

[10.46291/IJOSPERvol10iss1pp1-26](https://doi.org/10.46291/IJOSPERvol10iss1pp1-26)

An Investigation of the Features of Early Foreign Language Education in Azerbaijan

Lamiya VALISHOV

Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, Turkey; Email: lamiaguseyn@gmail.com

Asst. Prof. Abdul Kasım VARLI

Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, Faculty of Education,
Foreign Language Education, Turkey, kasim.varli@izu.edu.tr

Summary

This work discusses why early foreign language learning is essential. The study also describes the development of preschoolers at all stages. The study touched on how it is necessary to properly organize the process of teaching a foreign language for preschoolers to learn the material faster and easier and how teachers make lessons fun to motivate students. Participants of the study are ten experienced teachers who teach English as a foreign language in Baku (Azerbaijan). Data has been collected through semi-structured interviews with ten English teachers. Observations in the city of Baku have shown that many private preschools have an English education, and that this element is the reason for parents' school preference. In the research, factors such as teachers' approach to education and methods of making lessons were acquired from interviews through the qualitative content analysis method and examined under different categories. The research found that teaching foreign languages to children at preschool was more effective, and that varied teaching approaches for children had long-term effects on teaching foreign languages.

Keywords: Early Childhood, Features of Early Foreign Language, Language Teaching, Preschool, Language Acquisition, Language Education.

1.1. Introduction

This research aims to improve the educational qualifications of schools that provide foreign language education, drawing on the critical period hypothesis thought to exist in early childhood and examining the contribution of reducing the age level of foreign language education to an early age. The period between the ages of 2 and 6 is when the child discovers his surroundings, questions him, expresses his imagination, learns the values of the society in which he lives, and acquires his language skills.

1.2. Background to the Study

The study was provided in Baku city, where English education is only available in private schools. This is the reason why teachers from private schools are chosen. Training plans and materials were examined and implemented for seven months.

The thesis was the basis of interview results, and the issues articulated by theories and theorists were passed on in five sections. The problem phrase for the study was “What are the foreign language education practices given in the early age range and which methods and theories are they structured?”

1.3. Importance of the Study

The significance of the study is to learn the importance of the problem of organizing early foreign-language education; features and advantages of early foreign-language education; how to manage an early language education in a practical context; opportunity of improving the skills of foreign speech activity in the conditions of early foreign-language education. The study will show the importance of early foreign language education, allowing a new perspective for preschool students.

1.4. Research Questions

1. What are the key features of foreign language learning?
2. How do teachers organize their language lessons with preschoolers?
3. How do teachers teach phonics to children? What types of activities or games help children to develop phonetic awareness?
4. Do teachers use special technics or methods for language classes?

5. Is Role-play important for preschoolers in language classes? How does Role-play help with vocabulary development?
6. What kind of activities helps develop language learning in children?

1.5. Scope and Limitations of the Study

This research was limited to assessing opinions obtained from teachers at the private school. Three different age groups are present at the school where sample applications are performed. The study lasted for seven months. Five units were covered during this period, and the experimental treatment was applied only to preschool students. The experiment consisted of 10 English teachers preparatory school students. These limitations of the study can be tackled with longer-term treatments with more language levels included.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

In Saussure's (1959) view, the perspective of language is classified into three different forms: The term "Language," which refers to people's speech, the concept of "langue," which refers to the abstract system of rules, and the concept of "parole," which refers to speech. For Saussure, human speech looks like a natural ability in people. The concept of "language" defines *human language* as a pre-theoretical factual space in which speakers encounter speech competence.

According to Noam Chomsky, (1988) "The language faculty appears to be a species feature, universal to the species but unique in its essence, capable of constructing a rich, highly articulated, and complicated language from very basic material. The language that evolves in this way, mostly along lines set by our shared biological origin, permeates profoundly into thinking and understanding and becomes an important element of our nature."

2.2. Language Development Theory

The language has a structure that changes and rules over time. According to the data obtained by linguists, there are significant theories of language development, and these theorists took different aspects of language and came up with different views. In this section, these theories will be briefly mentioned.

2.2.1. Behavioral Theory

Many theorists like Pavlov (1927), Watson (1914, 1916, 1919, 1925), Guthrie (Guthrie, 1935, 1942), Thorndike (Engelhart, 1970), and Skinner (1938) worked on Behavioral Theory.

According to them, children learn the spoken language as they learn any behavior. The babies recognize the repeated sounds around them prayerfully and try to speak using the same sounds. When they make those noises, they are loved by the people around them and know they have accomplished something. The essential concepts in this Theory are prize and punishment. If a child is rewarded for manners without a specific purpose, it is shaped and learned in his mind. Over time, these reactions take their place in their systems, and the language-learning process begins.

2.2.2. Social Learning Theory

Social Learning and Personality Development theory, introduced by psychologist Albert Bandura (1963), proposed that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling and is influenced by factors such as attention, motivation, attitudes, and emotions.

2.2.3. Psycholinguistic Theory

The pioneers of this Theory were Chomsky and Lenneberg, who called it “psycholinguistic.” According to theorists, every human is born with a language-learning mechanism. This mechanism helps the child learn the language around them and grasp their rules. Through this mechanism, which makes it possible to grasp and use language rules, all children go through the same stages and learn to talk just as they learn to walk when they reach a certain level of maturity biologically (Erden & Akman, 2004, p. 76).

