The article illuminates the problems of preschool education, particularly foreign language teaching. The author investigates the circumstances and reasons of the problems and, accordingly, she puts forward some practical suggestions about solving them and overcoming the obstacles.

Meanwhile, as preparing competent and intelligent future citizens must also be on the scope of attention of our pedagogues, the article underlines the need of active learning instructional strategies to be used in various educational institutions. The author suggests starting it from the early age possible and plants the rewarding seeds of education from the preschool age.

A preschool English course supposes a distinctly organized procedure, which should meet the educational, cultural and practical aims of teaching at the same time. The teachers should help children to reveal their abilities, create an atmosphere of mutual understanding involving them in the process of language learning. Only by establishing pedagogical proper conditions teachers can guarantee success of the preschool English course. Carefully designed and planned instructional strategies will surely help the learners to achieve a wild range of powerful learning outcomes. Hence, the article suggests some approaches to stimulate students’ active engagement and enhance learning.

**KEYWORDS:**
Preschool age; Engagement; Learning to learn; active learning.

“It is not your business to teach him the various sciences but to give him a taste for them and methods of learning them when this taste is more mature. This is assuredly a fundamental principle of all good education.” *(Rousseau, J.J. 1762)*
In the huge classroom of life where the flow of information is unimaginably vast and measured already in zeta bytes, teachers should be facilitators, consultants and moderators in the everlasting process of education. We should start from the early age possible and concentrate on “learning to learn” as one of the main competences of the 21st century learner. We should pay attention to the fact that all learning is self-directed and that’s particularly true for life-long learning. As teachers we should help learners to design their own lives around two core principles: increasing diversity and ongoing discovery. Day by day, year by year the whimsical sense of dreaming about the future should become aspiration for the children, who actively move towards them. To reach the goals set the teachers should constantly focus the learners’ attention on three guiding principles: engagement, purpose and self-worth. Helping students work on these qualities will ultimately increase their academic motivation, a clear predictor of academic achievement.

LEARNERS’ ASPIRATIONAL ZONE
It is incredibly crucial for the learners to be sure that the teachers and the school care about them, that their presence and opinion matters. Everyone needs to feel worthy to get engaged in an activity or learning process. Engagement helps learners to have a spirit of adventure; they need to be willing to risk something and succeed. Also, when children are engaged, teachers can try to instill a sense of curiosity and creativity in them. All children require periodic engagement and direct reinforcement for effort. Not all disciplines are immediately fascinating. Not all questions have quick and clear answers.

Gradually the learners will find purpose in learning and it will push them to improvement. All these three qualities can be easily developed if the teachers build trust with students and care about them. Their wise management of reinforces can make the difference between student apathy and student enthusiasm.

We live in a society which is continually evolving and rapidly transforming, and it has become generally accepted that schooling should change to satisfy the needs of the progressing world. The expectations from traditional approaches are not appropriate and fruitful any more. We are not the same, the new generation is different. Some methods, even if they are good enough to practice, they just don't serve their purpose any longer. In order to create a better educational system, we must revisit the purpose of education. We are to consider how education can provide individuals with the tools to better themselves, to create a more egalitarian society, and thus it will help us to prepare the citizens of tomorrow for the inevitable challenges they are likely to meet.
The education of the future has to produce students able to work independently and also in a team environment. They must be problem solvers and critical thinkers. They must know how to go about learning something new. In order to memorize majority of the obtained information the educators must teach students the skills to acquire new knowledge on their own and use it to come up with novel solutions to problems. This does not mean that content is not important or should not be taught. Students need to learn content from a wide variety of curriculum areas for many reasons. They need to have a shared understanding and background.

If we could change a typical course, where all we do is lecturing, to something more productive (we might as well just hand out our notes), and let the students try something, see how it works, reflect on how to do it differently, then try it again and again, until it works better. The only way a skill is developed—skiing, cooking, writing, thinking critically, or solving thermodynamics problems—is practice. Fried sums this idea up: “The example we set as passionate adults allows us to connect to young people's minds and spirits that can have a lasting positive impact on their lives. At the same time the teacher is the guardian for learning in the classroom environment. If the teacher goes in unprepared, unwilling to share, unfocussed on the process of developing a context that will encourage and stimulate an interest and a thirst for further knowledge then that teaching is shirking the responsibility of being a teacher. Teaching is far more than simply transferring information, it is the engaging of minds to seek out answers” /Fried 1995: 45-67/.

