

Unit 1

Overview

幼儿英语教学法简介



★ Learning Goals

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- ▶ understand the characteristics of children as language learners;
- ▶ have a good command of the basic principles of teaching English to children;
- ▶ get familiar with the basic procedures of lesson planning.

I Introduction

Learning English as a foreign language in preschools has become an increasing trend in many countries across the world. There are numerous methods, techniques, and tools. Among them, language immersion is normally used as the main teaching method in preschools. Teachers use different foreign language teaching



methods according to different situations. Total Physical Response (TPR), games, rhymes, songs, phonics, sight words, stories and drama are frequently used to get children engaged in the learning process.

<p>READ and MASTER!</p> <p>A B C</p>	at	
	cat	sat
	mat	rat
	hat	bat
<p>The cat sat on the mat.</p>		



Your Turn

1. Which is the most important characteristic of a good teacher?

- Be friendly.*
- Have a good personality.*
- Have good knowledge and education.*
- Be a good communicator.*
- Be a good listener.*
- Have a good sense of humor.*
- Be gentle and kind.*
- Be a fluent English speaker.*
- Know a lot about teaching.*

2. What do you think is the best way to learn a foreign language?

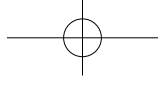
II Characteristics of children as language learners

1. Children's main learning characteristics:

- » Children need to move a lot.
- » Children are quick—quick to learn and quick to forget.
- » Children need to use their senses (sight, hearing, feeling, taste, and smell) to learn to speak.
- » Children have imagination.
- » Children are enthusiastic.
- » Children learn at different rates.

2. Children learn a foreign language by:

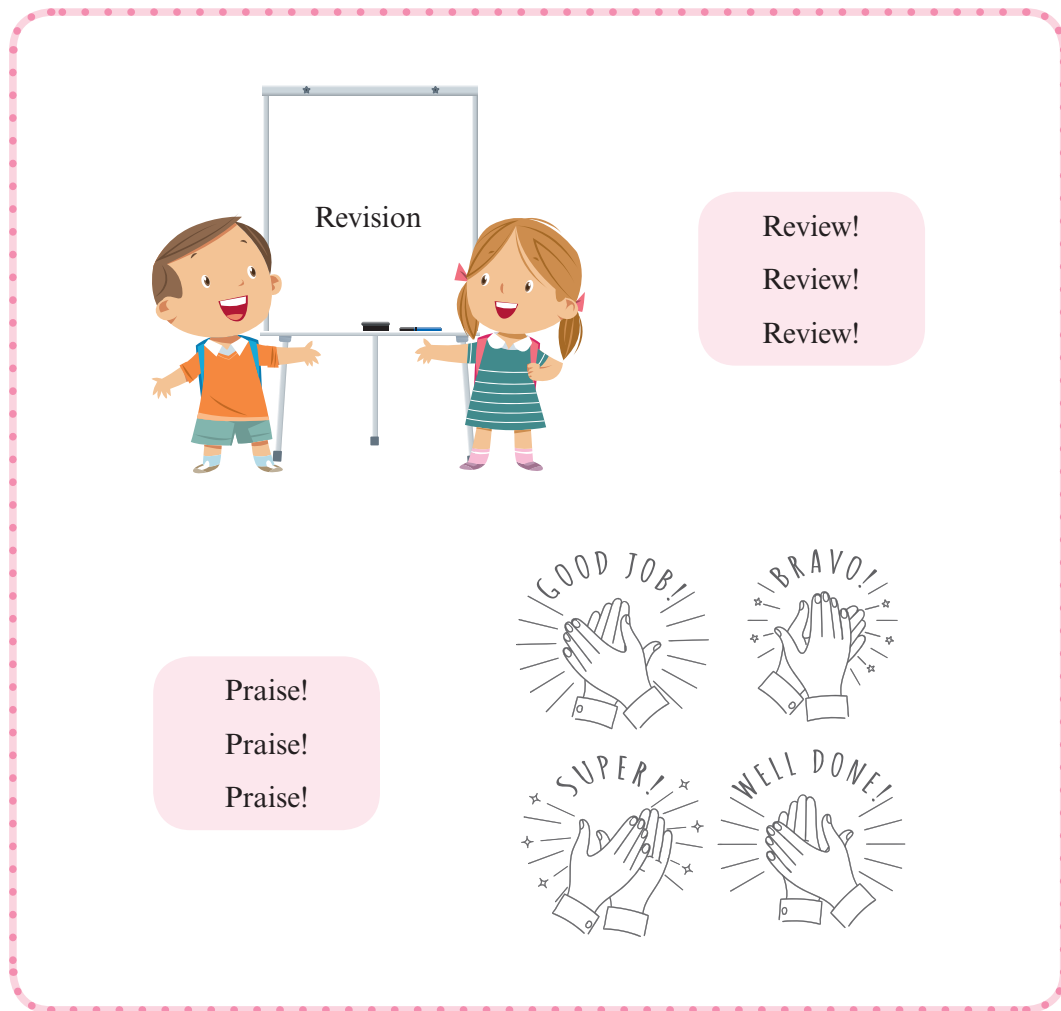
- » Using all their senses and getting fully involved. They watch, listen and then imitate.

