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**Liudmyla GUSAK**

*Doctor of Pedagogic Sciences, Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages for the Humanities, Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University, 13 Voli Ave, Lutsk, Ukraine, 43025*

**ORCID:** 0000-0001-7570-2574

**Kateryna HONCHAR**

*Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages for the Humanities, Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University, 13 Voli Ave, Lutsk, Ukraine, 43025*

**ORCID:** 0000-0003-3746-7125

**Tetiana VOROBIOVA**

*Candidate of Pedagogic Sciences, Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages for the Humanities, Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University, 13 Voli Ave, Lutsk, Ukraine, 43025*

**ORCID:** 0000-0003-2051-6787

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## LINGUODIDACTIC FRAMEWORK OF ASSOCIATIVE TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO STUDENTS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

**The purpose** of the article is to analyze linguodidactic peculiarities of associative teaching foreign languages to students of primary education. **Methods of the research.** The following theoretical methods were used to solve the tasks formulated in the article: the method of the analysis, structural and functional method, systematization, generalization. **The result of the research.** In the content of associative teaching foreign languages to students of primary education we can emphasize the ability to optimize learning foreign languages by students of primary education. A few basic concepts of teaching foreign languages theory, which are important for associative learning and teaching foreign languages to students of primary education, are considered in the article. Speaking of modern teaching technologies at primary school, which are focused on the psychological characteristics of young learners and activation of their reserves, we cannot but mention the intensive methods of teaching, which form the core of associative learning strategy. The purpose of intensive associative learning is to assimilate maximum amount of educational material in a minimum period of studies.

Associative learning strategy in its various aspects is realized in view of the individual characteristics of every pupil and taking into account the individual psychological differences in mastering a foreign language. Individual style of associative learning of a foreign language is caused by the presence of certain capabilities and skills. Associative learning strategy provides such a possibility to actualize all kinds of learner's individual qualities in harmony. We study native language via life experience without any effort, since a child stays in an environment of native language from his very birth, which contributes to the speedy and effective absorption of a language. In accordance with the principles of associative learning a child must be taught a foreign language in the same way in which he assimilated the native language (Hunko, 2010).

**Conclusions.** Having analyzed the linguodidactic peculiarities of associative teaching foreign languages to students of primary education we came to conclusion that associative learning strategy in general is focused on modern innovative technologies of training. It meets new goals and tasks of teaching foreign languages at primary school observing the age and individual characteristics of young learners and their needs, among which the basic ones are: the need to play games (through game-playing activity the content of educational material is better absorbed), the need to move, the need for external impressions, cognitive needs.

**Key words:** associative teaching, foreign languages, personal qualities, intensive training strategy, the method of graphic associations, rhythmization, students, primary education.

**Людмила ГУСАК**

доктор педагогічних наук, професор кафедри іноземних мов гуманітарних спеціальностей, Волинський національний університет імені Лесі Українки, просп. Волі, 13, м. Луцьк, Волинська область, Україна, 43025  
**ORCID:** 0000-0001-7570-2574

**Катерина ГОНЧАР**

кандидат філологічних наук, доцент кафедри іноземних мов гуманітарних спеціальностей, Волинський національний університет імені Лесі Українки, просп. Волі, 13, м. Луцьк, Волинська область, Україна, 43025  
**ORCID:** 0000-0003-3746-7125

**Тетяна ВОРОБІЙОВА**

кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент кафедри іноземних мов гуманітарних спеціальностей, Волинський національний університет імені Лесі Українки, просп. Волі, 13, м. Луцьк, Волинська область, Україна, 43025  
**ORCID:** 0000-0003-2051-6787

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## ЛІНГВОДИДАКТИЧНІ ОСНОВИ АСОЦІАТИВНОГО НАВЧАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЗДОБУВАЧІВ ПОЧАТКОВОЇ ОСВІТИ

**Мета статті** – проаналізувати лінгводидактичні особливості асоціативного навчання іноземних мов здобувачів початкової освіти. **Методи дослідження.** Для розв'язання сформульованих у статті завдань використано такі теоретичні методи: метод аналізу, структурно-функціональний метод, систематизація, узагальнення. **Результати дослідження.** У змісті асоціативного навчання іноземних мов здобувачів початкової освіти можна виділити можливість оптимізації вивчення іноземних мов у початковій школі. У статті розглянуто декілька основних понять теорії навчання іноземних мов, які є важливими для асоціативного навчання та викладання іноземних мов здобувачам початкової освіти. Говорячи про сучасні технології навчання в початковій школі, які орієнтовані на психологічні особливості молодших школярів та активізацію їхніх резервів, не можна не згадати про інтенсивні методи навчання, які складають ядро стратегії асоціативного навчання. Метою інтенсивного асоціативного навчання є засвоєння максимального обсягу навчального матеріалу за мінімальний період навчання.

