to searching for pedagogical tools aimed at ensuring the transition from “learning to read” to “reading to understand.” Studies analyzing the psychological-pedagogical difficulties faced by primary school graduates in achieving these outcomes note that the causes are largely related to insufficient development of personal growth indicators and, above all, the structural components of educational activity (motivation, educational actions, control, and assessment) [6].

It is also noteworthy that, to this day, the continuity of education has not been fully resolved based on the age-specific characteristics of children aged 7–10. In some countries, primary education is extended up to Grade 6. This indicates the need for a more detailed study of the effectiveness of achieving the literacy-related results planned by state standards for primary school graduates [7]. Until recently, the process of “understanding” was viewed superficially, with the prevailing belief that any information would undoubtedly be understood by the student (especially in their native language). However, with the growing recognition of methods for identifying and evaluating intellectual activity, it has been proven that reading comprehension is a complex intellectual process that depends not only on the teacher but also on the learner’s psychological and psychophysiological state.

Reading is one of the most important language skills, functioning as a tool that connects one thought to another, clarifies and supplements meaning, and represents not only the act of reading information but also the process of understanding and processing a given purpose. The concept of “reading comprehension” and its levels are explained differently by various scholars. A. Leontyev emphasized that “the essence of text perception lies in the formation of a semantic image of the text in the reader’s mind” [8]. In other words, comprehension is the mental visualization of the information read, the process of reconstructing meaning. This process is considered complete when the student analyzes the chain of events (actions) and draws conclusions from it. Thus, the overall results of learning are closely



connected with the mastery of reading and comprehension skills. The formation level of these skills is a prerequisite for successful further education in both secondary and higher levels of schooling.

Conclusion

The use of modern approaches and innovative methods in teaching English in primary schools helps to develop students' logical thinking abilities, improve their fluency, build skills for quick and accurate responses, and increase their interest in lessons.

The application of interactive and game-based methods enhances the effectiveness of the learning process and facilitates students' consolidation of knowledge. For example, in an interactive environment, students' activity increases, and they are more willing to participate in communication. According to research, the use of game methods in learning English in primary school has resulted in an average 30% increase in students' vocabulary (Zimnyaya, 2001). Moreover, it has been found that the use of multimedia materials develops visual and auditory abilities (Bonk, 2009). The use of audiovisual materials in teaching foreign languages, along with reading and listening activities, is of great importance in expanding students' vocabulary and creating opportunities to apply acquired knowledge in practice.

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