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TEACHING LANGUAGE THROUGH IMMERSION: BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

Annotation. *This article explores the concept of language immersion as a method of second language acquisition. It reviews theoretical frameworks like Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which support the effectiveness of immersion. Additionally, it discusses the cognitive benefits, particularly neuroplasticity, associated with immersion learning. The article also highlights the motivational factors that immersion environments provide to ESL learners. The research methodology compares traditional classroom methods to immersion techniques, illustrating how immersion can lead to quicker and more natural language acquisition. The article concludes by acknowledging the challenges of language barriers and anxiety but emphasizes the importance of support systems to optimize learning outcomes.*

Key words: *language immersion, second language acquisition, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Krashen's input hypothesis, motivation, ESL (English as a Second Language), listening comprehension, speaking skills, cultural understanding, real-world context*

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TILNI IMMERSIYA ORQALI O‘RGATISH: AFZALLIK VA KAMCHILIKLARI

Annotatsiya. *Ushbu maqola tilni immersiya orqali o‘rganishning ikkinchi tilni o‘rganish usuli sifatida konsepsiyasini ilgari suradi. U Vigotskiyning sotsiokultural nazariyasi va Krashenning Input gipotezasi kabi nazariy asoslarni ko‘rib chiqadi, bu immersiyaning samaradorligini qo‘llab-quvvatlaydi. Bundan tashqari, maqolada immersiya orqali til o‘rganish bilan bog‘liq kognitiv foydalar, xususan, neyroplastiklik muhokama qilinadi. Maqola, shuningdek, immersiya muhitlarining til o‘rganuvchi o‘quvchilariga motivatsion ta’sirlarini ta’kidlaydi. Tadqiqot metodologiyasi an’anaviy sinf usullarini immersiya texnikalari bilan taqqoslaydi va immersiyaning qanday qilib tezroq va tabiiy ravishda til o‘rganishga olib kelishini ko‘rsatadi. Maqola til to‘siqlari va tashvishlarning qiyinchiliklarini tan olib, o‘quv natijalarini optimallashtirish uchun yordam tizimlarining ahamiyatini ta’kidlaydi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *til immersiyasi, ikkinchi tilni o‘rganish, Vigotskiyning sotsiokultural nazariyasi, Krashenning Input gipotezasi, motivatsiya, ESL (Ingliz Tili Ikkinchi Til Sifatida), tinglab tushunish, nutq ko‘nikmalari, madaniy tushuncha, real hayotiy kontekst.*

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ПРЕПОДАВАНИЕ ЯЗЫКА ЧЕРЕЗ ПОГРУЖЕНИЕ: ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВА И ПРОБЛЕМЫ

Аннотация. *В этой статье рассматривается концепция погружения в язык как метод приобретения второго языка. Анализируются теоретические основы, такие как социокультурная теория Выготского и гипотеза ввода Крашена, которые поддерживают эффективность погружения. Также обсуждаются когнитивные преимущества, в частности нейропластичность, связанные с обучением в условиях погружения. В статье также подчеркиваются мотивационные факторы, которые создают среды погружения для изучающих английский как второй язык. Методология исследования сравнивает традиционные методы обучения с методами погружения, показывая, как погружение способствует более быстрому и естественному усвоению языка. В статье обсуждаются трудности, связанные с языковыми барьерами и проблемы, но подчеркива-ется важность вспомогательных систем для оптимизации результатов обучения.*

Ключевые слова: *языковое погружение, приобретение второго языка, социокультурная теория Выготского, гипотеза ввода Крашена, мотивация, ESL (Английский как Второй Язык), понимание на слух, навыки речи, культурное понимание, реальный контекст*

Introduction. While learning any new language the most common suggestion learners constantly might get is moving and living in the country where the target language is spoken as it gives greater chance to acquire that language. However, it is not always easy to change the living place. So, ***if you cannot actually be in a country where the language is spoken, you should make your learning environment as authentic as possible*** **[FluentU].** This is a simple concept on which new approach – teaching language through immersion based and this is an approach which has already been proved for its effectiveness.

Language learning through immersion goes beyond traditional classroom learning by making learners immerse themselves into their target language in the environment which is on purpose designed to let students naturally absorb and practice the language in the way they learned their native language. Through an immersive environment second language acquisition is completed quickly and naturally as learners can gain transformative experience they would naturally encounter if they were living in the target region full-time.

Literature review. Language learning through immersion is based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the vital role of social interaction and cultural context in language acquisition [Vygotsky, 1978]. Through immersion, language learners feel encouragement to acquire language by practicing meaningful interactions and tasks. In its turn, this social interaction gives chance for them to learn grammar and vocabulary through real-world contexts leading to deeper understanding.

Furthermore, Krashen's Input Hypothesis [1982] also claims the effectiveness of immersion by mentioning the benefits of students being exposed to comprehensible input beyond their current level of language proficiency. Language acquisition can be accelerated when learners are provided an abundance of comprehensible input making them develop language skills through interaction, exposure and real-life use.

