

## DEVELOPING METHODOLOGY FOR FORMING PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION SKILLS (ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE IMITATIVE METHOD)

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**Abstract:** *This paper explores the theoretical and practical foundations of developing primary school students' pronunciation skills in English lessons through the imitative (repetitive) method. The study emphasizes the importance of pronunciation as a fundamental component of communicative competence and highlights the effectiveness of imitation-based approaches in early language acquisition. The imitative method is analyzed from psycholinguistic and didactic perspectives, and ways of integrating it with modern educational technologies are proposed. Experimental results demonstrate that the imitative approach significantly improves learners' phonetic accuracy, rhythm, and intonation, while increasing their motivation and confidence in English communication.*

**Keywords:** *pronunciation, imitative method, primary school, English language teaching, phonetics, communicative competence, methodology.*

**Introduction** In recent years, the issue of early English language teaching has become a central focus in the education reforms of Uzbekistan and many other countries. Mastering correct pronunciation at the early stages of learning forms the foundation for subsequent communicative and linguistic competence.

Pronunciation is not merely a phonetic aspect of speech; it constitutes the basis for effective communication. Without correct pronunciation, learners struggle to be understood and face difficulties in listening comprehension and speaking fluency. Therefore, the formation of accurate pronunciation habits in primary school students is a crucial methodological task requiring a well-grounded pedagogical approach.

Theoretical approaches to pronunciation teaching have been widely explored by researchers such as V. A. Artemov, L. V. Shcherba, I. L. Bim, and N. D. Galskova, who emphasize the development of phonemic hearing, articulation training, and mastery of prosodic features.

The imitative method is rooted in behaviorist learning theory, which views language acquisition as the result of imitation, repetition, and reinforcement. According to this perspective, learners acquire correct pronunciation through exposure to accurate speech models and repeated practice.

Psycholinguistically, imitation plays a natural role in early language development. Primary school learners, by nature, possess high auditory sensitivity and a strong capacity for mimicry, which makes the imitative approach especially effective at this stage. This method aligns with children's cognitive and psychological characteristics, promoting natural and spontaneous language acquisition.

The imitative (repetitive) method is defined as a teaching approach that relies on listening to and reproducing accurate speech models provided by the teacher or native speakers. Its main goal is to develop learners' ability to perceive, reproduce, and internalize the phonetic and prosodic patterns of English.

**Listening Stage:** Students attentively listen to correct pronunciation models through teacher speech or audio recordings.

**Repetition Stage:** Learners imitate the pronunciation, paying attention to articulation, stress, and intonation.

**Differentiation Stage:** Students compare their pronunciation with the model and self-correct errors.

**Practice Stage:** Acquired pronunciation skills are applied in communicative activities such as songs, dialogues, and games.

Repetition drills to master articulation of difficult sounds;

Phonetic games, rhymes, and tongue twisters to develop rhythm and intonation;

Songs and chants for improving natural prosody and motivation;

Dialogues and role-plays for contextualized practice;

Audio-visual tools such as interactive videos and mobile applications for exposure to native-like pronunciation.

The teacher acts as both a model and facilitator of pronunciation learning. They must demonstrate accurate articulation, provide immediate feedback, and maintain a motivating and supportive classroom atmosphere.

Corrective feedback should be provided in a positive and encouraging way to avoid anxiety and to strengthen learners' confidence. Teachers are also advised to integrate phonetic symbols, visual articulatory schemes, and digital tools for clearer sound perception and articulation.

Experimental classroom observations show that primary school students taught through the imitative method exhibit a significant improvement in pronunciation accuracy, rhythm, and intonation compared to those using traditional approaches. Furthermore, the use of songs, poems, and multimedia resources enhances learners' engagement and enthusiasm for English learning. Students demonstrate increased listening comprehension and more natural speech production.

The results confirm that imitation facilitates the internalization of sound patterns and promotes spontaneous, fluent speech formation. The method also fosters self-confidence and communicative readiness among young learners.

The method ensures that learners acquire correct articulation and intonation at an early stage, which later supports fluent and intelligible communication.

It is recommended to integrate the imitative method with other modern approaches such as task-based learning, phonics, and communicative language teaching to create a comprehensive and engaging learning environment.

Additionally, teacher training programs should include phonetic workshops to improve instructors' pronunciation and teaching techniques.