2.2.4. Cognitive Theory

The presence of the mind factor in language development was most highlighted in Cognitive Theory. According to Cognitive Theory, children can express concepts before learning to speak and meanings before knowing grammatical structures. Research has shown that Piaget and Vygotsky are the most important representatives of Cognitive Theory.

2.3. Language Learning Theories

Under this subtitle will be talking about learning the native language and theories and years in language learning language

2.3.1. Critical Period Hypothesis

The critical period is where certain language behaviors should be earned depending on maturity. These periods will become easier to attain at later age levels if they are adequately taught by family, teachers, and the environment based on the child’s age status (Demirezen, 2003, p. 4).

Sciences have determined these periods, such as linguistics, neurolinguistics, biolinguistics, psychology, and physiology. Medical science proves to us the effect of maturity in learning a language by demonstrating the stages of brain development. MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) shows the state of neurons in our medical science mind. It has made the unknown known through technological applications such as tomography and EEG (Electroencephalography). Modern methods that bring to light what is happening inside the human brain on the screen are also a source of linguistics.

2.3.2. Derek Bickerton and Language Bioprogram Hypothesis

Prof. Derek Bickerton (1981) introduced this Theory in his book “Roots of language” in 1981. The Theory suggests that biology and culture interact in learning a human language. Accordingly, Asher (Asher, 2012, p. 31) argues that a mechanism in the child’s mind allows him to learn the grammar of the language, the birth of the bioprogram, and the ability to learn language biologically.

2.3.3. Sociobiological Critical Period Theory

Thomas Scovel (1988) proposed this Theory in 1988. The Theory is that people must realize that most things they think of as their own are reflections of the environment. During socialization, individuals find a place in society and gain an identity. It occurs with a sociobiological infrastructure. For example, the presence of a child growing up in the east and a child growing up in the west is different.

2.3.4. Noam Chomsky and Nativist Theory

Nativist theories by Noam Chomsky (1965,1972) hypothesize that individuals are innately predisposed to learn their mother tongue. According to this Theory, the child first develops the recipient language, and then this accumulation becomes the expressive language. This Theory answers how deaf people learn the language and why more than one language is spoken. The genesis of the mechanism grants everyone the right to learn languages.

2.3.5. Piaget and Stages of Language Development

According to Piaget (1926), language development progresses in parallel with cognitive development. So as language development progresses, so does cognitive development. Piaget observed a link between language development and play, and because of his observations, he

divided children's speech into "self-centered speech" and "social speech." The process continues from egocentric to socialized speech as genetic maturity is achieved.

In his view, self-centered speech does not vanish by turning to social conversation at a later age. In contrast, self-centered thinking becomes inner speech after people can think abstractly. According to Piaget's Theory (Bovet, M. 1976), language development phases can be collected under four titles.

a) Cooing

During this period, universal baby voices are made independent of the mother tongue in the first six months.

b) One-word speech (holophrases)

It occurs during the period the child enters during the twelfth- and eighteenth-months intervals. The most critical period of language development is recognized because the first meaningful words are spoken at this stage.

c) Telegraphic speech

It is the eighteenth to the twenty-fourth month of most. During this period, children begin to form sentences by combining two words.

d) Whole Sentences

This transition from telegraph to grammar speech is seen in children from the twenty-fourth month onwards. The grammar structure gradually begins to be gained. Then the child begins to resolve and learn the structure and rules of the sentence. During this period, children's vocabulary develops considerably. First rule sentences emerge. "Mommy came home," like, "Daddy got a ball."

2.4. Early Childhood and Foreign Language Teaching

Interest in foreign languages began in the world after World War I. The "Waldorfschule" schools established in Germany, which also exist in some European countries, are one of the first to offer dual language education. In the United States, the movement "Foreign Languages in Elementary Schools" has resonated in other European countries, and the supply of foreign languages has increased.

When the researcher examines the historical process and objectives of teaching foreign languages at an early age, she sees that teaching the foreign language from the first classes of schools developed intensively in European countries after the second world war. In the US, it began in the early 90s. After World War II, it thrived intensively, and in the United States, it began in the early 90.

Two studies, OYIP and ESODEU, were conducted in Turkey on foreign language education. (Akdoğan, 2004, p. 104) OYIP is the English program project implemented in preschools in 2000-2001. Within the framework of this project, children between the ages of 3 and 6 took part-day English lessons

2.4.1 An Overview of Language Teaching

This section includes the effects of native language acquisition on foreign language learning. A study of factors affecting language development in children found that various factors influence the rate of development. These factors include family relationships, maturation, health, and wit. When researcher looks at language development theories and approaches, as with mother tongue acquisition at age 3-6, the family factor has an important place in foreign language teaching. Families can reinforce what their children learn at school by changing the language of communication at certain times of the day, preparing educational work papers in the target language, or watching and interpreting educational videos. It is because the way he relays what he learns for the child and repeats and internalizes it through a question-and-answer method provides ongoing learning.

It is possible to find many areas for improvement in foreign language education for children aged 3-6. So, there are several differences between a child whose language foundations have been laid in kindergarten and a child who has never learned. It is commonplace to see the child make the wrong noises and pronounce errors at times when they are just beginning to speak. Laughing and mocking children's mistakes negatively affects their language development. Children are encouraged by seeing them communicate with them, and their self-confidence is boosted. Thus, they make more efforts to advance their speaking skills. During this period, reading books abundantly and asking for opinions in certain situations encourages them to speak up and become individuals.

