

XORIJIY TILNI (INGLIZ TILINI) KICHIK YOSHDAGI O'QUVCHILARGA O'QITISHDA IJTIMOIIY VA EMOTSIONAL TA'LIMNING O'RNI

Turdiboyeva Xusniyabonu Umid qizi

Uzbekistan State World Languages

University English philology faculty

Advisor: **Sobirova Feruza Islomjon qizi**

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada kichik yoshdagi o'quvchilarga ingliz tilini o'qitishda ijtimoiy va emotsional ta'limning o'rni tahlil qilinadi. SEL yondashuvi o'quvchilarning muloqotga kirishishi, ishonchi, hamkorligi va darsdagi faolligini oshirishga yordam berishi yoritiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: SEL, young learners, English teaching, emotional development, classroom communication

РОЛЬ СОЦИАЛЬНО-ЭМОЦИОНАЛЬНОГО ОБУЧЕНИЯ В ПРЕПОДАВАНИИ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА (АНГЛИЙСКОГО) МЛАДШИМ УЧАЩИМСЯ

Аннотация. В статье анализируется роль социально-эмоционального обучения в преподавании английского языка младшим учащимся. Показано, что подход SEL способствует развитию уверенности, сотрудничества, коммуникативной активности и положительной атмосферы на уроке.

Ключевые слова: SEL, младшие учащиеся, обучение английскому языку, эмоциональное развитие, общение в классе

THE ROLE OF SEL (SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING) IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES (ENGLISH) TO YOUNG LEARNERS

Abstract. This article examines the role of Social and Emotional Learning in teaching English to young learners. It shows that SEL supports communication, confidence, cooperation, and classroom participation, and helps create a positive environment for foreign language development.

Key words: SEL, young learners, English teaching, emotional development, classroom communication

Introduction

Teaching English to young learners is not limited to vocabulary, pronunciation, or grammar. At an early age, children learn language together with emotions, behavior, interaction, and social experience. They speak more freely when they feel safe, respected, and encouraged. For this reason, Social and Emotional Learning, widely known as SEL, has become an important part of modern primary language education. SEL helps children understand their feelings, manage emotions, cooperate with others, show empathy, and make responsible decisions. These abilities are especially valuable in foreign language classrooms, where learners often feel shy, anxious, or afraid of making mistakes.

Today, the need to combine language teaching with emotional support is becoming stronger. English lessons for young learners require an environment where children are willing to participate, listen to others, work in pairs, and express themselves without fear. The purpose of this article is to analyze the role of SEL in teaching English to young learners and to describe its practical significance in the classroom. The tasks of the article are to explain the connection between SEL and language learning, identify its benefits for young learners, and provide practical recommendations for teachers.

Literature Review and Methodology

In modern pedagogy, SEL is understood as a process through which learners develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making [1]. These five competencies are closely connected with classroom success because learning is not purely intellectual. It also depends on motivation, confidence, emotional balance, and interaction with others.

Researchers in child development and education have shown that emotions strongly influence attention, memory, and participation [2]. If a child feels nervous, ignored, or embarrassed, language learning becomes difficult. However, when the classroom atmosphere is positive and supportive, children become more willing to listen, repeat, ask questions, and experiment with new words. This is especially relevant in foreign language teaching because speaking in another language naturally creates uncertainty [3].

Young learners do not usually separate language learning from personal experience. They learn through songs, movement, stories, games, imitation, and social contact. Therefore, English lessons should develop not only linguistic skills but also emotional comfort and social interaction. This article is based on descriptive and analytical methods. It reviews the main ideas related to SEL and foreign language teaching and interprets them from the perspective of teaching English to children in primary education.

Discussion

SEL plays an important role in English lessons because communication is not only a linguistic act but also a social and emotional one. A child who knows words but feels afraid may remain silent. Another child may have weak grammar but still try to communicate because the environment is encouraging. This shows that language performance often depends on emotional readiness.

One of the main contributions of SEL is the creation of a safe classroom climate. Young learners need to know that mistakes are a normal part of learning. When the teacher reacts calmly, praises effort, and encourages mutual respect, children feel more secure. In such classes, learners are more likely to answer questions, role-play dialogues, sing songs, and take part in pair work. English becomes not a source of stress, but a space for expression and discovery.

