

Chapter 7

Psycho–Pedagogical and Methodological Premises Specific to Learning English at Preschool Age

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ABSTRACT

There has always been a special interest in learning foreign languages. It is recommended to start the learning process as early as possible. It can also be added the knowledge and compliance with pedagogical requirements - the use of interactive teaching-learning methods, the identification and/or development of appropriate didactic resources with the role of facilitating and stimulating language acquisitions, other than those involving writing and reading, the teacher's ability to provide the most suitable contexts for children, with an anchor role for learning English. The authors intend to address the issue of learning English from preschool age through the analytical presentation of several areas of interest: early education frameworks and psycho-pedagogical principles, explanatory pedagogical mechanisms and theories of learning at preschool age, applications for learning foreign languages, specific didactic strategies and resources for learning English in preschool, and applications for learning English at preschool age: examples, proposals, suggestions.

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1. PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL PREMISES OF LEARNING AT AN EARLY AGE

For the early age stage, the acquisitions regarding knowledge are impressive in volume and have a major impact for/in the evolution and stimulation of the child's subsequent development. The prerequisites for the psychological development and the balanced and harmonious evolution of children are given by the particularities of the anatomic-physiological development which takes place at a very fast pace: the neural structures of the brain are formed during this period in a proportion of over 85%, and also functions related to cognition, communication, emotionality and motor skills are developed. Stimulation through learning, through communication, through movement, through affection given, etc., are priority now, contributing to the strengthening of neural connections and the development of the brain. All these generate a special interest and concern for early education, understood as an important premise for the development and evolution of the future adult. And, if until the age of 5 the intellectual capacity that the child will reach in adulthood is developed in a considerable percentage, it follows that the lack of involvement and the failure to capitalize on the potential of these intellectual capacities at an early age leads to the need for huge efforts later, for recovery in the following school years.

In the school documents (see Curriculum for early education) teaching activities at an early age aim at the formation and development of knowledge processes, the harmonious development of the personality respecting the own pace of development as well as autonomous training, the development of communication, expression, socialization, training processes of basic skills, encouraging experiments, trials, explorations in the sense of developing autonomous learning skills, above all the development of a positive self-image. All of these are aspects defined in the official curricular documents as prerequisites for the key skills formed, developed and later diversified, along the schooling route (https://www.edu.ro/educatie_timpurie https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/Curriculum%20ET_2019_aug.pdf).

The fundamental values of education and the educational process are both values that form the basis of the Curriculum for early education, as follows: child-centered education, which implies knowing and respecting the child's unique character; education centered on respecting the rights of the child; education centered on active learning, which involves the active involvement of the child in various contexts and learning situations that generate understanding of the contents; education centered on integrated development (which implies a multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary approach to activities); education centered on the values of interculturality (which implies knowing and respecting one's own values but also the values of other ethnicities); education centered on equity and non-discrimination (which presupposes the proposal

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