Асоціативна стратегія навчання в різних її аспектах реалізується з огляду на індивідуальні особливості кожного учня та з урахуванням індивідуально-психологічних відмінностей в оволодінні іноземною мовою. Індивідуальний стиль асоціативного навчання іноземної мови зумовлений наявністю певних здібностей та навичок. Асоціативна стратегія навчання надає таку можливість для гармонійної актуалізації всіх видів індивідуальних якостей здобувача освіти. Ми вивчаємо рідну мову через життєвий досвід без будь-яких зусиль, оскільки дитина з самого народження перебуває в середовищі рідної мови, що сприяє швидкому та ефективному засвоєнню мови. Відповідно до принципів асоціативного навчання дитину потрібно навчати іноземної мови так само, як вона засвоювала рідну мову (Нипко, 2010).

**Висновки.** Проаналізувавши лінгводидактичні особливості асоціативного навчання іноземних мов здобувачів початкової освіти, ми дійшли висновку, що стратегія асоціативного навчання в цілому орієнтована на сучасні інноваційні технології навчання. Вона відповідає новим цілям і завданням навчання іноземних мов у початковій школі з урахуванням вікових та індивідуальних особливостей молодших школярів та їхніх потреб, серед яких основними є: потреба в іграх (через ігрову діяльність краще засвоюється зміст навчального матеріалу), потреба в русі, потреба в зовнішніх враженнях та когнітивні потреби.

**Ключові слова:** асоціативне навчання, іноземні мови, особистісні якості, стратегія інтенсивного навчання, метод графічних асоціацій, ритмізація, здобувач початкової освіти.

**Introduction.** Primary school age is considered to be sensitive for learning a foreign language. Psycholinguistic developments indicate that children of this age are characterized by flexibility of the brain, the need for new knowledge, innate language capacity, the ability to imitate and copy/replicate. It all together creates favorable conditions for successful

learning of a foreign language at primary school. In this regard, we are mostly interested in linguodidactic developments that could underpin associative learning of foreign languages. Our task is to describe and substantiate the mechanisms of associative strategy of learning and teaching a foreign language from the conceptual positions of linguodidactic science.

The issues of successful foreign language learning have been studied by many scientists from different fields of knowledge. Let us consider a few basic concepts of teaching foreign languages theory, which are important for associative learning and teaching foreign languages to young learners.

Scientists have singled out two main types of foreign language acquisition – rational-logical (people, who belong to this type, master a foreign language in receptive or passive way – listen and read or perceive and understand foreign language through theoretical comprehension, grammatical analysis of language features) and intuitive-sensitive (this type of people are inclined to productive or active mastery of a foreign language only via practical language communicative activities, and think that any language laws and rules can be assimilated in the process of communicative activity).

Associative teaching of foreign languages to primary school pupils concerns mainly the second type of foreign language acquisition, which can be also called practical. A practical way of learning a foreign language is characterized by subconscious, intuitive way of learning. Under such conditions, a foreign language is acquired without mediation of native language and a pupil learns to think in a foreign language directly, spontaneously.

Personality of communicative type demonstrates a high level of auditory perception, auditory memory, high-speed processing of updating knowledge and new information. Personality of non-communicative type demonstrates successful mastery of a foreign language by an involuntary memorization, supported by visual verbal reinforcement material. Associative teaching is focused simultaneously on both types of mastering a foreign language, combining verbal and non-verbal means of communication.

Scientists-methodologists emphasize that both spontaneous and voluntary, conscious and unconscious characteristics are of particular importance for teaching a foreign language. We can learn a foreign language involuntary when we study it in a country whose language we study, practicing it with native speakers or using the so-called method of «governess» to master commonly-used lexis. When studying foreign languages at educational institutions we place importance on involuntary and arbitrary assimilation of foreign language material, since it is performed in accordance with the relevant programs, designated number of hours, homework assignments and so on.

