The Role of Psycholinguistics in School Methodology

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Abstract

This article examines psycholinguistics in school teaching methods, using the English language as an example, the concept of "psycholinguistics" as a theory of speech activity. The author focuses on the goals and objectives of early teaching of foreign languages on the basis of exercises and games based on the school methods of teaching psycholinguistics.

Keywords: psycholinguistics, English language, teaching, school, methodology, theory and practice, exercises and games.

The term "psycholinguistics" was first used by the American researcher N. Pronko in a large article entitled "Language and Psycholinguistics," which was published in the USA in 1946. But this term came into scientific use only in 1953 at an interuniversity research seminar in Bloomington (Indiana, USA), organized by famous American psychologists J. Carroll and Charles Osgood, as well as linguist and ethnographer Thomas Sibeok. A year later, a collective monograph under this title was published in the United States, and the term "psycholinguistics", having received a certain content, began to designate a new scientific theory that was emerging. The term "psycholinguistics" is more than apt. It is formed according to a model that is productive for scientific language, reflecting the desire of science for integration and emphasizing the complexity of this discipline. The term "psycholinguistics" consists of two parts: psycho – a common part with the word psychology and linguistics [1].

The increasing need for knowledge of the English language poses the question of selecting methods for teaching children of different ages. It is extremely important to select methods of work in accordance with the age characteristics of the child and his level of knowledge. When selecting exercises, it is also necessary to have knowledge of the psychological patterns on the basis of which the process of perception and reproduction of English speech is carried out [3]. The problem of the described patterns is solved by the science of psycholinguistics.

This science helps answer two questions that relate to teaching a foreign language. Firstly, it becomes known that for free speech activity a student needs to master lexical, grammatical and phonetic material together with the acquisition of special communication skills [2]. That is, not only theoretical training is required, but also activities aimed at developing the mechanisms of verbal communication. In this case, methods such as writing, speaking, reading and listening can help. With the help of reading and listening, the child develops skills in recognizing language material, and when writing and speaking, he learns to quickly formulate thoughts in English [3]. Secondly, psycholinguistics allows you to choose an individual approach to students based on the child's cognitive style.

Psycholinguistics identifies the following main characteristics of cognitive style, which affect the method, speed and quality of assimilation of new material:

✓ Field dependence/field independence. Field dependence is characterized by high sociability and dependence on the group. In this case, it is advisable to involve the child in group exercises, where he can receive approval from the group in case of success and support in case of failure. A primary school English textbook provides a familiarization exercise in which a student interacts with a group to practice familiarization skills in a foreign language. This task is best suited for children with pronounced field dependence of character. Field independence is characterized by high personal autonomy, low level of interest in other people, and alienation. It is advisable for children of this type to be given tasks for individual work. For example, a suitable task would be independent work with a textbook. Tasks like: rewrite words, find definitions of objects in a textbook, fill in the blanks.
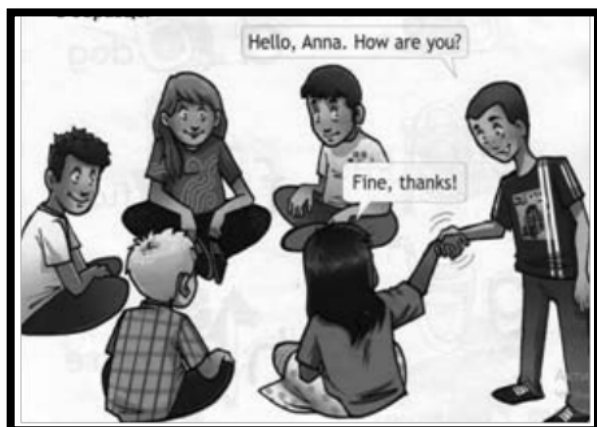
Pic. 1. Exercise: Introductions
*[Greet to your classmates as shown*
in the example]

✓ Rigidity/flexibility of cognitive control. A child with rigid cognitive control has difficulty concentrating on activities when exposed to constant interference. For example, with noise or other diverse influences on the senses, the child is more often distracted from the main activity. Children with flexible cognitive control easily assimilate information regardless of the different effects on the senses [4]. For a student with rigid cognitive control, tasks to train concentration will be useful. For example, searching for an extra item among others based on a given criterion.
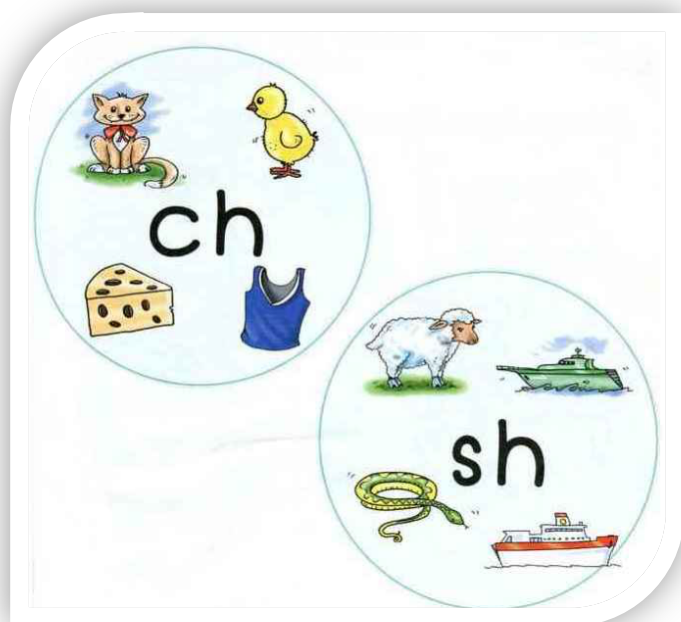
Pic.2. Exercise: searching for an
object [which pictures are
superfluous]