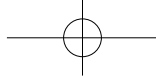


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- » Making associations between words, languages, or sentence patterns and putting things into clear, relatable contexts.
- » Making mistakes, which is part of the natural process of learning.
- » Repeating and feeling confident when they have established routines.
- » Being motivated, particularly when their peers are also speaking/learning foreign languages.
- » Having more opportunities to be exposed to the language.
- » Having fun.
- » Feeling at home.





Your Turn

How far do you agree with the views below?

Children learn a foreign language:

- in the same way they learn their mother tongue.*
- fast if the teacher motivates them.*
- by translating sentences into their mother tongue.*
- and feel embarrassed when they make mistakes.*
- by listening and speaking.*
- by focusing formally on the rules of grammar.*
- through a variety of enjoyable activities.*
- fast in a warm and happy atmosphere.*
- by plenty of practice.*

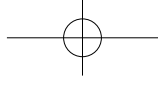
III Basic principles of teaching English to children

1. Keeping children's attention

- » Make the activities short and abundant. Children have very short attention spans.
- » Change the pace of activities by following games with lots of physical movements with quieter and less active ones.
- » Teach the same thing over again in many different ways.
- » Vary the way you speak, for example, speak loudly, whisper, use a changeable voice, etc.
- » Use lots of actions and exaggerated facial expressions.
- » Let children touch, feel, throw and make things.
- » Use puppets to keep children's attention and to get them to speak.

2. Speaking English whenever possible

- » Use English whenever possible. All instructions and questions are just as important as the teaching contents.



- » Speak at normal speed.
- » Use normal stress and intonation.
- » Use full sentences or phrases.
- » Maintain good eye contact with the whole class.
- » Vary the way you speak (loudly, slowly, whisper, use a high/low pitch, etc.)
- » Do not worry if your English is not perfect. Most teachers in the kindergarten are not very fluent English speakers but they do a very good job of teaching young children the language at this level. The main objective is to help children to learn to like the language.

3. Using mother tongue when necessary

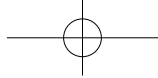
- » Teachers are going to need the mother tongue especially in the beginning when setting discipline and class rules, or at any time when having difficulties explaining an activity in English. Do use the expressions necessary if you need to manage the class right from the start, children will quickly begin to understand and use them gradually.
- » Use mother tongue less and less as the school year progresses.

4. Dealing with pronunciation

- » Make sure that children see the lips of the teacher when he/she speaks.
- » It is perfectly normal for a child not to be able to pronounce certain sounds. The majority of children will get over this problem as they get older. Just be patient.
- » Young children need to hear the different sounds in the foreign language. Focus on a particular sound and ask the children to pronounce it one by one, do not overcorrect pronunciation.

5. Dealing with mistakes

Repeating, encouraging and praising can help children to overcome mistakes. Overtly correction might discourage them. Some useful techniques are:

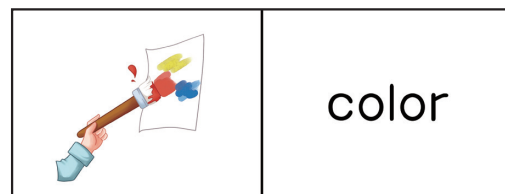
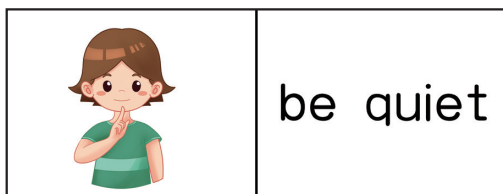