SEL also supports self-confidence. Many children are afraid of speaking English because they think their pronunciation is not good enough or because they do not know how to say something correctly. A supportive teacher can reduce this fear by using positive feedback, simple encouragement, and cooperative tasks. Expressions such as "Good try," "Let's do it together," or "You are improving" can change the learner's attitude toward the lesson. Confidence is especially important in speaking activities, because oral participation is often the most emotionally sensitive part of foreign language learning.

Another important function of SEL is the development of empathy and cooperation. In young learner classrooms, English is often taught through group games, songs, storytelling, and shared tasks. These activities become more effective when children learn to listen to classmates, wait for their turn, help others, and celebrate each other's success. Pair work and group work are not only language exercises; they are also social learning opportunities. Through them, learners practice greeting, thanking, apologizing, asking for help, and showing respect. These are both language functions and social skills.

SEL also helps with classroom behavior and attention. Young children may become restless, frustrated, or distracted during lessons. If a teacher includes emotional check-ins, movement breaks, and calming routines, children can regulate their feelings more successfully. For example, starting the lesson with a question like "How are you today?" using emotion cards, or asking learners to point to a happy, tired, or excited face can help them connect feelings with language. This simple practice supports vocabulary development and emotional awareness at the same time.

Storytelling is one of the most effective ways to combine SEL and English teaching. Stories allow children to talk about feelings, friendship, kindness, fear, courage, and problem-solving. When learners discuss characters and their emotions, they practice language in a meaningful context. For example, after reading a short story, the teacher can ask: "Was the boy sad or happy?", "Why did the girl help her friend?", or "What would you do?" Such questions develop both comprehension and emotional reflection.

Games and role plays are equally useful. A role play such as "helping a friend," "sharing toys," or "saying sorry" gives children an opportunity to use simple English expressions in socially meaningful situations. In this way, language and behavior grow together. Songs with emotional vocabulary, classroom routines with polite expressions, and collaborative drawing or speaking tasks also strengthen SEL in language lessons.

At the same time, teachers should remember that SEL is not a separate extra topic added to the lesson only sometimes. It should be integrated naturally into everyday teaching. The tone of the teacher's voice, the way mistakes are corrected, the rules of pair work, and the overall atmosphere of the lesson all influence children's emotional experience. If the classroom is too strict, overly corrective, or competitive, children may lose interest in using the foreign language. If it is supportive and balanced, they usually become more active and open.

Results

The analysis of SEL in English teaching to young learners makes it possible to identify several practical outcomes.

First, SEL increases participation. Children speak more willingly when they feel emotionally safe. Second, it improves classroom communication because learners become more respectful, cooperative, and attentive to others. Third, it supports motivation. Young learners enjoy English more when the lesson includes encouragement, empathy, and enjoyable interaction. Fourth, SEL helps develop confidence, especially in speaking and listening activities. Fifth, it improves classroom management because emotionally supported children are more focused and better able to regulate behavior.

The use of SEL-oriented activities in English lessons also leads to richer language practice. Emotional vocabulary such as happy, sad, angry, excited, scared, and proud

becomes easier to learn when it is connected with real classroom experiences. Functional phrases such as “Can I help you?”, “Thank you,” “I’m sorry,” “Let’s play together,” and “It’s your turn” become more meaningful when used in real interaction rather than isolated drilling. This shows that SEL does not reduce language teaching. On the contrary, it makes language use more natural and purposeful.

Conclusion and Practical Recommendations

SEL has an important role in teaching English to young learners because language learning at an early age is deeply connected with feelings, behavior, and social interaction. A child learns better in a classroom where they feel safe, valued, and understood. SEL helps teachers build such an environment and supports confidence, empathy, communication, and responsible participation. It also makes English lessons more human-centered and effective.

Several practical recommendations can be given. Teachers should begin lessons with short emotional warm-ups such as greetings, mood questions, or feeling cards. Pair and group activities should be organized in a way that encourages cooperation rather than fear of failure. Mistakes should be corrected gently, without embarrassing the learner. Storytelling, songs, games, and role plays should include emotional and social themes. Teachers should also model positive language, kindness, patience, and respect in every lesson. In this way, English lessons will help children not only learn a foreign language but also grow as confident and caring individuals.

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