

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN PEDAGOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO CHILDREN

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Abstract: This article explores the interconnected roles of pedagogy and psychology in teaching foreign languages to children. Emphasizing the importance of developmental psychology, it demonstrates how understanding cognitive and emotional growth in children can enhance pedagogical approaches. Effective language instruction not only relies on methodologies suited to different age groups but also considers motivation, emotional engagement, and memory retention as psychological factors. By integrating pedagogical strategies with psychological insights, educators can create a learning environment that supports language acquisition in a holistic and child-centered manner.

Keywords: Pedagogy, Psychology, Foreign Language Teaching, Children, Cognitive Development, Motivation, Emotional Engagement, Language Retention, Teaching Strategies, Developmental Psychology

INTRODUCTION

The process of teaching foreign languages to children presents unique challenges and opportunities. Educators must design and deliver lessons that account for children's developmental stages, learning preferences, and cognitive capacities. This process requires a deep understanding of both pedagogical principles and psychological theories, as they help shape effective, adaptive teaching strategies that encourage children to learn naturally and joyfully.

Theoretical Background: Pedagogy and Psychology. Pedagogy, the art and science of teaching, provides educators with frameworks for structuring lessons, assessing progress, and fostering engagement. In foreign language instruction, pedagogy guides methods such as the communicative approach, task-based learning, and immersion. Meanwhile, psychology offers insights into how children learn, remember, and respond emotionally to new languages. For instance, psychological

theories like Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and Piaget's cognitive development stages can inform age-appropriate language teaching.

Cognitive Development and Language Learning. The cognitive abilities of children evolve through distinct stages, as outlined by Piaget, which impacts their ability to understand and use language. In early childhood, children primarily learn through concrete experiences and simple vocabulary, making play-based learning effective. As they mature, they can handle more abstract concepts, which allows for deeper grammatical instruction and nuanced vocabulary. Thus, language pedagogy tailored to cognitive development stages enables children to absorb language in ways that align with their mental capacities.

Emotional and Motivational Aspects. Motivation is essential in language learning, especially for young learners who thrive on enjoyment and positive reinforcement. Psychological theories of motivation, such as Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory, emphasize intrinsic motivation as a critical factor in sustained learning. Pedagogical methods that foster autonomy, competence, and relatedness in language activities can make learning enjoyable and rewarding for children, thereby increasing their intrinsic motivation to learn.

Memory and Retention Techniques. Psychological research highlights the importance of repetition, association, and context in language retention. Techniques like spaced repetition and mnemonic devices, often used in pedagogical settings, enhance memory by reinforcing language patterns. For example, teaching through songs, rhymes, and stories allows for natural repetition in enjoyable formats, supporting language retention over time.

Conclusion

The interplay between pedagogy and psychology is critical in foreign language education for children. By incorporating insights from both fields, educators can design curricula that are cognitively accessible, emotionally engaging, and effective for long-term retention. This holistic approach not only fosters linguistic competence but also supports the overall developmental needs of young learners.

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