As a matter of fact, spontaneous does not mean unconscious. In view of these psychological characteristics, when studying a foreign language we may move from unconscious practice in oral speech to an arbitrary system of conscious acquisition of a foreign language, from the arbitrary and deliberate assimilation of language rules to spontaneous and automatic speaking. Associative learning strategy in teaching foreign languages to pupils of primary school is implemented according to the following theoretical considerations: from involuntary and unconscious via spontaneously conscious to an arbitrary conscious learning. This is the way of mastering a foreign language, which pupil passes at a primary school from the first to the fourth grade and it makes him well-equipped to proceed successfully in studying a foreign language in senior forms of school.

Associative learning strategy in its various aspects is realized in view of the individual characteristics of every pupil and taking into account the individual psychological differences in mastering a foreign language. Individual style of associative learning of a foreign language is caused by the presence of certain capabilities and skills. In the scientific literature we can come across different approaches to the definition of «skills», however, we concentrate our attention on the two major among them: active learning approach and functional-psychological approach.

The ability to study is considered to be a general ability to assimilate new knowledge and methods of activities (Losova O., 2010). Depending on the method of knowledge acquisition and the characteristics of neurophysiological mechanisms scholars highlight two types of teachability: explicit teachability (voluntary, conscious training) and implicit teachability (spontaneous learning) (Butzkamm, W. Butzkamm, J., 1999).

The concept of psycholinguistic abilities to master a foreign language implies two aspects and we should certainly differentiate between them: language capability and the ability to master the language (Chomsky, N., 1980). Language capability (linguistic competence by Chomsky) is the ability to master the first / native language. The ability to master a language is the ability to learn non-native / foreign language.

Scholars distinguish the following two types of abilities in foreign language acquisition context: communicative-linguistic and cognitive-linguistic.

The first type of abilities is connected with foreign language communicative skills and implies productive command of the language, for example, speaking, understanding, reading and writing. Communicative-linguistic type is characterized by communicability, mobility, impulsiveness in making decisions and effective communicative behavior.

The non-verbal components of intellectual abilities prevail over the verbal-logical, and abilities of auditory perception which dominate over visual ones (Blavatska, I. Ye., 2008). Children with this type of foreign language capabilities study easily and naturally according to the methodology of associative learning strategy.

Cognitive-linguistic abilities as individual psycho-physiological characteristics of a person ensure quick formation of skills in mastering the language systems (vocabulary, phonetics, grammar) (Bidiuk, I. V., 2008). Cognitive-linguistic type is characterized by greater spontaneity of actions, slowed reaction to the situation of communication, poor facial expression / mimics and gestures. In the cognitive sphere there is a dominance of verbal-logical components over figurative and the children are predominantly visual memory type. In this case children feel uncomfortable in verbal-motor activities.

Associative learning is extremely effective for the schoolchildren with a mixed type of abilities.

The objective of this article is to analyze linguodidactic peculiarities of teaching English to students of primary education.

The result of the research and its discussion. Personal qualities play the decisive role in mastering the foreign language. The researchers emphasize the need for creating conditions that would allow schoolchildren to demonstrate in full all the qualities of human individuality in a collective, group and individual forms of work, i. e. provide individualized learning of a foreign language (Hunko, S., 2010). Associative learning strategy provides such a possibility to actualize all kinds of learner's individual qualities in harmony.

We are born with the ability to assimilate any language quickly, without any problems and retain this talent to about 11–12 years of age, states a well-known psycholinguist Naomi Chomsky (Chomsky, N., 1980). In the conditions of proper organization of associative learning children of primary school learn the language very quickly, and acquire it to the fluency level of elementary user without

knowing grammar rules. It can be explained by the peculiarities of learning activity at this age.

P. Selingson noted that learning of foreign language by junior pupils begins with mastering the «live speech» through the communicative activity of children when they have to use the assimilated words to satisfy their needs and goals of communication (Selingson, P., 1997).

We study native language via life experience without any effort, since a child stays in an environment of native language from his very birth, which contributes to the speedy and effective absorption of a language. In accordance with the principles of associative learning a child must be taught a foreign language in the same way in which he assimilated the native language (Husak, P., 2016). Some researchers (W. Butzkamm, D. Delanoff, D. Kirsch, L. Chernovatii) also point to the similarity of processes in acquisition of both native and foreign language. Like the children, mastering native language, the junior schoolchildren, studying a foreign one, assimilate speech blocks as models for actions on the basis of imitation and subsequent memorization (Chernovatii, L., 2020).