Research methodology. Language acquisition is widely considered as much more complicated process as it includes variety of elements of language like vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation alongside with the comprehension of four basic language skills. Throughout decades myriad number of methods and techniques have been offered and tried in order to see their effectiveness to ease the difficulties of this operation. In traditional classroom settings these elements of target languages are taught through structures and systems using formal instructions. More focus is put on teaching grammar and vocabulary by translating texts, sentences and learning them by heart without mindful understanding in these classrooms. The learners are given explanations of grammar rules profoundly and following to the provided syllabus the language elements are introduced progressively to make language learners understand them better from simpler to more complex language units. The lessons usually enable students comprehend written texts and produce their own piece of writing based on the gained vocabulary and grammar knowledge. However, majority of students might have problems with their speaking and listening skills since they do not have enough chances to practice with these skills with traditional methods.

Various researchers have been trying to confirm the effectiveness of traditional language learning. For instance, an analysis of the meta research on instructed second language acquisition found that instruction ranks as one of the powerful simulators for learning [Norris and Ortega, 2000]. According to the researchers' beliefs, language proficiency of learners can be enhanced to a greater level with the help of explicit teaching that includes the rules of grammar and vocabulary.

However, according to Krashen's [1982] proposal language acquisition and learning are different processes. Being a conscious knowledge of the language learning is generally obtained through formal instructions and structures. Acquisition, on the other hand, is seen as unconscious process which is more similar to the way that children naturally acquire their first languages. In the second language learning, acquisition plays a great role as it leads to the enhanced fluency and communicative competence in the target language. Unlike methods based on formal instructions, immersion learning can present greater scale of opportunities for language learners as they have chances to undergo the most authentic learning by immersing themselves into their target languages, finding themselves communicating with native speakers, being surrounded with the atmosphere where the language is commonly utilized.

In order to prove the effectiveness of immersion model in second language learning a good number of researches have been conducted by well-known educators. For example, learners in language programs have been found to do better than non-immersion learners in a number of aspects of language proficiency, with listening comprehension and speaking skills being at the top [Genesee, 1987].

These researches all prompt that when the language is taught through immersion, it is more likely for learners to reach an intended language proficiency level easier in an immersive environment, in a holistic way that involves both formal and informal education since they become fully engaged in this language learning experience as active learners who can understand the nature of the language deeply with its all nuances.

Discussion. Teaching language through immersion have already become one of the main arguing topics among educators as it can offer myriad number of benefits to language learners. However, this process still possesses a number of limitations and challenges that must be studied further to find some

feasible solutions. First of all, counting the advantages of learning languages through immersion the first thing that should be mentioned is its resemblance to natural process of children acquiring their first language which enables language learners to gain enough confidence in their language proficiency as they can enhance their skills through authentic materials with proper intonation and pronunciation. This experience will further result in significant improvement of both listening and speaking skills with proper accents, various speech speeds and slangs. Moreover, throughout real-world contexts, students get greater chances to develop cultural understanding, as well as, culture related language nuances which will minimize the fear of making mistakes that most language learners cannot overcome. Finally, language immersion can be highly effective with enhanced vocabulary retention through real-life situations where students can develop faster fluency and become able to internalize language systems and rules consciously rather than doing chunks of grammar or vocabulary exercises without proper understanding. Coming to the challenges of teaching language through immersion the first most noticeable thing might be students' frustration and anxiety that happen mostly in the early stages of learning. Without proper support systems and guidance of teachers, some students may struggle to understand how immersion works and feel hesitated about fully participating in language learning settings [Cummins. 2000]. Furthermore, continuous exposure to the language may sometimes lead to burn, especially if language learners feel that their progress is too slow or they are not making expected breakthroughs. In order to overcome these limitations and challenges most researchers suggest a balanced approach, combining informal exposure with structured learning and adequate support to address these challenges. Moreover, it is recommended to supplement inversion with scaffolding techniques, such as guided and informed language learning process, involvement of peer support and assessment and immediate targeted feedback.

Conclusion. All in all, as literature review and discussion part state, teaching language through immersion can be highly effective as it offers its students wide range of opportunities that majority of traditional teaching methods cannot match. This approach promotes not only enhanced listening and speaking skills by providing natural atmosphere that mimics the way of acquiring first languages but also fosters cultural understanding with all language nuances and diverse speech patterns that will ultimately lead to increased motivation and confidence of learners in their language proficiency. However, at the very beginning of this language learning process students might feel confused and a bit frustrated, yet this can be solved with implementation of scaffolding techniques and introducing clear objectives and milestones with proper guidance and instructions. While challenges such as initial language barriers and anxiety may arise, the use of scaffolding techniques can ensure that learners have the necessary support to thrive in an immersive setting. Overall, immersion can be felt as transformative which reveals the true nature of any target language and ultimately result in greater fluency, deeper cultural awareness, and improved communication skills, making it an invaluable tool in second language learning.

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THE ROLE OF GAMIFICATION IN ENHANCING EFL LEARNING OUTCOMES: AN EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH

Annotation. *This article investigates the application of the gamification method in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom at tertiary level. It aims to assess how game-based strategies influence students' motivation, engagement, and academic performance. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, an experimental study was conducted at Uzbekistan State World Languages University involving*