✓ Impulsivity/reflexivity. Students of the impulsive type react quickly to incoming questions and also quickly give answers. Working in question-answer mode in printed or audio format is suitable for them, depending on their style of perceiving information. With a reflective cognitive

style, it is recommended to give tasks where you need to analyze and compare several data and give a final answer. An example of such tasks is listening, in which, in a test form, the student needs to compare several answer options based on the text he listened to. Tasks on comparing foreign words with their characteristics or choosing the correct option among the proposed list of words would also be appropriate.
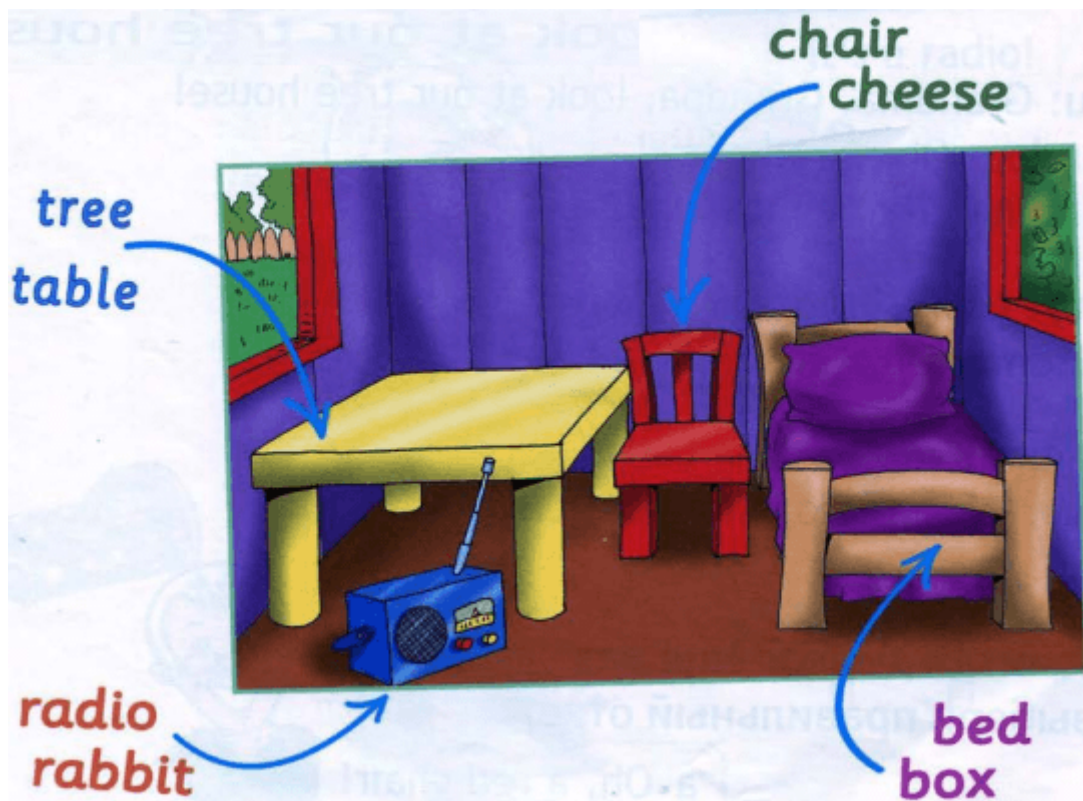

Pic. 3. Exercise: correct choice [look at the picture and choose the correct answer]

✓ It is necessary to take into account the style of information perception: auditory, visual or kinesthetic. Since determining the perception style of each student can cause difficulties for the teacher, it is recommended to use different types of providing and consolidating information. It is advisable to use tables and pictures, accompanying them with your own explanations, and then encourage students to repeat what they heard or saw earlier [5]. In exercises aimed at the auditory type of perception, you are asked to listen to or repeat the text.