Having taken for granted the similarity of the mechanisms in acquisition of native and foreign languages, Austrian scientists under the leadership of Peltzer-Karpf and R. Zangle defined the stages of learning foreign language and their sequence regarding young learners:

1) *the initial stage*, the stage of the receptive-reproductive and iterative learning of a foreign language – the first and second years of schooling;

2) *the reorganization stage*, the stage of segmentation and analysis of speech products, search and hypothesis testing, modeling relationships – the second, third and fourth years of schooling;

3) *the stability stage*, the stage of setting and application of the language rules or, in other words, the stage of an orderly and coherent speech – the end of the fourth year of schooling (Peltzer-Karpf, A., Zangle, R., 1998).

The analysis conducted by the researchers provided the foundations to offer a method of associative symbols as such that helps pupils to saturate their speech experience at the initial stage, to adapt children to sounding of a new language, develop their speech articulation base and accumulate a large number of lexical-semantic patterns.

At the first stage the peculiarities of perception of young learners should be taken into account.

Perception at the age of 7–8 is characterized by involuntary nature and affectivity. The schoolchildren perceive, first of all, bright details or the information with specific regard to their interests.

Emotionally colored information activates the brain activities of junior schoolchildren 1.5–2 times stronger than neutral, causing the need for a supporting emotional atmosphere in the classroom, personal selection of important learning material, using associative strategy of learning and teaching. In the process of learning foreign language this initial stage of language acquisition is a major one, because it affects the success of further language acquisition (Bachler, R., 2023).

The reorganization phase begins approximately in the second half of the second grade. In the opinion of psycholinguists it is characterized by intensive mastering of the «critical array» of lexical units, resulting in the speech synthesis. After a child has learnt a certain amount of foreign language material, gradual dynamic processes of sorting and organizing the material starts in his consciousness. All the above mentioned factors indicate to intuitive comprehension of the language system by children (Selingson, P., 1997). It implies that the second stage of learning a foreign language is a stage of mastering grammar.

The phase of grammar acquisition is followed by further improvement of children's speech habits: enriching vocabulary, correcting pronunciation. Their speech becomes more complicated. It is a stage of transition to a stable phase of learning a foreign language at which pupils apply the rules in formulating their thoughts, and speech activities are arbitrary regulated. The second and the third stages, particularly in the terms of associative learning, are adaptive to the future learning of foreign languages at secondary school level, where teaching and learning are realized according to the established traditional methods of teaching.

From teaching experience we know that the traditional teaching methodology has several shortcomings: learning is reduced to the acquisition of ready knowledge, is focused on the «average» learner concerning the tempo rate and scope of knowledge; neglects individual psychological characteristics of pupils; is characterized by solid memory loading of the pupils, and others. With regard to foreign language teaching, the traditional methodology aims to study language as a system

with a dominating role of exercises at all stages of language acquisition, while the ultimate goal of the communicative principle is formation of the communication skills. To overcome these shortcomings many educators seek for the ways to improve the effectiveness of foreign language teaching by introducing new approaches into the traditional methodology, using intensive techniques, individualization, differentiation, focusing on student-centered learning; in our case, it is associative learning.

The problem of efficient foreign language teaching has been hotly debated issue since ancient times. More than three centuries ago, a great educator Jan Amos Komenský wondered at how difficult it was to learn a foreign language in the then schools, how complicated and lengthy was the process of studying even one Latin. In his fundamental work «Great didactics» Ia. Komenský wrote: «things are essential, words only accidental; things are the body, words but the garment; things are the kernel, words the shells and husk. Both should be presented to the intellect at the same time, but particularly the things, since they are as much objects of understanding as are the languages». That is why he emphasized that the basis of primary language learning (either Latin, or any other one), should be a study of the real world. The exact naming of the principal objects of the world and human actions should become a basis for understanding the world and further development of pupils (Kravets, V., 1996).

J. A. Komenský considered images to be a basic aspect in teaching foreign languages. This is evident from his fundamental work «The world around in pictures». Reference to the experience of Jan Amos Komenský is valuable and beneficial for the analysis of preconditions of paradigmatic development of modern teaching projects.