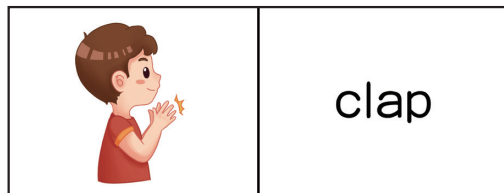
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- » Keep their age and level of English in mind.
- » The ideas are more important than the grammar.
- » Only correct the mistakes that are important.
- » Use actions to help correct answers.
- » “Model” the correct form of the language. If one child says “Me wented home.”, the teacher can say, “Yes, you went home. What did you do then?”
- » Encourage children to correct themselves, this will build confidence and deepen the learning process. Provide two versions and let the children decide which is correct.
- » Give lots of praise and encouragement for every effort—they can’t know everything.

6. Introducing classroom language gradually

- » The purpose of classroom language is to manage the classroom, to instruct children what to do, to motivate them, to provide feedback and to provide language input.
- » Choose a few expressions of classroom language to teach the children at the beginning of the term. The teacher can gradually introduce new classroom language with TPR or flashcards.
- » What the teachers say is as important as how the teachers say. Teachers’ attitudes to the children are conveyed through their tone of voice, use of pausing and facial expression. Gestures and body language shall be included to promote understanding.





» Too much teacher talk will lead to loss of concentration and reduced learning. Try to get the children involved. You will find useful classroom language for class management, common classroom materials, games and songs in Appendix I.

Your Turn

Below are some purposes of the teacher's talk and actions in the classroom. Complete the chart according to your own experience. Add more if possible.

Frequency: 1. very frequently; 2. frequently; 3. sometimes; 4. seldom; 5. never

Language: English (L2) or your own language (L1) or both sometimes

Purposes	Frequency	L1 or L2	Teacher's talk	Teacher's actions
To greet each other	3	L2	Good morning, everyone!	Wave his/her hands
To maintain good atmosphere				
To give instructions				
To ask for information				
To give information				
To provide examples				

(续表)

Purposes	Frequency	L1 or L2	Teacher's talk	Teacher's actions
To check understanding				
To praise children				
To give feedback				
To give models of procedures				

IV Lesson planning

Writing lesson plans is more than just a piece of paperwork—it is a way to ensure teachers are fully prepared for each class and stay on track. Lesson plans help to design teaching objectives, procedures and contents.

Lesson plans can be daily or long-term ones. A single lesson plan may cover several days' lessons. It should include a few basic elements as follows:

1. Background Knowledge

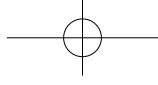
This section includes the basic information about the lesson, such as class size, class period, age range, language level, etc.

2. Goals and Objectives

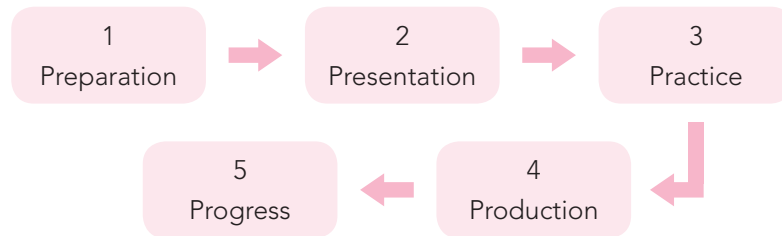
Goals and objectives include language, specific cognitive and psychomotor goals. They shall be considered according to the specific condition of children and be the guideline for the other parts of lesson planning.

3. Teaching Procedure

Teaching procedure refers to the process to accomplish teaching goals. It includes lots of instructional activities designed for the lesson. The 5P method is frequently



used to plan lessons and it will help teachers to pace out the instructional activities effectively.



Preparation

If teachers plan on introducing a new lesson, take this as a good time to set the scene of the lesson. Teachers can set the scene in a few ways: ask questions about a certain topic, sing a song, play a game or review materials from the previous lesson. This will spark children's interest, focus their attention, and prepare them for the lesson ahead.

Presentation

The presentation part of the lesson is where the new material is well presented. The teacher can present the new material in various ways such as a video clip, a song, a dialogue, a story, etc.

Practice

The goal of this stage is that children can use the presented materials in context. This is where the teacher organizes activities for children. These activities or exercises may vary from a short role-play, games, songs, stories to problem-solving activities—all are great ideas.

