

Methodology for Teaching Time-Related Concepts in Preschool Education

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Abstract: *Children have started to become interested in how much time they have spent performing various activities in their daily routine. They have begun to carry out these activities consciously. Some children have developed the ability to assess the duration of one, two, or several minutes in exactly the same way. The overall outcome of their development has been such that it can be seen not only intellectually but also ethically.*

Keywords: *Time, Preschool Education, Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow, Evening, Night, Daytime*

For example, the educator invites the children to play a game where they hit a ball on the floor for one minute or throw a ball in the air and catch it. The same exercises are carried out with jump ropes or hoops. To help the children perceive the duration of a minute, they are sometimes asked to sit quietly for one minute. The educator explains how much time each child has spent on performing a specific task and the speed of each child's activity. Later, the children themselves begin to estimate the duration of time spent on activities like dressing. The educator continuously checks if the children's judgments about the passage of time are consistent.

When children begin to develop the ability to orient themselves in time, it signals that special pedagogical guidance is required. It is well known that reflexes related to time exist both in animals and humans. For example, the reflex of breastfeeding intervals in infants is a sign of the child's ability to perceive time. This is the initial stage of time orientation, still in the form of preliminary signals.

It is known that orientation in time is also observed in animals. This skill develops based on biological needs and the periodicity of the organism's activity. Therefore, the highest level of orientation in time in animals remains biologically conditioned and does not exceed the limits of their biological needs.

According to philosophy and psychology, the ability to perceive time in humans develops both biologically and socially, arising from the broad social relations and interactions that occur during the individual's life activities. The initial emotional reflection of time, in the form of signals, begins during the first months of life, and social manifestations gradually emerge, retaining its biological foundation. Subsequently, these initial signals of time reflection are integrated into a second system of signals and undergo significant qualitative changes. As a result, the perception of time becomes more distinct, and the child starts mastering time measurement units.

Similar to how the surrounding world reflects in the human mind, the reflection of space and time appears in two primary forms: directly (sensory-imagery) and indirectly (logical-conceptual). These forms of reflection are interconnected and represent the reflection of spatial and temporal relationships.

The transition to a new level of reflection and time orientation typically coincides with the development of speech, as the child acquires new terms related to time and their vocabulary expands. Thus, the initial

stage of understanding time in preschool children is associated with the formation of emotional and logical reflection of time.

In the later stages of development, children begin to acquire the ability to understand time concepts such as seconds, minutes, hours, days, and so on. These units form the basis for understanding the passage of time. Through this knowledge, children begin to understand time relationships and the concept of temporal unity, which is crucial for their further cognitive development.

The development of children's time-related orientation in preschool education should be approached from a didactic perspective, as it is not only an essential cognitive skill but also a fundamental part of their overall personal development. Activities that support this development, such as the understanding of daily routines, seasonal changes, and the days of the week, should be integrated into their everyday learning. In the preschool education system, developing time orientation in young children is not just an intellectual exercise, but also a holistic developmental approach. The children's engagement with activities like games, routines, and discussions about different times of the day fosters their ability to measure time intuitively. For example, during group play or daily routines, children are encouraged to reflect on when and how long they perform certain activities, which helps them internalize the passage of time.

Educators must use various teaching aids, such as visual charts showing the sequence of daily activities, clocks with movable hands, and engaging storytelling sessions that place events within a clear timeline. This helps the children visualize and experience the structure of time—past, present, and future—through both direct interaction and conceptual learning. By using terms like "yesterday," "today," and "tomorrow" in context, children can understand these abstract concepts as they relate to their own lives.

In addition, methods like role-playing, where children act out different times of the day or activities that happen at specific times, contribute to a deeper understanding of time. Educators can also integrate seasons and weather into their teaching, as these are tangible and cyclical markers of time that children can easily relate to.

Moreover, the educator's role in providing continuous feedback, assessing the children's ability to judge time, and adapting learning activities based on individual needs is essential for the development of time concepts. As children grow, their ability to handle more complex ideas about time, like past and future events, strengthens, and they become better at managing their own time and actions throughout the day.

Thus, the methodology not only aims at teaching children how to measure time but also nurtures their ability to integrate these concepts into their daily life, fostering a sense of order and predictability in their environment.

In conclusion, preschool children need to gradually form a deeper understanding of time concepts, starting from their personal experience with daily activities, and extending to broader units such as days, months, and seasons. This process should be based on appropriate pedagogical methods that foster both emotional and cognitive development related to time.

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