J. A. Komenský's methodology of studying Latin is based on the principles of materialist sensationalism, which found its practical implementation in his work «The World Around in Pictures». (*Orbis sensualium pictures*), which was first published in 1658. Komenský fills his «World in Pictures» with specific content and materials accessible for senses of perception of young learners. In his book the author goes far beyond merely sensory experience. Together with images of accessible sensory experience he introduces a number of concepts that are inaccessible to the external senses, for example, integrity, justice,

humanistic ideas and so on. J. Komenský prefers symbolic images to generate this kind of concepts. The images, according to the scholar, are of particular importance in teaching foreign languages, the guiding principle of which is the principle of matching the innate inclinations or capabilities. In addition, games and visual aids are the means which can help the pupils to learn efficiently language elements from the real world. Conceptual ideas contained in the works by Komenský find their objective reflection in the studies of many contemporary scientists. However, very often the fundamental principle of matching innate inclinations, methodologically justified by Komenský, in modern interpretations is often reduced to the principle of using visual aids in teaching.

Speaking of modern teaching technologies at primary school, which are focused on the psychological characteristics of young learners and activation of their reserves, we cannot but mention the intensive methods of teaching, which form the core of associative learning strategy. The purpose of intensive associative learning is to assimilate maximum amount of educational material in a minimum period of studies.

Intensive training strategy is based on the methods of suggestopedia. Suggestopedia is a method developed by the Bulgarian psychiatrist-educator Georgii Lozanov. Suggestopedia is a specific set of learning recommendations derived from suggestology, which Lozanov describes as a «science concerned with the systematic study of the nonrational and/or nonconscious influences that human beings are constantly responding to» (Darici, N., 2022).

Efficiency of suggestopedic learning system is provided by its focus on the overall development of the individual, the simultaneous development of intellectual, emotional and motivation aspects. Modern psychologists and teachers-methodologists believe that suggestopedia methodology is highly effective method.

Modern linguists and teachers have developed a lot of educational techniques based on the approaches offered by G. Lozanov. One of such methods is the method of Schechter, based on the emotional and semantic perception. The main idea of the method is that «individual subjective content of the statement is formed directly from the sum of meanings of linguistic units that constitute a phrase» (Mytnyk, M., 2016). The main tool of implementing this method is a cluster of communication-based tasks which are relevant to the purpose of developing communicative skills. The pupils can correlate

the tasks with the motives essential for them. The emotional-semantic approach is focused on the development of live speech. Training takes place in cycles, where the first cycle – oral communication and reading, the second cycle – grammar, writing and monological speech and the third cycle – specialization in speech rationing / standardization.

The intensive method of developing speech skills is defined as the «cycle/inter-cycle method». This method was developed at the University of Tbilisi in 1970-ies under the leadership of L. Sh. Gegechkori. Elements of suggestopedia were used by the method, and its peculiarity is a succession of lessons aimed at the oral speech training. The inter-cycle training deals mainly with training language phenomena.

Methodology of the intensive course by L. Gegechkori assumes the sequence of cycles in speech and language training. The main attention is paid to the language training cycle, because, according to the researcher, at this stage the principle of conscious approach to language learning is intensively used. The main objective of this stage is to provide pupils with the appropriate guidance and help them use consciously those linguistic phenomena which they have apprehended mostly intuitively in communicative acts at the oral speaking stage. The methodological techniques used during the inter-cycle training are: a) drill-type exercises performed under the supervision of an instructor; b) independent work in a language laboratory.

Some scientists worked out intensive methods to enhance linguistic capabilities of the individual in collective/group communication. This method of training is aimed at the formation of foreign language communicative competence drawing on the use of psychological reserves of an individual and learning activities of schoolchildren. «Modern communicative linguistics poses new challenges in methodology and considers that language should be acquired primarily as a means of communication» (Mytnyk, M., 2016). Theoretical framework of the method takes into consideration the psychology of communication, the theory of speech activity and the use of the unconscious learning reserves (Mytnyk, M., 2016).

The fundamental didactic principles of this technique are:

– the principle of individuality (directed informal communication between teacher and learners promotes motivation of pupils, their creativity, creates a positive emotional climate in the learning process);

– communication is the basis for constructing the whole teaching and learning process, that implies continuous communication;

– the principle of stage-concentrated educational material and appropriate organization of learning process (it implies mastering linguistic material and formation of speaking skills simultaneously and in parallel to one and the same communicative task);

– the principle of concentration in the selection and organization of educational material which is realized at three levels:

1) formation of communicative nucleus, i.e the initial set of phrases and the ability to use them in certain/concrete situations;

2) the level of pupils' analytical activity and ability to apply these analytical operations to the new language material;

3) the level of stable skills formation.