Apart from communication within the family, the child also needs a peer relationship to socialize. Communicating with peers in parks, playgrounds, and school supports language development. Gaming is a language a child uses for ages 3-6. Kids share many things about themselves with the games they play. So, playing with a child allows him to develop his language skills.

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The chapter begins by explaining why the study design was chosen. Second, it contains information on the venue and attendees. Following that, the data gathering technique is described, followed by information regarding data collection instruments. Lastly, the data analysis technique is described in full.

3.2. Research Context

The purpose of this study was to describe participants' assumptions and behaviors by asking them open-ended questions. It is the semi-structured interview method.

3.3. Research Questions

The study will seek answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the key features of foreign language learning?
2. How do teachers organize their language lessons with preschoolers?
3. How do teachers teach phonics to children? What types of activities or games help children to develop phonetic awareness?
4. Do teachers use special techniques or methods for language classes?
5. Is roleplay important for preschoolers in language classes? How does Roleplay help with vocabulary development?
6. What kind of activities help develop language learning in children?

3.4. Research Design

Qualitative research is a sophisticated and ever-changing research approach that is currently used in many fields of social science research, including applied linguistics (Heigham & Croker, 2009). It analyzes local knowledge and understanding of a given program, experiences of the people, meanings and relationships, and social processes and contextual aspects that marginalize a group of people.

3.5. Nature of the Research

The study describes the interviewed teachers that work in private schools with half-day English programs in Baku/Azerbaijan. Two Teachers teach 36-48; three teachers teach 48-60, and five

teachers teach children in the 60 + month range. The study group consisted of 177 children from the small group who went to private school and received 30 hours of English education per week by the same teachers and 59 children from the medium and large groups who received 40 hours of English lessons per week.

Table 3.1 Percentage distribution of children by age and gender in the study group

Child's age (months)	Sex	N	%
36-48	Boy	18	43,75
	Girl	14	56,25
	Total	32	100
48-60	Boy	24	50
	Girl	24	50
	Total	48	100
60+	Boy	55	56,70
	Girl	42	43,30
	Total	97	100

3.6. Sampling of the Study

A “semi-structured” interview form aimed at determining the level of knowledge and awareness of teaching methods and techniques of the lessons of English teachers serving in primary schools has been prepared. Convenience and snowballing sampling were used to identify potential participants (Creswell, 2014).

According to Table 1, all teachers hold a bachelor's degree or above. Most English language instructors hold a TESOL certificate or a Diploma in English Language Teaching.

Table 3.2 Demographic data of teachers

Pseudonym	Gender	Current city	Nationality	Education and qualifications	Teaching years
T1	Female	Baku	Azerbaijan	MA, TESOL	13
T2	Female	Baku	Azerbaijan	BA, English	5
T3	Male	Baku	Azerbaijan	BA, English	7

Pseudonym	Gender	Current city	Nationality	Education and qualifications	Teaching years
T4	Female	Baku	Azerbaijan	PhD, TESOL	8
T5	Female	Baku	Azerbaijan	BA, TEFL	4
T6	Male	Baku	Azerbaijan	BA, TEFL	4
T7	Male	Baku	Azerbaijan	BA, English, TEFL	10
T8	Female	Baku	Azerbaijan	BA, TEFL	8
T9	Female	Baku	Azerbaijan	MA, English	16
T10	Female	Baku	Azerbaijan	MA, English	12

NOTE. TESOL=Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages; TEFL=Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

3.7. Data Collection Method

Data collecting in qualitative research occurs in the natural world, when participants encounter the topic being studied. Qualitative researchers do not take people to a lab or assign them devices to complete. To collect several data sources, such as interviews, observations, documents, and audio-visual information, face-to-face interaction is preferred. Researchers gather and analyze data using questionnaires or instruments created by other researchers. While collecting data, qualitative researchers use an inductive process to develop categories and themes from the bottom up, with increasing abstractness in the data units. Researchers strive to keep the meaning they bring to the study from interfering with data analysis throughout the process. They attempt to comprehend the significance that participants have for the subject and to create sense from the participant's perspective.

3.8. Data Collection Tools

The major data source for this study was semi-structured interviews. The conversation included questions designed to elicit information about the characteristics of English lessons for young learners, language learning experiences, organizing English classes, classroom practices, and the benefits of role play on vocabulary learning, as well as other factors influencing students' cognitions. Questions that aimed to get information about features of the English lessons for young learners, language learning experiences, organizing English classes, classroom practices, and benefits of role play on vocabulary learning, and other factors affecting students'

cognitions. Interviews were conducted via e-mail in English. Each interview lasted an average of 20 minutes.

3.9. Data Analysis

The researcher transcribed the interviews via the data collection process, permitting pre-coding by underlining, circling, or highlighting significant words, phrases, and sentences. The first step in coding is to divide qualitative data into discrete parts and compare them for similarities and differences, which "allows for fine discrimination and differentiation within categories." (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.102). The researcher studied the interview transcriptions and field notes as soon as the data collection was completed to acquire a broad feel of the key ideas voiced by all participants. Second, the researcher began to sort the parts under the subtitles. Code, themes, and concepts have been reached, and each sub-purpose has been attempted to explain these codes and themes.

