

FORMING THE INTELLECTUAL ABILITIES OF SCHOOL PREPARATORY GROUP CHILDREN BASED ON DIDACTIC GAMES

Kasimova Dilrabo Baxadirovna

Senior Lecturer, Department of Theory and Methodology of Preschool Education,
Faculty of Preschool and Primary Education,
Nizami National Pedagogical University of Uzbekistan

Ravshanova Mohira Dilmurod qizi

4th-year student of the program “Psychology and Pedagogy of Preschool
Education”

Abstract: *This article examines the role of educational games in the personal, intellectual, and social development of children in preschool education, in developing children's thinking, memory, attention, speech, and independent thinking skills, and the use of effective methods and techniques for developing the mental abilities of children in the preschool group using educational games.*

Keywords: *educational games in the personal, intellectual, and social development of children; thinking, memory, attention, speech, and independent thinking; educational games*

Аннотация: *В данной статье рассматривается роль дидактических игр в личностном, умственном и социальном развитии ребенка на дошкольном этапе обучения, в развитии у детей навыков мышления, памяти, внимания, речи и самостоятельного мышления, а также применение эффективных методов и техник формирования умственных способностей детей подготовительной группы к школе на основе дидактических игр.*

Ключевые слова: *дидактические игры в личностном, умственном и социальном развитии ребенка, мышление, память, внимание, речь и самостоятельное мышление, дидактические игры*

Today, modernizing the education system and nurturing a generation with well-rounded intellectual potential is one of the priority directions of state policy.

Particularly, the preschool stage plays a crucial role in a child's personal, cognitive, and social development. During this period, a child's thinking, memory, attention, speech, and independent reasoning abilities are gradually formed.

Preschool education represents the most critical stage in the formation of a child's personality. At this stage, the foundation is laid for the development of a child's cognitive abilities, social skills, and interest in acquiring knowledge. Nowadays, due to the widespread use of electronic devices, screen-based games, and passive activities, traditional active play among children has decreased. Therefore, it is highly important to systematically employ didactic games in preschool groups to stimulate cognitive activity, foster independent thinking, and enhance school readiness.

Didactic games serve as an effective tool in the pedagogical process, significantly improving children's knowledge acquisition, social skills, and language development. Developing cognitive abilities in preschool groups is particularly relevant, as successful adaptation to school education largely depends on the extent to which these skills are developed. Traditional educational methods do not always fully align with the age and psychological characteristics of children. Therefore, there is an increasing need for pedagogical tools that actively engage children, spark their interest, and stimulate the learning process.

Didactic games are among the most effective educational tools for preschool-aged children. They enhance interest in learning and foster cognitive activities such as logical thinking, analysis, comparison, and drawing conclusions. Through play, children acquire knowledge naturally and without compulsion, which increases the effectiveness of education.

Moreover, in today's information-rich environment, children are increasingly engaged in passive activities, leading to a decrease in independent thinking and creativity. This situation underscores the relevance of using didactic games in preschool education to develop cognitive abilities.

Therefore, studying the development of cognitive abilities in preschool groups through didactic games from a scientific-pedagogical perspective, and implementing effective methods and approaches in practice, is a current necessity.

Didactic games are activities aimed at solving pedagogical tasks in the form of play, contributing to the development of children's cognitive abilities—including logical thinking, memory, attention, speech, imagination, and creativity. In preschool age, play is the primary activity through which a child explores the environment, acquires new knowledge, and learns self-expression. When applied pedagogically, play becomes an effective educational tool—children actively participate and learn to apply knowledge in practice.

Among Uzbek scholars, Mirzayeva Manzura Akhmatjanovna (Karshi State University) emphasized that didactic games are a crucial tool in shaping intellectual and creative abilities in preschool institutions. Egamberdiyeva M.K. (Chirchiq State Pedagogical University) suggested that didactic games, through modern pedagogical innovations, activate children's cognitive activities and prepare them for school. Valijon Kadirov, Zuhra Bozorova, and Otabek Mirzayev (Andijan State University) researched methods for deeply developing speech and language skills through didactic games.

Al-Khwarizmi, in his scientific works, emphasized the philosophical concept of guiding humans toward intellectual perfection and highlighted the importance of education and knowledge for the development of the nation's economy.