In the result of these levels realization communicative proficiency is formed, as well as the ability to train speech patterns with the new lexical loading, in new conditions and using new foreign language material (Mytnyk, M., 2016).

Recent researches assert that methods based on associations in regard to the development of creative thinking of young learners demonstrate their high efficiency. They are the method of graphic associations, method of sound (phonetic) associations, complex associative method. All of them help pupils to overcome a number of difficulties in language acquisition in a fundamentally new way, help children to absorb better even the basics of their native language (Ukrainian, in our case).

The method of graphic associations suggests that when memorizing spelling of words it is just enough to draw a picture, which illustrates the word and outplay the letter you want to remember in it. The method of sound (phonetic) associations is rather beneficial when we are searching for some kind of sound correspondence between words or the endings of words, which are to be memorized, especially when the phrase or a specific word of a rhyme is apt. It has much in common with mnemonics technique.

Since ancient times mnemonic-based methods have been widely used in language learning, in general, and vocabulary, in particular. However, little research has been undertaken to study the importance of mnemonic devices in teaching foreign language to young learners. We believe that the use of mnemonic devices substantially

enhances levels of retention in immediate and delayed recall of the second language vocabulary in comparison with other learning strategies.

The word *mnemonic* derived from the Greek word *Mnemosyne*, referring to the ancient Greek goddess of memory.

Mnemonics are techniques or devices, such as a rhyme or an image, that serve to enhance the storage and recollection of information contained in memory. Children who are primarily visual or verbal learners are able to create a picture, word, rhyme, or sentence that is attached to an idea they already have. By using mnemonics, a learner can develop better ways to take in information so that it will be much easier to remember. Mnemonic techniques include peg words (words associated with numbers used to remember lists of items), keywords (associating a similar-sounding word with a targeted word), acronyms (using the first letter of each word in a list to construct a word), acrostics, that is creating a sentence where the first letter of each word is the targeted information, and loci (storing information you want to remember in carefully visualized locations).

Association is a mnemonic link to some element or elements that can promote remembering or recalling the word and comprises a link to meaning, sound, sound and meaning together, structure, context, mental image, letter(s) in the word, proper names, signs and so forth.

The above mentioned methods of associative learning develop oral and written language skills, promote literacy of primary school children and thus affect mental independence, positive attitudes to learning activities and develop the ability to sort out the tasks, find rational ways of solving problems. It is an effective way to teach young learners to study, which is one of the most important tasks of primary school (Husak, P., 2016).

One of the effective associative learning strategies is offered by I. Barynkina. This strategy falls into the category of associative method of combination. The researcher concluded that the words are easily remembered, when they are accompanied with illustrations, for example, fantasy cartoon characters (Mordous I. O., Kutsenko I. M., 2018).

I. Matiuhin assumes, that the associative method of combination is the ability to sort out and link information to remember it with vivid, unusual images, images based on associative ideas. This

method allows to increase the amount of the lexicon to be remembered almost twice, and develop not only mechanical memory but also imagination of primary school children (Matiuhin, I. Yu., 2000).

Another effective technique, according to I. Barynkina, is rhythmization, when information is transferred into verses and songs, lines of which are related to certain rhythm or rhyme. Practice shows that rote memorization, learning by heart (for example, the three major forms of irregular verbs) is an ineffective method that takes children a lot of time and efforts. But if accompanied by verses and expressive facial mimics and gestures, and supported with some visual aids (pictures or objects) the educational material can be remembered more efficiently. In other words, it takes a lot of effort to remember words and sentences, but being visualized these words automatically pop up in our mind when we try to recall them (Mordous I. O., Kutsenko I. M., 2018).

We believe that such mnemonic-based methods develop pupils' cognitive interests, positive attitudes,

promote language development and literacy of schoolchildren, teach them to find various creative ways of solving problems. This is especially important at the initial phase of training, the main objective of which is to teach pupils to study.

It is suggested to implement thesaurus method of teaching primary school children by using associative word fields. The method lays emphasis on the linguistic picture of the world and leads pupils to enhancing their lexicographical culture.

Conclusion. Associative learning strategy in general is focused on modern innovative technologies of training. It meets new goals and tasks of teaching foreign languages at primary school observing the age and individual characteristics of young learners and their needs, among which the basic ones are: the need to play games (through game-playing activity the content of educational material is better absorbed), the need to move, the need for external impressions, cognitive needs.

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