MODERN TRENDS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO CHILDREN THROUGH ART TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract: This paper explores the innovative and growing role of art technology in teaching foreign languages to preschool children. It investigates modern trends in integrating artistic expression and digital tools into early language education. Based on a review of recent studies, classroom observations, and interviews with educators, the article highlights how music, drawing, digital storytelling, and dramatic play improve vocabulary retention, pronunciation, and communicative competence. The research suggests that art technology enhances emotional engagement, supports multimodal learning, and aligns with 21st-century pedagogical goals.

Keywords: early childhood education, language acquisition, art technology, preschool pedagogy, digital storytelling, visual arts, music and movement, drama and role-play, intercultural awareness, multisensory learning, STEAM education, foreign language teaching, Uzbekistan preschool, creativity in education, digital tools in language learning.

1. Introduction

The early childhood period, especially between ages 3 and 6, is a critical window for language development. Research in neurolinguistics confirms that children's brains are more receptive to language acquisition during this stage (Lenneberg, 1967; Lightbown & Spada, 2021). However, teaching foreign languages to young children requires play-based, sensory-rich, and emotionally engaging methods. Traditional grammar-based instruction is not effective for this age group.

Recently, art technology – a combination of traditional artistic activities and modern digital tools – has emerged as a promising method to support language learning. It includes the use of:

Visual arts (drawing, painting, collage),

Music and rhythm (songs, chants, instruments),

Drama and role-play,

Digital tools (interactive whiteboards, drawing apps, storytelling platforms).

The aim of this study is to identify the modern trends and best practices in using art technology to teach foreign languages in preschool institutions.

2. Methods

This research applied a qualitative and descriptive methodology, focusing on both theoretical and empirical data. The methods included:

2.1 Literature Review

25 academic sources (2018–2025) on language acquisition, art in education, and preschool pedagogy were analyzed.

Special focus was placed on studies from Europe, the USA, and Central Asia.

2.2 Classroom Observations

Observation of 6 preschool classrooms in Uzbekistan and one in Finland that use art technology to teach English or Russian.

The researcher documented how teachers integrated art into language lessons.

2.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Conducted with 10 early childhood educators.

Questions explored teachers' experiences, challenges, and observed outcomes in their students.

Analysis Criteria:

Student motivation and participation,

Vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation improvement,

Cultural awareness,

Creativity and emotional development.

3. Results

The research found the following five major trends in modern language teaching through art technology:

3.1 Digital Storytelling as a Core Strategy

Teachers use digital tools like Book Creator or StoryJumper to create visual narratives. These stories:

Introduce new vocabulary in context,

Encourage active listening and speaking,

Can be personalized with children's own drawings or photos.

3.2 Music and Movement Integration

Songs with gestures help children learn pronunciation, sentence structures, and rhythm. Educators reported that:

Children memorized up to 30 new words in a week using songs,

Singing boosted confidence in speaking.

3.3 Use of Visual Arts for Vocabulary

Children drew new words (e.g., "apple," "sun," "house"), then labeled their artwork. This visual connection increased retention and supported children with different learning styles.

3.4 Dramatic Play and Role-Play

Through puppetry and dress-up games, children practiced real-life dialogues (e.g., buying food, greeting others).

Encouraged spontaneous speech and social use of language.

3.5 Cultural Exposure through Art

Art was used to introduce foreign cultures (e.g., painting French flags, singing African songs), promoting intercultural awareness alongside language skills.

4. Discussion

The study supports the theory that multisensory learning — combining sight, sound, movement, and touch — is highly effective for young children. Art-based learning enables this naturally.

Benefits identified include:

Higher attention spans and fewer discipline problems,

Increased self-expression in the target language,

Boost in social-emotional development, such as empathy and confidence.

Moreover, art activities bridge language gaps — even if children don't understand all words, they engage with meaning through visuals or music.

However, some challenges remain:

Teachers need training in both art pedagogy and digital literacy,

Limited resources in rural or underfunded preschools,

Art-based lessons require more preparation time than traditional methods.

Despite these challenges, the benefits are substantial. The approach aligns with global movements like STEAM education, which integrates Arts into Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

5. Conclusion

Modern trends in art-based foreign language education represent an innovative and effective approach tailored to children's individual development. The integration of drama, music, visual arts, STEAM, and digital tools significantly improves language acquisition in preschool settings. In Uzbekistan, further development of scientific and methodological foundations and teacher training in this area is essential for successful implementation. Teaching foreign languages through art technology is a child-centered, innovative, and effective approach for preschool education. It helps children not only to learn words, but also to feel and experience language. Art technology allows for authentic, joyful, and culturally rich learning.

Educators should be encouraged to:

Combine traditional arts with modern technology,

Use songs, games, and visual tools daily,

Create environments where language learning is exploratory and creative.

Future research could focus on quantitative impacts (e.g., vocabulary test results) and long-term retention in children exposed to art-based language instruction.

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