Learning is essentially a discovery process. We are all natural learners. As babies, we discover things by ourselves before we can be told. Even when we
understand enough to be told, we still need to try things out for ourselves. The understanding cycle – expectation- failure - explanation - reminding - generalization - is a natural one. No one teaches it to us. We are not taught to have goals, nor to attempt to develop plans to achieve those goals by adapting old plans from similar situations. We need not to be taught this because the process is so basic to what comprises intelligence. Learning is a natural act. Accordingly, we need to transform all training and education so that it looks, feels, and is like doing (Bransford, Brown, Cocking 2000:12-13).

The role of the teacher is to be an exposer of knowledge. Effective teaching entails trying things out, formulating hypotheses and testing them. But, a student cannot do this in a vacuum or in an isolated atmosphere. The teacher should be there to guide them to the right experiences. The teacher should also be there to answer a student's questions, or at least, to listen to his questions and perhaps suggest ways that he could discover the answer himself. Curiosity comes from trying things out, from failing on occasion, from explaining why, and from trying again (Lochhead, Whimbey 1987: 64-73).

A good teacher should have as his goal exposing his student to situations that the student will become curious enough to take his learning into his own hands. In other words, the role of the teacher in a goal-based scenario is to open up interesting problems and provide tools for solving them when asked by the student to do so. The accomplishment of the goal should be its own reward. The curriculum must be oriented towards, and satisfied with, the idea that a student will learn what they need to in order to accomplish goals. Hopefully they will have become curious and acquired both oddball cases and routine micro-scripts along the way.
It is one of the leading principles because conscious learning plays an important role in language acquisition, enlarges intellectual capacities of learners, and helps to understand new concepts and express new ideas in the target language. This principle also implies comprehension of linguistic phenomena by the learner through the medium of vernacular and the arrangement in sentence patterns graded in difficulties with the emphasis on some essential points. The principle of conscious approach ensures purposeful perception and comprehension of the material, its creative absorption, and retrieval of information from the learner with a certain degree of individuality. The teacher who brings a sense of personal involvement to the classroom, who wants to share the knowledge with the members of the class, who is prepared to show that he/she is also a part of the learning cycle, will be setting up a relationship which will encourage a good learning environment. Wolk highlights this by emphasizing that teachers ‘who are passionate about learning ... create an infectious classroom environment’. The effective environment will allow students the time to learn. This is something that is mentioned frequently in the literature. He emphasizes that ‘good learning needs time and patience’ and argues that students need time ‘to own their learning’/Wolk 2001: 34-36/.

The next step is to help the students to assimilate and accommodate the new information. This can be done by asking the right question at the right time and provoking the students to dig more deeply into the problem at hand. There may be some cases when a more radical approach is needed to change students’ prior inadequate beliefs: they need to realize that they do not work for solving the problem, and be led through constructing a scientifically more correct model. But the conceptual change should be done very carefully, without hurting the students’ inner world and their desire to learn.
Every child is talented. The main task of parents and teachers is to find the talent and create conditions for its proper development. If earlier the school
contributed to expose the background talent of the child, now the school is interested only in "the stuff" of children’s information. The more information the student possesses, the more chances he has to become an excellent student at school. Unfortunately, the life shows that the excellent student of school is not always an excellent person in life. The education system is arranged so that it recognizes only one ability - to absorb the information exclusively from all the disciplines. The spirit of the research and the creative flight of the thought are practically missing in the public-school education. And if your child is inquisitive, he has a creative nature, and does not sink in “dry” information, he can feel himself more stupid than intelligent at school /Nelson K. 1973, 5-17/. The talent of this child will be ignored; even if the school curricula and teaching methods are brilliantly organized, they can damage the child’s individuality, for the whole system of schools is not based on identifying the characteristics of each student. Instead of recognizing the unique talent of the child, all children in school are consumed to the same standard of the mental development. Very gifted and talented children leave school with low marks, and feel themselves incapable. If the parents are very supportive to the school evaluation system, the children are not lucky twice. The children, who leave school with a sense of their own ineptitude, get a huge obstacle in the way of further development.
Hence, it is important for parents and educators to discover and develop the natural abilities of the child in early childhood. The problem is that the individual approach in public schools is missing. Every child is born with an inquisitive mind and has a thirst for knowledge. May the boredom in school and the lack of luster in the child’s eyes become a signal for parents that the school doesn’t meet his needs?

References:


