

THE ROLE OF PHONETIC GAMES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHONETIC SKILLS IN STUDENTS OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL AT THE PRIMARY STAGE OF LEARNING THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE

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Abstract:

This article presents research on the impact of phonetic games on speech development in primary school students. These games not only contribute to improved performance but also enhance students' motivation and engagement in the language being studied. Developing phonetic competence is a cornerstone of global linguistic education, determining the success of foreign language acquisition. This task is particularly relevant in language teaching, as accurate pronunciation and phonetic accuracy ensure effective communication. Therefore, the study of general phonetics, which explores the universal patterns of phonetic systems and their properties, encompassing the entire process of generating and perceiving oral and written speech, is of considerable interest.

Keywords: speech skills, phonetic skills, stress, intonation, phonemes, syllable, speech rate, intonation contours, speech, articulation, acoustics.

INTRODUCTION

Recently, interest in learning Russian has grown, prompting Russian language teachers to seek new, more engaging methods, particularly for teaching phonetics, including through dedicated phonetics lessons. In this paper, we sought to understand how phonetic games influence speech development in primary school students. To begin, let's clarify: a phonetic game is a didactic tool integrated into a game environment, designed to optimize the development of articulatory, auditory, and discriminative abilities in speech sounds. This approach promotes the consolidation of phonetic competencies, increasing learners' engagement and intrinsic motivation. This is especially relevant when learning their native language, and developing a deep understanding of the phonological and lexical organization of language in primary school students is a key factor in literacy acquisition. Furthermore, the effectiveness of literacy instruction is significantly enhanced by targeted development of primary school students' ability to reflect on the sound structure and vocabulary of the language. Conscious understanding of the phonetic system and vocabulary of a language is fundamental to the successful acquisition of literacy in primary school students. Mastering the phonetic system is

the foundation for improving speech skills in one's native language. This includes accurately reproducing vowels and consonants, as well as distinguishing them by hard/soft, stressed/unstressed characteristics. Learning one's native language involves developing language skills—lexical, grammatical, and phonetic. Success in mastering oral speech is determined primarily by the study of phonetics and the development of phonetic skills.

METHODOLOGY

One of the effective methods for developing correct pronunciation is the use of phonetic games in the learning process. Developing phonemic awareness is critical for mastering all forms of speech (sound production, reading, and writing). However, during literacy training, young schoolchildren face significant challenges in developing this awareness. Significant differences in the interpretation of phonemic awareness are a key issue requiring solutions for effective development.

MAIN PART

Research into phonetic games as an integral component of didactic and methodological approaches to language teaching has been conducted by a number of prominent scholars. In particular, significant contributions were made by V.V. Markova, whose work focused on phonetic games and exercises for improving pronunciation, and V.Ya. Dovgal, who studied the process of acquiring the sound system of a language.[1] Furthermore, this topic is being actively explored by linguists specializing in the linguistics of creativity and the theory of language games.

Phonetic skill is the ability to clearly hear speech sounds, understand what they mean, and pronounce them correctly. When this ability becomes flawless, one can say that phonetic skill is fully developed. Phonetic skills are formed with five years and The development of correct pronunciation is complete. Normally, all children should learn to clearly pronounce all sounds in words and sentences. Phonetic skills are divided into two main categories: those related to hearing and pronunciation, and those related to rhythm and intonation. Let's look at each in more detail.

In studying the works of leading linguists, it became clear that the value of game strategies in education was not only recognized but also actively promoted by such prominent figures like A.S. Makarenko,

D.B. Elkonin, L.S. Vygotsky and S.L. Rubinstein. Today, this idea is embodied in numerous practical materials, in particular, in collections of games for primary school students, such as “Games for Children Studying Russian” by M.D. Astafieva [2] and “Alphabetical and Thematic Games in Russian Language Lessons” by N.A. Kulyasova.[3] Research conducted in the field of using games for teaching Russian.

Specifically, the following works stand out regarding the introduction of games into the process of mastering the phonetic aspects of language. O.B. Blinova [4] in her research “Methodology for Teaching Phonetics of Russian as a Foreign Language” conducted the necessary experiments and established that game-based methods contribute to a better understanding of certain phonetic features. language, increase motivation, create optimal conditions for high-quality acquisition of phonetic material, and simplify the acquisition of pronunciation skills for the most difficult English sounds.

A.A. Pevtsova [5] in her work “The Importance of Phonetic Games in the Development of Phonetic Skills in Schoolchildren at the Initial Stage of Learning a Foreign Language” found that phonetic games help to form and improve phonetic skills, eliminate psychological barriers and difficulties associated with mastering the phonetic aspect of speech, making learning engaging and memorable. She also emphasized that with the regular use of phonetic games in foreign language lessons, children successfully master phonetic skills.

For a child's full development, successful socialization, and easy communication with others (both adults and peers), literate speech with clear pronunciation and correct articulation is crucial. Speech development begins at birth and is particularly intense during preschool and elementary school. However, many children have difficulty pronouncing individual sounds: they may substitute, omit, or distort them. If such errors are not corrected promptly, they can carry over into written speech, cause psychological difficulties, and slow the child's overall development. To improve speech and correct sound errors, it is recommended to use phonetic games specifically aimed at developing speech skills. Phonetic games promote the development of the speech apparatus and hearing. They help:

- **Auditory perception:** the ability to hear and distinguish speech sounds, words and sentences.
- **Pronunciation:** clearly and correctly pronouncing sounds, combining them into words and phrases, and using pauses, stress, and intonation correctly.
- **Rhythm and intonation:** understanding and correct application of logical and emotional stress, as well as intonation patterns of speech.

