

TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

Language is a means of communication. In the last decades English takes a place as a global lingua franca, in particular the political and social connections. It plays a great role in social relationship. And the English language is the first and essential language that we teach to children at very early stages of schooling.

Key words. Young learners, kinesthetic, tongue twisters, “Games-in-Education” method, role of plays.

Young learners have special distinguished characteristics which differentiate them from adult learners. They are natural language learners. Young learners:

- Are kinesthetic.

Young learners study new things by touching, making or doing it by themselves. Teachers need to take into account this character of them to make teaching more successful.

1. Are very active

Children at this age become full of energy. This can be the cause of noise or bad behavior in the classroom.

1. Have a short attention length

Young learners’ world is filled with games. They do not have enough patient to stay still for 40 or 45 minutes on school. So, teachers should consider that children should take breaks every 5-10 minutes. Games, tongue twisters, riddles, short stories, songs can be effective to use during these breaks.

- Are selfish

According to psychology, children at this age become very egocentric. They love their personal things such as books, pens, toys and etc. They want their teacher always to pay attention to them, so they make noise or disturb other classmates. If the teacher pays more attention to them, they may feel them as a teacher’s pet.

1. Love appreciation and reward

Certainly, children love praises and rewards. Using such techniques during the class is a way of encouraging them. Moreover, this method is effective to do speaking activities or games without making too much noise.

- Are good at remembering accurately

Children can remember everything you said word by word, even your position, used gestures, anything else. So, teachers need to be very careful to their words and actions. On the other hand, the instructor can use the good sides. Children easily learn the poem you have just given or grammatical rules you have delivered, the accurate order of the story or fairy tales.

- Love learning through playing, acting, doing

As I mentioned above, children love learning via acting, playing. Majority of the teachers agreed that the learners learn the subject more effectively.

- Are creative

Children are very imaginative. They create a new poems or animals. They remember new things by connecting to another thing. So, do not surprise when they whisper totally another thing when you asked another.

- Love listening activities

Listening activities should be the first method to use in language learning. This the foremost language skill that young learners practice in their first language, therefore it is natural to start with listening with children. Teacher talks, stories, songs are very appropriate for their age.

While games and activities are used to be fun and useful for learners, they are inseparable way of teaching children. The goal of games is to help young learners not only use the target language, but also learn to discuss and perform skills in that target language. The method “Games-in-Education” is being an important way in education. Indeed, educational games are being continuously growing in numbers.

In the article which was published in VOICE magazine, the publication of British Council, has stated that “Plays has an important role in children’s developmental stage. Educational games (races, competitions, flashcards and such techniques) can be counted as the best tools to teach active learning and in addition to help young learners to improve their sociability.

As learners, children are full of energy. They are considered as natural language learners. Moreover, they have the habit of trying on an activity even if they do not fully understand how to do it. Surprisingly, learning how to speak in foreign language is not a problem for them, because it is more challenging for adults who learn foreign languages through grammar books. Nonetheless, unlike adults young learners lose their interest and motivation more quickly if that find the language or the activity is difficult for them. In the case of foreign language learning, teachers absolutely need to know their learners’ character to find the best methods to teach them. To be precise, knowing children very well, makes learning more effective.

Conclusion. The learners are fully encompassed with games throughout the days at their home, on their PC and even on their phones. Nevertheless, the classroom is the only place that they do not have a chance to play. Even though, some teachers effectively use games as an integral part of their lesson.

In addition to this, games are not just time-filling or warming-up activities. Instead, they have very important educational value. Games help children to use the language right away without thinking about the correct form.

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