During the reporting phase of the research, participant names were hidden for participants using codes in the form of T1, T2, and. One-on-one excerpts from the interviews sought to improve credibility.

3.10. Limitations of the Study

The study lasted for seven months. Four units were covered during this period, and the experimental treatment was applied only to preschool students. These limitations of the study can be tackled with longer-term treatments with more language levels included. The concept of learning is elaborated, and features of foreign education are introduced.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

The results of the data analysis are reported in this chapter. The chapter is broken into five sections, each of which contains the findings of qualitative data collected during an eight-week period.

4.2. The Organization of Foreign Language Classes with Preschool Children.

For the study, the teachers were asked questions such as "How do you organize your language lessons with preschoolers? Do you use special techniques or methods for language classes?".

Seven teachers answered that they often use game-based technic in language classes with preschoolers.

This technic in organizing language lessons was Gamification. Gamification is game-based learning or play-based learning. A group of children sits while the instructor delivers them a game. Not all games are made equal. Teachers should think about how the gaming context was built; are the learning goals clear? Could it frustrate or bore students?

The benefit of this technic is that active and critical learning should be encouraged in this technic by the environment, not passive learning.

The following important form of organization of educational activities in studying a foreign language was the presence of music classes in developing the competencies of a foreign language. The use of music in English classes is primarily a priority in that songs include new words and expressions. It contributes to a more active perception of the grammatical and lexical reserve of the language. Because children listen to songs in English lessons, they develop musical perception and audio analysis of the pronunciation of various grammatical constructs. So, music is a preferable method for organizing language lessons for teachers.

The following preferable method was The Total Physical Response method which teachers used in language classes because it involved the whole body in the learning process. Language and physical movement coordination were essential in this method. The teacher gave students commands in the target language with specific body movements while the students responded with whole-body movements

Interviews showed that teachers also used an Interactive learning method in English classes. This is an integral part of teaching English. The teacher does various activities with the child, and both benefit from it. To be creative and create a collage or a poster, do crafts, and organize workshops for kids like making a salad, baking pizza, and making soft toys. Also, perpetrate any activity together, such as growing flowers and creating a garden. Interaction in English between a teacher and a child should always happen during live communication and real-life situations. This method helps kids and adults indirectly learn the language while engaging in various activities.

One of the teaching methods was Content-Based Teaching, in which teachers arranged students learning on the subject or knowledge they would learn. It motivated children to learn because the subject matter was exciting and allowed them to apply their learned language skills in a different context instead of memorizing vocabulary.

4.3. Importance of Role-Play in Language Classes

Role-playing is the best communication model because it mimics the facts of the world around it in the most important ways; also, the speech and non-speech behavior of communicants takes place in the role-playing game.

In the process of learning, the instructor sees it as a sort of conversational communication. However, the youngster in this scenario must recognize the game's instructional value. The teacher's responsibility is to progressively manage the academic activities of the pupils, providing that the lesson has a pleasant psychological environment in the case of a disagreement among the game players.

There are certain stages in role-playing:

1. Establishing a purpose or mission
2. Designating game circumstances
3. Scenario creation
4. Preparation of necessary data and role cards
5. Informing participants
6. Game management
7. Future-oriented reflection and creation of proposals

Teachers can use role-play games at all stages of training. In preschool, teachers cannot do without a role-playing game. By example, children should experience, observe, and grasp everything. Plots can involve traveling to the store (the customer purchases goods and services from the vendor) and visiting a doctor at home (a conversation between the patient and the doctor).

Examples of some role-play games for language teaching are the followings:

Figure 4.1: In the clinic

Materials: medical instruments, bathrobe.

The doctor and patients are chosen.

Players take up seats. The patient comes to the doctor.

Doctor: Good morning!

Patient: Good morning!

Doctor: How are you?

Patient: So-so. I am ill.

Doctor: What?

Patient: My nose\my eyes\my hands

Doctor: Show me your eyes\nose\hands... I will help you.

The doctor examines the hand, eyes, and nose. He drops, gives pills, listens to him, and asks the question:

Doctor : How are you?

Patient : Good! Thank you very much!

Doctor : Goodbye!

Patient : Goodbye!

Figure 4.2: In-store

The game can be held in different stores, for example, in a vegetable store or toy store. Sellers are selected, and all attributes for the game are prepared: storefronts, toys, and vegetables for sale.

Here are the first customers showing up at the toy store.

Buyer : Good morning!

Seller : Good morning!

Buyer : Give me, please, an apple!

Seller : Here you are!

Buyer : How much is it?

Seller : Three\four\five...

Buyer : Thank you! Good-bye!

Seller : Goodbye!

Figure 4.3: On the plane

Educator: We are a bunch of travelers. We are in the aircraft. Our destination is London. Your team's leader is me. We are a bunch of travelers. We are in the aircraft. Our destination is London. Your team's leader is me. I am 30. I am 30 years old. I am a teacher. I am a teacher. I

can teach children. I can teach kids. Please, introduce yourselves. Imagine yourself, please. Who are you? How old are you? Where do you live? What are you? Where do you work? What can you do?

Possible answers from children:

I am a cook. I live in London. My name is Michael. I work in the cafe. I cook tasty things.

Then pilot with the attributes of the cap on the head and the helm in the hands comes out.

Kids : What are you?

Pilot : I am a pilot.

Children : Where do you work?

Pilot : I work at the airport.