Production

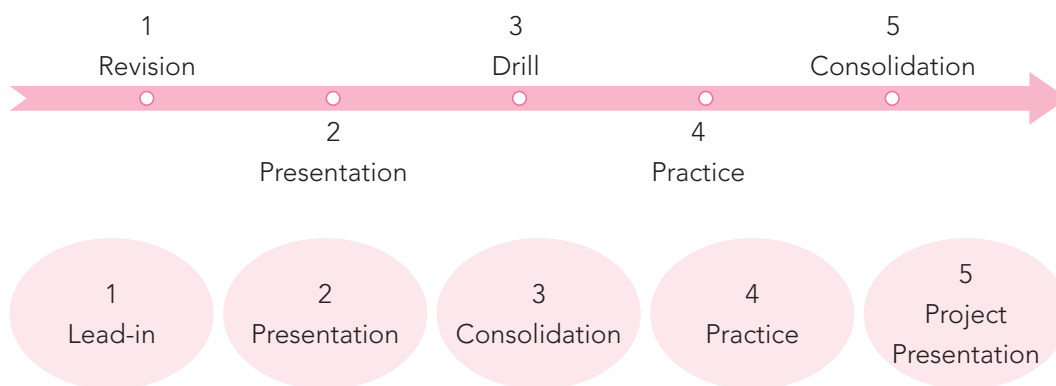
This is the fun part. It gives children the chance to use their newly learned materials freely and openly. The production activity can be done in a group, in pairs, or individually, depending on what it is.

Progress

This part is to check and consolidate what children have learned in the lesson. Teachers may make children review the words or sentences through various interesting

activities such as games, songs, discussion, etc.

Here are some variations of the 5P method:



4. Assessment

Assessment is a way of checking whether the learning goals have been achieved and providing feedback on children's learning.

5. Reflection on the lesson

After teaching a lesson, teachers can compare the lesson plan with the actual lesson, check the goals, input, procedures, outcome and the organization, and make note of the lesson plan's perceived successes and failures. Teachers can improve future lessons by doing the reflection work.

6. Teaching aids

Teaching aids are important because they create a visual and interactive experience for students. As the students become more engaged, they are more likely to understand the topic being taught.

Teachers should prepare all equipment, audiovisual and other objects needed for the lesson, and make sure everything goes well before the start of classes to avoid wasting time.

There is a great number of teaching aids for teachers to use and apply on preschool activities.

6.1 Basic items

Children like to see all different kinds of visuals: posters, flashcards, pictures,

videos, picture books, picture dictionaries for children, etc.

They also like to be engaged in physical and fun activities and participate in making things like Christmas postcards, paper airplanes, ships, etc. Therefore, the best is to combine handmade materials with manufactured ones.

Here are some useful items for craft activities:

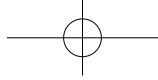
crayons	pencils	washable paints	paint brushes	glue sticks
tapes	colored cards	colored ribbons	scissors	stickers
safety pins	large pieces of paper	old newspapers	big boxes	envelopes

6.2 The interactive whiteboard

Many preschools today have been updating their technology to offer children the most advanced language courses available. Teachers not only need to be up-to-date with their professional development as far as teaching techniques and resources are concerned, but also need to keep up with technology.

V Mini-project

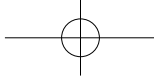
- Work in groups and choose a topic that is suitable for 4-6 years old children. For example, letters, shapes, sports, body parts, etc.
- Look through all the information in this unit again and plan a complete lesson with a variety of interesting and useful activities. Please write down your teaching plan in the following charts step by step.
- Conduct the demo teaching with your partner and then reflect on your teaching practice.



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Teaching Plan of the Mini-project (Part I)

Topic	
Goals	
Materials needed	
Age	
Class size	
Class length	

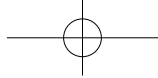


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Teaching Plan of the Mini-project (Part II)

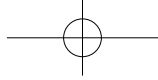
	Stage	Time	Stage aims	Activities	Teaching aids
Procedures	Preparation				
	Presentation				



(续表)

Teaching Plan of the Mini-project (Part II)

Procedures	Stage	Time	Stage aims	Activities	Teaching aids
	Practice				
	Production				
	Progress				



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Teaching Plan of the Mini-project (Part III)

Reflection