Beginning the lesson with physical exercises will teach children to control their bodies, alternating moments of tension and complete relaxation. We suggest starting the game with a drill that will help children master the art of contrasting muscle tension and subsequent relaxation. We offer a wide range of types for using phonetic games:[6]

"A stone turn into a rope"

“First we will all tense up together, as if we had become hard stones, and then we will become soft and pliable, like ropes.”

“Let’s try to become very strong and still at first, and then completely relax, like soft fabric.”

The Ducks Are Flying

"Press your forearms to your sides and flap your hands like wings. Inhale as you rise up onto your toes, and exhale as you lower them. Then slowly lower your arms and sit up like ducks landing on water."

"Let's pretend we're ducks. Keep your arms by your sides, and use your hands to mimic the flapping of wings. Rise up onto your tiptoes as you inhale and lower yourself as you exhale. Then, gently lower your arms and sit down, as if you were landing on a surface of water."

"The tiger turns into a cat"

"First, we'll show off the sharp claws of a tiger by tensing our fingers. Then, we'll relax them, turning them into soft cat paws."

"Let's pretend to be a fierce tiger, tensing our fingers like claws. Now let's turn into gentle cats, relaxing our fingers."

"Cold - warm up"

"Let's imagine we're frozen solid, unable to move. Every cell in our bodies has become rigid. And now spring has arrived, and we're slowly beginning to thaw and move."

"Let's pretend we're frozen, unable to move from the cold. And then we'll imagine the spring sun melting the ice, and we'll come alive again."

"Good is stronger than evil"

"First, let's try to portray the sorcerer's evil face: clench your teeth and squint your eyes. Then, make it kind by softening and relaxing your facial muscles."

"Let's show what a really angry wizard looks like by tensing his jaw and squinting his eyes. Now let's turn him into a kind one by relaxing all the facial muscles."

"Frog Pose"

"Squat down, spread your knees wide, and place your hands on the floor. Make your eyes wide and stretch your mouth. Then relax completely."

"Let's get into the frog pose: squat down, spread your knees, and place your hands on the floor. Puff out your cheeks and make your eyes wide. Then relax."

Elementary school students don't yet have full control over their hearing; they have difficulty comparing sounds. But this is a skill that can be acquired! Developing speech sound discrimination is especially important for children with speech difficulties, as they often simply don't notice their own pronunciation errors. Games are designed to help them learn to listen and hear. You'll soon see how the student begins to "discover" their speech, striving for correct articulation and correcting inaccuracies.

Study of vowel sounds and development of phonemic hearing

The next stage of work is devoted to mastering vowel sounds. It's important to understand that while developing correct pronunciation, work is simultaneously underway to develop phonemic awareness. This includes tasks aimed at distinguishing syllables and sound combinations based on their acoustic properties: loudness, pitch, and duration.

Phonetic rhythm as a teaching tool: [7]

The use of a phonetic rhythm system makes this work more accessible, understandable and engaging for children.

Developing auditory loudness perception: exercises to determine the loudness of speech elements increase hearing sensitivity and improve speech intelligibility in various acoustic conditions. Games such as "Quiet-Loud," where children repeat sound complexes (e.g., "au," " ee ") with varying vocal strengths, correlating the concepts of "far-quiet" and "close-loud," help develop these skills.

Mastering Pitch: The foundation of understanding the melodic aspect of speech is the ability to identify and reproduce pitch. The concepts of "high and low" are reinforced through vocal exercises (singing vowel sounds at different pitches) by demonstration and instruction, as well as through games like "High and Low," "Three Bears," or "Ladder."

Perception of Sound Duration: The duration of speech signals is learned through imitating hand movements that demonstrate the duration and brevity of heard sounds, onomatopoeia, and through varying the speed of pronunciation of syllables, words, and phrases. These exercises help develop an understanding of word and phrase stress, speech tempo, and expressiveness.

Practical exercises with vowel sounds and intonations

Below are examples of exercises that link the pronunciation of vowel sounds with certain intonations and movements:

The "A" Sound (Intonation of Joy): Children extend their arms forward, palms together. Saying "a-a-a...", they smoothly move their arms out to the sides, palms facing up.

The "O" Sound (Intonation of Surprise): Children clasp their hands together in front of them, touching their fingertips. Saying "o-o-o...", they smoothly raise their arms out to the sides and form a circle above their heads.

The "U" Sound (Threatening Intonation): Starting position: arms bent at chest level, palms facing away from you. While saying "u-u-u...", children straighten their arms forward and down with pressure.

The "E" Sound (Intonation of Reproach): Starting position: arms down. While saying "e-e-e...", children smoothly bend their arms at the elbows, raising their hands to shoulder level. Their elbows are lowered (the "surgeon's" pose), and they shake their heads with a reproachful expression.

The "I" Sound (Intonation of Surprise and Joy): Starting Position: Arms bent in front of the chest, index fingers pointing upward, fingers clenched into fists. Saying "ee-ee-ee...", children rise on their toes, raise their arms high above their heads, and stretch upward.

The sound "Y" (angrily): Starting position: arms bent at chest level, fingers clenched into fists, elbows pointed out to the sides. While pronouncing "y-y-y...", children forcefully move their arms bent at the elbows out to the sides, as if making a "ra" sound.

CONCLUSION

Systematic lessons, including game-based exercises on phonetic rhythm, promote comprehensive speech development in children. The results include accelerated development of gross, fine, and articulatory motor skills, as well as motor coordination. Improving the ability to distinguish speech sounds (phonemic hearing).

Normalization of speech breathing.

Developing skills to control the strength and pitch of your voice.

Improving the rhythmic and intonational aspects of speech.

Clarifying the pronunciation of existing sounds, stimulating the development of new sounds through imitation, and creating a foundation for their correct production and more rapid automation. Improving children's overall speech activity.

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