Kids : What can you do?

Pilot : I can fly an airplane.

After that, the pilot sings the song with the children:

I want to be a pilot, a pi-lot, a pi-lot

I want to be a pi-lot, to fly an airplane.

With the advent of new characters, the words of the song change, and the melody remains the same.

Teacher: Our plane is landing at the airport. We are in London. You can get off. Our plane lands at the airport. We are in London. You can go out.

Children tourists, together with the teacher-leader of the group, approach the Airport sign and are built one after another.

4.4. Vocabulary and Sentences in the Preschool Period

Each group plan is different for students' age ranges. Hence, the age range maturity affects the existence of the word.

There were three English classes at private schools where interviewed teachers taught. Two teachers taught in small groups; three teachers taught in the middle groups; five teachers taught in the big group. Children in the small group were 3-4 age range. Children in the middle group were in the 4-5 age range, and children in the big group were 5-6 age range. The age factor must mature in the presence of words, and children advance each semester by adding new insights on top of the previous one.

Considering this information, it is necessary to expect students to impose sentences. It is uncommon for the small groups to form sentences, but the middle and large group's children communicate in their language. His first sentences need to be more appropriate both in syntax

and phonetically. However, teachers should correct sentences by repeating them. Because the product of language sentences and false interventions in the first sentences can make the language blush and not deliver the product again.

In the presence of the word learned during this period, activities were carried out with vocabulary cards called flashcards. The name of objects, numbers, colors, and shapes were the first learned words during preschool. Verbs were the most used in school. Envelopes, on the other hand, were elements that everyone could hear in the sentences of more large group students that were the last to be learned. Thus, names covered much of the vocabulary of early-childhood students who received language education. The presence of words during preschool generally started with the words everyone used most often in our daily colloquial language and need. Providing foreign language training

To express the child's needs, they first need to know words in a foreign language. That is why teachers sort the plans based on general conditions and promise asset elements. The priority gives to in-class colloquial. The first taught simple sentences that a child must use to express their basic needs, such as toilets, water, and help. For example, Simple sentence patterns such as "I am thirsty," "May I go to the toilet," "Can you help me," "Can I come in," and "I don't understand." The simple dialogues begin to communicate, and other elements of the word being are included in the process. Children now begin to study basic concepts (numbers, colors, and shapes) that need to be learned in the target language and to be able to express them when asked them to be able to set their sentences more quickly as the age group grows, driven by the wealth of their promised assets.

4.5. Phonetic Games for Preschool Children

The research questions "How do you teach phonics to children? What types of activities or games help children to develop phonetic awareness?" aimed to explore experienced teachers' thoughts and beliefs on developing phonemic awareness in preschool children. The findings are presented under the following examples depending on the game's purpose and what type of phonetic skill is formed during its conduct: games that create perceptual phonetic skills and games that include productive phonetic skills.

a) Games aimed at forming the skills of identifying the sounds of the English language:

Figure 4. 9: "English Sound."

The teacher calls interspersed sounds and sounds of other languages. The game is played in a circle: players must raise their hands (clap) if they hear an English sound. If the player does not have time to react or misidentifies the stimulus sound, then he is eliminated from the game.

Figure 4.10: "Football game."

The teacher pronounces the word; players must say the word starting with the same sound as the word heard (for example, Teacher: House- Student: Give, etc.). For each correct answer, the player receives a token. The one who collects the most significant number of tokens wins.

b) Games aimed at forming skills for establishing sound-letter correspondences.

Figure 4.11: "Letter-sound."

Each player receives two sets of cards. In the first set- cards on which letters are written (B, D, C...), and in the second set- cards on which sounds are written ([n], [d], [b]...). Game participants must find a pair of sounds for each letter that these letters can denote (for example, B- [n] and [b]). The winner is the player who completed the task correctly and fastest.

c) Games aimed at forming the skill of identifying the accent-rhythmic model of a word.

Figure 4.12: "One-Two Game"

This game is necessary to distribute many words from the proposed list as soon as possible. According to the proposed accent-rhythmic models (monosyllabic and bisyllabic).

Figure 4.13: "Equal-unequal."

Material: two-syllable words emphasizing the first and second syllables (mom, mine). The teacher presents each student with words in pairs (for example, mom- dad), and the student must clap his hands in terms of the same rhythmic structure uttered (teachers can use audio recording). For the correct answer, the player receives a token.

d) Games aimed at forming skills for recognizing communicative types of utterance.

Figure 4.14: "Is that a question?"

In this game students listen to statements of various communicative types uttered by the teacher, after which they must raise the card (or say): "Question "/" Not a question." The game goes in a circle. Whoever answered incorrectly is out of the game.

The group of games aimed at developing productive phonetic skills includes

e) Games aimed at the formation of articulatory skills.

Figure 4.15: "Guess the Word."

2 teams play this game. Each group is divided into two subgroups, which must stand opposite each other at different ends of the audience. Students are given cards with words that need to be uttered without the participation of a voice: cat, which, mine, us, thank you, etc. When a player from the first subgroup performs a task, players from the second must guess a word within 1 minute. The subgroups then change roles. For each guessed word, 1 point is awarded, and the points are summed up. The second command performs the same task. The teacher gives points, and the winner is announced.

f) Games aimed at the formation of rhythmic accentuation skills.

Figure 4.16: "Guess the Country."