Abu Rayhan Beruni discussed the role of labor and labor education in human development, categorizing labor based on the type of work. In his work *Mineralogy*, he highlighted the economic importance of craftsmanship and the rational use of natural resources. Ibn Sina explained that matter consists of four inseparable elements—air, fire, water, and earth—and emphasized the importance of preserving valuable natural resources in his work *Aqsom ul-Ulum ul-Aqliya* (Classification of Intellectual Knowledge).

International research in CIS countries on preschool education and play has confirmed that play pedagogy is an effective means of reinforcing cognitive and social skills in children. Through various forms of didactic games, children develop logical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork skills harmoniously.

Cognition, broadly defined, begins with perception and understanding, encompassing reasoning and the overall process of acquiring knowledge. Intellectual education involves systematic pedagogical influence to develop thinking, enabling children to assimilate accumulated human knowledge, skills, and social experience. Such education requires adults to create diverse tools, methods, and conditions that ensure cognitive development.

Mental activity demands focused attention toward specific goals. A person's intelligence is reflected in the success achieved in primary activities. Intellectual education produces mature, sharp-minded, and talented individuals, revered as wise persons in society. Wisdom is considered one of the most noble human qualities, often metaphorically described as "the crown of intellect is gold, but not everyone possesses it."

Cognitive development in preschool children involves purposeful adult guidance to stimulate active thinking. It includes providing knowledge about the surrounding world, systematizing information, fostering curiosity, developing cognitive skills, and enhancing learning abilities. Ensuring sufficient cognitive development in children aged 6–7, as they transition to school, is a major responsibility of educators.

Cognitive maturity represents qualitative and quantitative changes in a child's intellectual activity influenced by educational interventions and experience. During preschool age, children rapidly acquire knowledge, develop speech, and improve cognitive processes, mastering fundamental mental activity skills. Cognitive development at this stage is crucial for future overall activity. Social interactions contribute significantly to intellectual growth, as children assimilate language and conceptual frameworks through communication.

The development of cognitive abilities is reflected in children's capacity to observe connections, generalize, and understand events. From the beginning of any educational activity, attention must be organized to ensure engagement with cognitive tasks. During reinforcement, exercises with didactic materials should stimulate independent activity.

Creative play promotes knowledge acquisition, activating thinking, imagination, attention, and memory, while encouraging children to solve problems independently, devise practical solutions, and articulate knowledge. Play fosters curiosity and expands children's understanding. It cannot be fully subordinated to narrow didactic goals, as it addresses broader educational objectives.

Rule-based games develop sensory perception, reasoning, speech, involuntary attention, memory, and motor skills. Each such game has specific didactic objectives, aiming at holistic development. Learning through play aligns with age-specific characteristics and enhances engagement, often allowing children to solve more complex problems than in standard lessons. Play should complement other methods such as observation, discussion, and narration for optimal educational outcomes.

Children learn to apply knowledge in various contexts through play. Creative games encourage imagination, experimentation, and construction activities, simultaneously fostering moral qualities. Emotional experiences during play leave lasting impressions, cultivating positive feelings, noble aspirations, and healthy curiosity.

Play is also a form of independent activity, promoting interaction, cooperation, and social skills among peers. Educators guide children in play to foster friendships, fairness, and responsibility. Pedagogues influence multiple aspects of a child's personality—cognitive, emotional, volitional, and behavioral—leveraging play to support intellectual, moral, aesthetic, and physical development.

Play enriches children's knowledge and imagination. Role-play games enhance observation, curiosity, and the scope of understanding. Children set goals, requiring

the use of reasoning and intellect, while negotiating, debating, and problem-solving collaboratively. Experiencing and enacting roles helps children internalize knowledge and social understanding.

Through didactic and role-play games, children gradually progress from individual play to cooperative play, experiencing various social roles such as parent, driver, teacher, caregiver, or artist. Creative and structured games enhance thinking, imagination, sensory processes, and practical application of knowledge.

Didactic games make education easier and more engaging, aligned with children's age and interests. Well-designed games maximize joy and learning outcomes.

Key aspects for successful implementation include:

1. **Enhancing pedagogical methodology:** Developing and applying the correct methodology for didactic games in preschool institutions.
2. **Creating play resources:** Developing and regularly updating sets of didactic games that stimulate logical, speech, and social activities.
3. **Teacher training:** Organizing specialized courses and seminars on play pedagogy for educators.
4. **Parent collaboration:** Encouraging the use of didactic games at home to reinforce children's development.
5. **Introducing innovations:** Utilizing interactive and digital didactic games to make school readiness engaging and effective.

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