Pic. 4. Exercises for auditory perception [Listen and repeat the words after the teacher]

In exercises aimed at the visual type of perception, it is suggested to read or write text, look at a picture or redraw it. It is best to use exercises aimed at several types of perception at once.
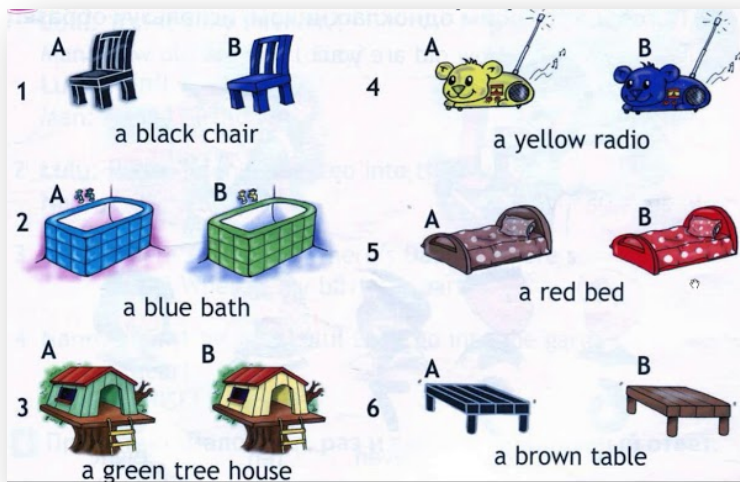
Pic. 5. Visual perception exercises (read the phrase and match the correct colors to the objects)
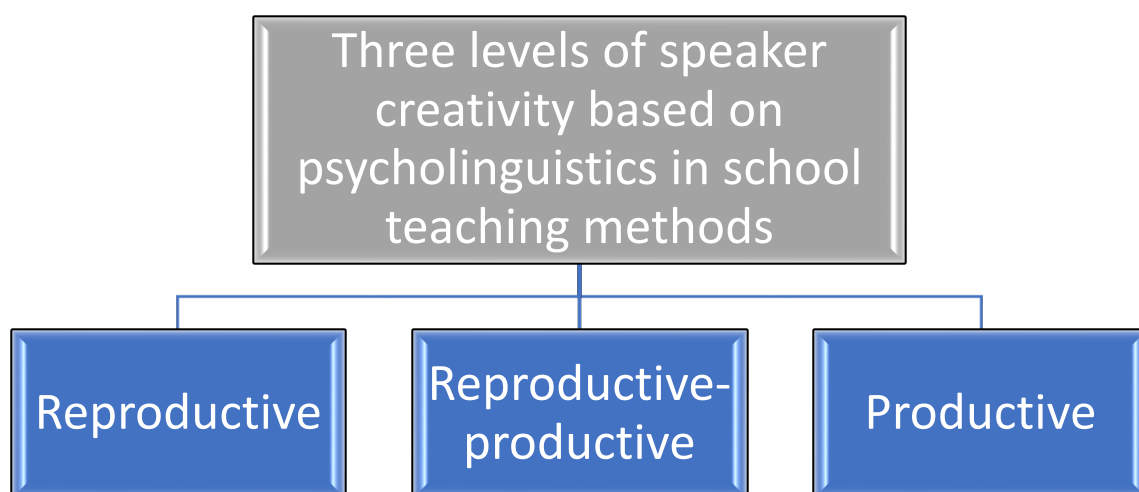
When teaching English, it is necessary to develop four main types of speech activity, which are distinguished in psycholinguistics in school teaching methods: listening (listening), speaking, reading and writing [4]. Oral speech includes speaking and listening, and written speech includes reading and writing. Secondary types of speech activity include translation. Based on this, it is necessary to select exercises for the development of each type of speech activity. This can be done not only by doing exercises from the textbook, but also through play activities.

In order for students to master a new language, it is necessary to gradually increase the speaker's level of creativity. However, it is necessary to rely on the student's level of knowledge. There are three levels of speaker creativity based on psycholinguistics in school teaching methods:

The first level is reproductive: a person repeats words or sentences he hears. At this stage, there is usually preparation for reading or listening to a text in English. The teacher needs to give about ten new words and invite them to write them down in the dictionary, and then repeat them out loud.

The second level is reproductive-productive: in order to convey a thought, it is necessary to use ready-made blocks (words or phrases). Exercises for composing sentences from ready-made words or phrases are suitable here. For example, you can offer an exercise to describe an object using sentences from the text you read.

The third level is productive: it is characterized by the fact that the speaker formulates phrases independently and creatively constructs a statement. An example of exercises at this level is independent compilation of a text about something. At the initial stages, it is suggested to compose a story of several sentences describing yourself or your family. You can also suggest composing a short dialogue based on the example.

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                    │   Three levels of speaker   │
                    │     creativity based on     │
                    │ psycholinguistics in school │
                    │      teaching methods       │
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To summarize, it is worth noting the significant contribution of psycholinguistics to the learning process using the example of the English language, which is manifested in aspects of teaching methodology at school. This science makes it possible to identify what training should be aimed at and in what ways it should be carried out, based on the course of the individual's speech and cognitive processes. It is necessary to note the high effectiveness of exercises carried out in a game form. The effectiveness of such work is due to the removal of students' internal barriers, the emergence of positive emotions, which increases interest in learning the language, the degree of memorization of new information and the level of trust in the teacher and the learning process as a whole. The prospect for further scientific activity is the search for new modern methods of teaching foreign languages to children of different ages based on psycholinguistics in school teaching methods.

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