On the board is a list of names/countries/cities selected by different accent-rhythmic models (Russia, China, America, etc.). Each player must select one name from the list and "blot" it, lengthening the stressed syllable. The rest of the participants should guess what he said. You can also answer yes or no without words, "humming," and gestures. For each correct answer- 1 point.

g) Games aimed at the formation of intonation skills.

Figure 4.17: "Guess who I am"

This is a game for forming the skills of intonation design of a clarifying question.

In teaching many European languages, phonetic games have long been actively used due to their effectiveness in forming phonetic skills.

4.6. The Critical Features of Foreign Language Learning.

One of the study questions, "What are the critical features of preschool children in foreign language classes?" teachers' answers were analyzed and collected in four stages.

Firstly, the education of preschool children was very different from the school one: classes would be more mobile, and the change in activity would occur more often. Moreover, the

younger the children, the more often the type of activity changes. To comply with concentration, better to alternate between active and passive occupations. In physical development, younger preschoolers have high activity and can control their bodies well. This leads to the need for periodic rest. Active exercises take a leading position over activities related to skill or accuracy, for example, assembling puzzles and puzzles or tying laces.

Secondly, the game was essential in developing various activities and all preschool-age achievements. The child expresses all aspects of his life in the game, what he was taught, what he read, and what he heard from someone or saw somewhere. The game satisfies the need for children to know the world of adults and makes it possible to express their feelings and relationships.

Thirdly, the next issue on the organization of foreign language classes for children of preschoolers was their duration and frequency. Activities lasting an hour were too long and tedious for children. Teachers said that the most optimal time was about thirty-five or forty-five minutes, provided that the group's occupancy was no more than ten people with a frequency of classes two to three times a week. There would need to be more than one weekly session to assimilate and consolidate new material successfully.

Fourth, during the lesson, it was better to sometimes distract from the topic under study and arranged a dance minute with a song-charging, or remember one of the previous topics, for example, who would quickly find red, yellow, or green. It will help preschoolers avoid overwork.

4.7. The Importance of Games in Teaching Foreign Languages to Preschool Children

This section presents the results of the interview question about "The importance of games in teaching foreign languages to preschool children. "

Findings showed that the game process was crucial in developing the child's brain. The game's essence was that this was an actor whose goal was not the result. Furthermore, this was what the brain needed precisely- to practice various emotions and roles in those not focused on development. In work, the effect was always significant, and one of the problems was that the focus on the mark entered the lives of children earlier and earlier in the modern world.

Moreover, the actual free game was under threat. The teacher urged them to respect the student's identity and not use "bad" methods of influencing the child.

Teachers recommended following games for teaching foreign languages to preschool children.

Figure 4.18: "Who took the cookie from the cookie jar."

a) The ever-popular children's game "*Who took the cookie from the cookie jar.*" This game improves the practice of Q&A with a repetitive rhythm, Promotes Interaction, and is Easy to Learn and Play

The entire song is as follows:

Teacher: Who took the cookies from the cookie jar? Children: X took two cookies from the cookie jar.

X: Who me?

Children: Yes you!

X: Not me! Children: Then who?

When you say X: Y, person Y is asked the same way until they find out who has the cookies. When the cookies are found, they are shared in class, and the game is over.

Figure 4.19: "Simon says"

b) "*Simon says*" This game is played on repeating and reinforcing learned verbs. Examples of Simon's directives are as follows: hands up, turn around, jump on one foot, sit down, put your hand on your head-leg-chest, shake your head, and clap your hands. The Simon pattern in the game has sometimes been "the teacher says... mother says..." but can be changed according to the subject matter, and a fun learning process arises by making many concepts in a collective state.

Figure 4.20: "Mr. Crocodile"

c) "*Mr. Crocodile*" game in this game child learns colors.

One child stands in the middle of the room. The players stand on the other side and speak.

Children: "Please, Mr. Crocodile, can we cross the river?"

Mr. Crocodile: "Only if you are wearing something red."

“Mr. Crocodile can make any condition. It can be based on something other than the color of the clothes. Variation: Each time Mr. Crocodile says a color, those kids wearing that color can “cross the river.” Whoever is left at the end is the new Mr. Crocodile.

As mentioned earlier, the use of materials during preschool is crucial. “Game” is a means of expression in this period for children; a toy is a way that expresses themselves. Therefore, it is necessary to be attentive in selecting language teaching materials.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This study investigated the features of early foreign language education in Azerbaijan. The study participants were ten experienced teachers with more than seven and more years of teaching experience. The data were collected from teachers who teach in private schools. The data were collected through a semi-structured interview and were analyzed qualitatively. The data collection steps include pre-coding and coding (segregating, grouping, and regrouping the codes; organizing the principles into categories; merging or refining the types; theming the data). The study was carried out in Baku city, where English education is only available in private schools. This is the reason why teachers from private schools were chosen. Training plans and materials were examined and implemented for seven months.

This investigation aimed to assess the degree of teacher cognition of early foreign language education. More specifically, this study examined experienced EFL teachers’ beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and experiences regarding organizing and teaching foreign language learning to students in their early years. The study also sought to explore the crucial features of children.

