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PECULIARITIES OF AND DEALING WITH LEARNER AGE DIVERSITY IN EFL STUDENT GROUPS

Abstract: this article analyses the study of the issue concerning difficulties in diverse age groups and clarification weather the age imbalance influence to the learners' acquisition during EFL classes that reveals the methodological phenomenon- diversity in age of learners does not influence to their acquisition and proficiency, on the contrary this factor will provide lively and dynamic atmosphere in class. It will be thoroughly investigated according to modern methods of teaching foreign languages.

Key words: diverse age, group, method, classes, classes, materials, individual differences, social factors, learning style.

Language: English

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Introduction

Most people think that English is taught best at the early stage. They believe that the earlier children learn English, and the more exposure to the language, the better it will be. This actually is a fallacy because the success of foreign language learning is not merely determined by the age and exposure factors. There are still many other factors that have to be considered to make sure that teaching English to Young Learners will be effective, such as the nature of language instruction given, psychological and social factors, teaching materials, individual differences in cognitive and learning styles, and many other factors. Younger leaners are not necessarily better learners compared to older learners. Teaching English for young learners, therefore, should be properly handled if it is to be successful. It needs highly skilled and dedicated teaching. Teachers of English for young learners need to have a sound understanding of how students think and operate, that is how young learners learn a language. This will serve as the foundation for the implementation of teaching English to young learners.

Materials and method

At the beginning of the course, learners are going to have3classes conducted from 3 different study books. All the tasks, activities and exercises from each book are thoroughly analyzed. Afterwards students will be given opportunity to choose the book they want. Besides this book, supplementary materials from internet will be used either. Video extracts intended for EFL learners will be used 2, 3 times in a month. I design comprehensive tasks for those videos. Mostly they are in oral form: question-answers or short retelling of the main idea. Moreover, popular songs will be played during the classes: learners are given the context of a song with gap filling exercises for while- listening task. As it was mentioned, at the end of a month learners will have a final test, which will be computer based and includes all the language

aspects taught during the month. They are intended to check learners' comprehension on grammar, vocabulary, reading and listening. As to check writing skills of learners, I require them to write a short paragraph on a particular topic or some letters they learnt to write during the classes. To check students' speaking abilities small talks asking them questions about their opinion on some issues, etc. or sometimes presentations will be given. All the materials used in the study are reliable and valid. I asked some of colleagues to observe class and look through prepared materials for teaching; they also were satisfied with effectiveness of materials she had selected. As classes will be conducted based on interactive method it is obvious that technical equipment such as computer, speakers, mobile phones, tape recorders, video cameras etc., were used during the classes. Each lesson listening or video based activities will be provided, eventually, learners do post listening and post watching tasks such as discussions and exercises. At the end of the month students will be given laptops to do computer based test. Moreover, learners will be given projects where mobile phones and video recordings are needed, for example, they are supposed

to record their speech on a particular topic in order to improve their pronunciation and fluency.

In order to conduct this research various methods were used in this paper. Even though it was somewhat difficult to select the methods appropriate for the current research, I found some ways, which were effective for achieving the goal of this research. Firstly, there was an observation. Observations were held during the lessons. Next important method was need analysis of learners. Questionnaires were distributed to analyze the significant features of learners. I observed a group of learners studying in study center "West Mood", where I works. The students were selected according to the level of their proficiency at a target language. Their native language was Uzbek. Before selecting them as a group, she has analyzed the needs of learners and their knowledge at a current sphere. All students are acknowledged with basic item of the language. The lessons have been being conducted three times a week afternoon. The lessons are conducted in a friendly atmosphere, using interactive method of learning English. Below the information about the subjects of the target research is given. Overall, there are nine learners:

Table 1.

Name	Age	Gender	Nationality
Gavhar	30	Female	Uzbek
Bekzod	20	Male	Uzbek
Husniddin	23	Male	Uzbek
Nozimjon	12	Male	Uzbek
Mominjon	12	Male	Uzbek
Madina	17	Female	Uzbek
Umida	15	Female	Uzbek
Anvar	26	Male	Uzbek
Shohista	29	Female	Uzbek

Results and discussion

The five-month teaching was important and reliable in testing the suggested hypothesis in practice. The next stage of the investigation was to interpret the collected data. Coming from questionnaires, it was obvious that all students were weak at speaking and lack at practicing what they have learnt. They all want to be proficient in English almost for the same reason. Analyzing their needs, it is significant to pay attention to their age. The age diversity may occur as a big problem while conducting the lessons, because older

students are weak at acquisition and younger ones are at feeling responsibility and attention. To examine the role of age as a moderating factor in the FL acquisition, I observed the subjects as two separate sub groups. As there were nine students of different age, it was valid to divide them into adults and teenagers.

Comparing the expected learners' needs and actual needs determined in the course we could say that they are fitting each other. Our observers and evaluators' comments about our questionnaire were

positive, so I did the next step- analysis of Test results. Overall, there were 30 items and the test was graded for 30 points. To see the blank sheet of Test look for below

Table 2.

Name	The scores (out of 30)	Percentage of scores (converted into 100 points)
Gavhar	23	76%
Bekzod	27	**90%**
Husniddin	20	**66%**
Nozimjon	18	**63%**
Mominjon	22	**73%**
Madina	27	**90%**
Umida	22	**73%**
Anvar	23	76%
Shohista	25	**84%**

The graphic representation of data about the scores that the subjects got on the Pre-Test is presented. Considering the fact that the test was designed for starters of language practicing, we can observe that subjects managed the test quite satisfactory.

Conclusion

Having studied the subjects' test results as well as the questionnaire answers, I can say that five-month exposure to the learning EFL was effective I looked through the works done in this sphere and found out that my opinion was similar with some kinds of authors. Coming from the results of the research, I can surely say that the age diversity in one group does not influence to the proficiency and acquisition of learners. In this issue, the opinion of authors listed below and in my point of view was proven. Both adults' and teenagers' results were good and similar to each other. Such factors as sluggishness, busyness, tediousness could be as variables to influence to learners' results but not the age diversity. Hence, I can say that age diversity plays positive role in learning process as it avoids the issue of monotony. Adults could learn many features from teenagers and wise versa not only in study but also in life. The lessons with mixed aged learners were very interesting.

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