

**INCREASING YOUNG LEARNERS' INTERESTS
IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

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Abstract. *This article investigates practical methods for boosting young students' enthusiasm for studying a foreign language. Although young children are inherently curious, engaging and developmentally appropriate instructional strategies are necessary to keep them motivated. This article examines successful tactics, such as gamification, narrative, digital tools, interactive exercises, and cultural immersion, to increase young learners' excitement for learning a foreign language. It also looks at how peers, parents, and teachers may work together to create a safe and engaging learning environment. The article also addresses typical obstacles to maintaining motivation and suggests creative ways to make language learning more interesting and pleasurable. Teachers can encourage young students to cultivate a lifelong love of foreign languages by implementing dynamic and student-centered teaching methods, which will eventually boost language proficiency and cross-cultural communication abilities.*

Key words: *Language acquisition, foreign language learning, young learners, motivation, gamification, storytelling, digital tools, interactive learning, cultural immersion, parental involvement, collaborative learning, multisensory learning.*

Introduction

Many renowned scholars have made significant contributions to the understanding of language acquisition and effective teaching strategies, particularly for young learners. Their theories and research provide valuable insights into how children acquire and retain foreign languages.

Noam Chomsky introduced the concept of Universal Grammar, suggesting that children are born with an innate ability to learn languages. He argued that the human brain is pre-wired for language acquisition, which explains why young learners can pick up new languages more naturally than adults. His theory underscores the importance of providing rich linguistic input to support children's natural language-learning abilities.

The Sociocultural Theory of Lev Vygotsky emphasizes the role that social interaction plays in cognitive development. He popularized the Zone of Proximal Development

(ZPD) theory, which holds that children learn best when assisted by an adult with greater experience, like a teacher or a peer. The application of collaborative and interactive learning techniques in foreign language instruction is encouraged by this approach.

By putting out the stages of cognitive development, Jean Piaget advanced our knowledge of language acquisition and child development. His research supports the necessity for engaging and entertaining language-learning methods by indicating that young learners learn languages best through inquiry and hands-on experiences.

These scholars' contributions highlight the importance of engaging, interactive, and developmentally appropriate strategies in foreign language education. Their theories serve as the foundation for modern teaching methodologies that aim to increase young learners' motivation and enthusiasm for language acquisition.

Learning via play and interaction is one of the best ways to get young students interested in a foreign language. Incorporating gaming elements into lessons, or gamification, makes for an entertaining and engaging experience. Through activities like role-playing, scavenger hunts, online tests, and language-based board games, students can practice grammar and vocabulary in an enjoyable and natural environment. Duolingo and Kahoot! Are examples of digital tools that make learning interactive and competitive, and role-playing exercises help students get more comfortable speaking the target language.

Another effective technique for language learning is storytelling. Stories help new words and structures stick in your memory by giving them meaning and an emotional connection. Digital storytelling, audiobooks, and picture books all facilitate meaningful language engagement for kids. Students can practice language skills while fostering their imagination and creativity by reading folktales from many cultures, enacting scenes from stories, or being encouraged to write their own narratives. A dynamic approach to improving language learning is provided by technology. Videos, interactive games, and instructional applications are examples of multimedia resources that offer a multimodal experience that strengthens listening and vocabulary. While foreign-language songs and cartoons introduce students to real pronunciation, Quizlet and Memrise provide interesting tasks. Keeping students motivated requires a nurturing learning environment that involves parents, instructors, and peers. Through collaborative learning activities, kids can practice speaking and listening with their peers in a casual environment. Parental participation promotes learning outside of the classroom. Examples of this include labeling household goods in the target language or engaging in language activities at home. In order to increase students' confidence and willingness to try new things with the language, teachers are essential in creating a positive environment where errors are accepted as a necessary part of learning. Even with these captivating techniques, there may be obstacles including lack of perceived relevance, short attention

spans, and fear of making mistakes. Lessons that incorporate movement, music, and narrative should be dynamic and diverse in order to overcome these challenges. Activities should be linked to students' interests and real-world experiences to keep them interested, and mistakes should be accepted as a necessary part of learning. Enhancing comprehension through the use of visual and sensory cues is another important tactic. Interactive whiteboard exercises, narration with images, colorful flashcards, and hands-on activities like matching games and painting are beneficial for young learners. Touch and sound learning are examples of sensory experiences that improve memory and comprehension. The use of realia from the target culture or the association of words with items in the classroom, for instance, can improve the relationship between vocabulary and real-world situations. Including a range of learning styles guarantees that every learner stays interested. While tactile activities like role-playing dialogues are preferred by some youngsters, others learn best through auditory ones like listening to rhymes and recorded discussions. Lessons are kept interesting and various learning requirements are met using a well-rounded approach that incorporates visual, aural, and hands-on components. By relating language studies to students' interests, personalized learning strategies can further boost motivation. Children develop a sense of ownership and interest when they are given the freedom to select the subjects for storytelling, conversation practice, or project-based learning. To make courses more engaging, teachers can incorporate aspects of their pupils' interests, such as sports, music, or animals. Students can interact meaningfully with the language by promoting self-expression through role-playing, creative writing, and art. Exposure to the target language in a real-world setting can boost pupils' confidence and excitement. Whether through in-person meetings, virtual conversations, or multimedia materials, setting up interactions with native speakers gives students real-world language experiences. Students can become more comfortable with pronunciation, rhythm, and cultural quirks by watching cartoon movies, listening to easy podcasts, or following age-appropriate social media posts in the target language. Through these exercises, students can also observe how the language is used in real-world situations. Teachers can encourage young students to take an authentic interest in foreign languages by using these interesting and student-centered teaching techniques. Students are kept motivated and excited by an innovative, immersive, and encouraging approach, which eventually results in more successful language learning and a lifelong respect of linguistic and cultural variety.

Conclusion. Promoting young learners' passion for learning a foreign language necessitates a multidimensional strategy that places an emphasis on participation, communication, and worthwhile educational opportunities. Digital tools, immersive cultural activities, gamification, and narrative all combine to create a dynamic atmosphere where students can naturally and joyfully improve their language skills. Incorporating interactive exercises, visual and aural aides, and group projects allows

teachers to accommodate different learning preferences while keeping students engaged. Additionally, the active participation of classmates and parents improves learning outside of the classroom by reiterating language use in natural contexts. In order to foster a positive environment where errors are viewed as opportunities for development rather than setbacks, teachers are essential. By integrating their hobbies into courses, teachers may empower students to take charge of their education and develop a stronger bond with the language. Adaptive teaching strategies, such relating language acquisition to real-world situations and utilizing interactive materials, can assist in overcoming obstacles like short attention spans and a lack of perceived relevance. Understanding and confidence are strengthened by exposure to native speakers, multimedia content, and real-world language use. In the end, teachers may encourage young students to acquire a lifelong appreciation for languages and cultures by making foreign language study engaging and meaningful. In addition to improving language proficiency, this foundation equips pupils for international conversation, creating a generation that is more interconnected and culturally sensitive.

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