The study has found that teachers use different methods for teaching English to children. The participants hold divergent views about the kinds of organization of foreign language classes with preschool children. Firstly game-based learning was found to be a crucial technique, among others. The benefit of this technique is that active and critical learning should be encouraged in this technique by the environment, not passive learning. Secondly, music classes

in developing the competencies of a foreign language are a necessary form of organization of educational activities in studying a foreign language. It contributes to a more active perception of the grammatical and lexical reserve of the language. Because children listen to songs in English lessons, they develop musical perception and audio analysis of the pronunciation of various grammatical constructs. Thirdly, teachers use the Total Physical Response method in language classes because it involves the whole body in the learning process. In this method, the teacher gives students commands in the target language with specific body movements while the students respond with whole-body actions. This movement helps children with two goals; a) the child recognizes the meaning of words in a foreign language faster than traditional learning methods. b) they passively and subconsciously learn the structure of the language itself. The following is the fourth; the interactive learning method is an integral part of teaching English. The teacher does various activities with the child, and both benefit from it. To be creative and create a collage or a poster, do crafts, and organize workshops for kids like making a salad, baking pizza, and making soft toys. This method helps kids and adults indirectly learn the language while engaging in various activities. The last one is the Content-Based Teaching. This method is organized around the content or information that students will acquire. Students apply their language skills in a different context.

This investigation also showed that the teachers see role-play as a form of dialogue communication in the learning process. Using role-play games in lessons increases the effectiveness of the educational process, develops students' communication skills, and motivates them to learn English further. However, unlike other games, including educational games, role-play has the following individual features inherent only in this type of academic work, without which the game cannot be considered role-playing:

- modeling in the game close to natural conditions
- the presence of conflict situations
- mandatory joint activities of game participants performing the roles provided by the game conditions.

This investigation has also shown that children's vocabulary in the target language has been observed to be very rich in preschools, as seen in the above example of word-for-word schemes. There is a good foundation for later years.

The following result is about phonetic skills. The findings have been presented under the following examples depending on the game's purpose and the type of phonetic skill that is

formed during its conduct: games that form perceptual phonetic skills and games that form productive phonetic skills. 1) Games aimed at forming the skills of identifying the sounds of the English language 2) Games aimed at forming skills for establishing sound-letter correspondences. 3) Games aimed at forming the skill of identifying the accent-rhythmic model of a word. 4) Games aimed at forming skills for recognizing communicative types of utterance. 5) Games aimed at the formation of articulatory skills. 6) Games aimed at the formation of rhythmic accentuation skills. 7) Games aimed at the formation of intonation skills.

Finally, the findings have indicated that the most convenient and efficient outcome in early childhood is the game. Children are forced to use a foreign language to join to play, learn the rules, and get involved in the game. Their teachers observed that they played the games in the event and used the target language. The important thing here is to promote the pleasure of the game and bring everyone into the game. That is where the child's self-expression in the target language begins. This varies for everyone.

The study also touched on the importance of role-play for students. Role-Play games are essential for preschoolers because it helps children cope with various problematic emotions, such as fear, aggression, and destructive behavior.

There are specific problems during language learning, but these problems will be overcome over time and can be improved according to the teacher's attitude. Summing up, a properly built educational process and the teacher's competence can help develop in children an interest in the studied foreign language and help them succeed in its study.

In the continuing education system, early study of foreign languages will make it possible to humanize the upbringing of children, strengthening their developing, educational, cultural, and pragmatic orientation. Given the child's sensitivity to speech perception and reproduction at an early age, it is possible to develop and maintain the flexibility of the speech apparatus to form and improve a person's speech ability throughout his life. It has been established that in infancy (by 8-9 months), the child can pronounce the sounds of any language correctly Jusczyk (1984-1986). If he hears speech in only one language, the speech apparatus adjusts to this language and becomes rigid. When teaching children, a foreign language, it is necessary to remember that the "psychological and pedagogical" concept of teaching foreign languages in different countries was based on the theory of learning the language by a child that existed until recently.

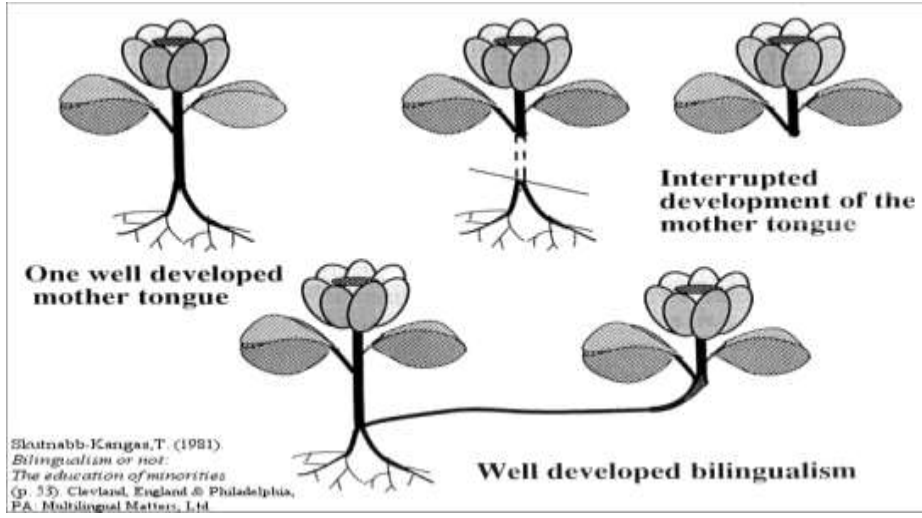
This hypothesis contends that a toddler acquires linguistic skills by unintentionally copying an adult's speech. To put it another way, nobody breaks down a child's speech into units they can

assimilate, doses speech samples, arranges them in a certain order, or explains grammatical principles. By the time they are five or six years old, a typically developing kid has already mastered this most challenging grammar that creates autonomous assertions. By the time they are seven or eight years old, the child is speaking in complicated sentences and rather long texts. However, imitation is not the primary mechanism for children's language mastery. It is the ability to independently build a statement that is achieved due to the child's extensive analytical work. A child does not so much imitate as it dismembers and generalizes everything that it sees and hears and outputs systems of rules that determine the expression of individual thoughts and intentions. Additionally, according to this hypothesis, the infant acquires the L2 in a manner like how they learned the first language naturally, without separating the rules, and because of their incredible capacity for imitation. The growth of a youngster in a multilingual environment serves as evidence.

The researcher suggests that; firstly, it is necessary to note the general features of teaching a foreign language. The teacher must strive for classes to take place based on an individual approach in the conditions of collective forms of training. Secondly, the teacher must offer a way of assimilating knowledge aimed at the development and not to the detriment of it. Moreover, for this, it is essential that every child is the leading actor in the lesson, feels free and comfortable, and actively discusses the lesson's topics. It is important to note that excessive fascination with frontal forms of work when teaching children, the English language creates the illusion of each student's activity and is unlikely to contribute to his creative development. Thus, it is essential that children are liberated, together with the teacher, "create" a lesson. Not only does so much knowledge and mastery of language and speech materials determine the effectiveness of teaching a foreign language at the lower school age but also. It is possible if the main form of school activity is not listening, speaking, reading, or writing in a foreign language but living, and active communication with the teacher and each other.

Finnish scientist Skutnabb-Kangas (1981) begins his native and foreign language connection in his book "Bilingualism or Not: The Education of Minorities," using the lotus blossom metaphor in his book "The mother tongue-our roots." Lotus flowers, as they are known, have their roots in water, not soil, and they cling to the depths of water, and many lotus blossoms can bind to each other and survive with a single root. When a child speaks, people hear what he expresses, the side of the lotus flower that appears on the surface. However, the foundations of the mother tongue reach deep into the water. For a child who learns a second language, the language he has just learned is like the water lotus on the surface. He learns, expresses, and understands that

language. However, in a child's eyes, this language is not different from a lotus that moves from place to place without its roots. If a foreign language is like a lotus flower that lives on the water surface without roots, it develops that children can have both languages. However, this foreign language is independent of solid roots like the one in the mother tongue. According to Skutnabb-Kangas (1981), the ability of both languages to develop positively depends on the roots of the mother tongue.



Picture 5.1: Water-lily metaphor

REFERENCES

- Akdoğan, F. (2004). Yeni Projeler Işığında Erken Yaşta Yabancı Dil Öğretimi. *Hasan Ali Yücel Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi* (2);97-109.
- Asher, J. J. (2012). *Learning Another Language Through Actions*. USA: Sky Oaks Productions.
- Bandura, A. (1963). *Social Learning and Personality Development*. New York: International Thomson Publishing.
- Bovet, M. (1976). *Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development and Individual Differences*. In: Inhelder, B., Chipman, H.H., Zwingmann, C. (eds) *Piaget and His School*. Springer Study Edition. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-46323-5_20.
- Bickerton, D. (2012). *Adem'in Dili* (Çev: Mehmet Doğan). (M. Doğan, Çev.) İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınevi.
- Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1972). *Language and mind*. NY: Harcourt Brace.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Demirezen, M. (2003). *Yabancı Dil ve Anadil Öğreniminde Kritik Dönemler*.

- Dergipark, 4.
- Erden, M., & Akman, Y. (2004). *Gelişim ve Öğrenme*. Ankara: Arkadaş Yayınları.
- Guthrie, E. R. (1935). *The psychology of learning*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Guthrie, E. R. (1942). Conditioning: A theory of learning in terms of stimulus, response, and association. In *The psychology of learning, 41st yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Heigham, J., & Croker, R. A. (2009). *Qualitative research in applied linguistics: A practical Introduction*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire. England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pavlov, I. P. (1927). *Conditioned reflexes: An investigation of the physiological activity of the cerebral cortex* (G. V. Anrep, Trans.). London, England: Oxford University Press.
- Piaget, J. (1926) *The language and thought of child*. London Kegan Paul, Trench and Trubner.
- Saussure, F. (1959) [1916]. *Course in general linguistics (PDF)*. New York: Philosophy Library.
- Scovel, T. (1988). *A Time to Speak: a Psycholinguistic Inquiry into the Critical Period for Human Speech*. New York, NY: Newbury House Publishers.
- Skinner, B. F. (1938). *The behavior of organisms*. New York, NY: Appleton-Century.
- Skutnabb-Kangas. (1981). *Bilingualism or not: the education of minorities*. Cleveland, England: PA: Multilingual matters.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures For Developing Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Watson, J. B. (1914). *Behavior: An introduction to comparative psychology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Watson, J. B. (1916). The place of a conditioned reflex in psychology. *Psychological Review*, 23, pp. 89-116.
- Watson, J. B. (1919). *Psychology from the standpoint of a behaviorist*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott.
- Watson, J. B. (1925). *Behaviorism*. New York: W. W. Norton.