



Irina A. Balakina,
PhD in Philology, Associate Professor,
Ural State Pedagogical University
26, prospekt Kosmonavtov, Yekaterinburg, Russia, 620091
irina_m1983@inbox.ru
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7424-0344>
SPIN-КОД: 3263-2473

Ekaterina V. Rozhkova,
Student
Ural State Pedagogical University
26, prospekt Kosmonavtov, Yekaterinburg, Russia, 620091
rozhkova_ev04@mail.ru
SPIN-код: 9392-6000

WAYS OF IMPROVING MOTIVATION TO LEARNING A LANGUAGE IN YOUNG SCHOOL CHILDREN

The article analyzes effective ways of increasing motivation to learn a foreign language in children of primary school age. Within the framework of the work the available pedagogical literature related to the issue of increasing the level of motivation of pupils within the framework of foreign language lessons and in extracurricular time was studied. On the basis of theoretical provisions, the main ways of keeping pupils' interest in the learning process are considered, among which the following are emphasized: game technologies, didactic and role-playing games, means of information and communication technologies, the system of positive reinforcement. According to the authors' opinion, these ways of increasing motivation in primary school children are the most effective in the present educational space, because at the same time they will allow to develop language skills, creative thinking and communication abilities. The paper also provides practical recommendations for teachers and parents on how to integrate the methods into school and home practice, emphasizing systematicity and positive feedback. The paper emphasizes the need to integrate several methods into a single system and recommends further empirical research to assess the long-term effectiveness of the proposed techniques. The practical value of the paper lies in the specific recommendations for teachers and parents.

Keywords: motivation, foreign language, junior schoolchild, techniques to increase motivation.

For citation: Balakina I.A., Rozhkova E.V. [Ways of improving motivation to learning a language in young school children]. *Social'nye i gumanitarnye nauki: teoriya i praktika* [Social Sciences and Humanities: Theory and Practice], 2025, issue 3(14), pp. 106–110 (In Russian), <http://dx.doi.org/10.17072/2949-5601-2025-3-106-110>, EDN ZTNEKI

Балакина Ирина Александровна,
кандидат филологических наук, доцент
Уральский государственный педагогический университет
620091, Россия, г. Екатеринбург, пр-т Космонавтов, 26
irina_m1983@inbox.ru
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7424-0344>
SPIN-КОД: 3263-2473

Рожкова Екатерина Вячеславовна,
студент
Уральский государственный педагогический университет
620091, Россия, г. Екатеринбург, пр-т Космонавтов, 26
rozhkovaev04@gmail.com
SPIN-код: 9392-6000

СПОСОБЫ ПОВЫШЕНИЯ МОТИВАЦИИ К ИЗУЧЕНИЮ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА У ДЕТЕЙ МЛАДШЕГО ШКОЛЬНОГО ВОЗРАСТА

В статье анализируются эффективные способы повышения мотивации к изучению иностранного языка у детей младшего школьного возраста. В рамках работы была изучена имеющаяся педагогическая литература, связанная с вопросом повышения уровня мотивации учеников в рамках уроков иностранного языка и во внеурочное время. На основе теоретических положений рассматриваются основные способы удержания интереса школьников к процессу учения, среди которых – игровые технологии, дидактические и ролевые игры, средства информационно-коммуникативных технологий, система положительного подкрепления. По мнению авторов, именно отмеченные способы повышения мотивации у детей младшего школьного возраста являются наиболее эффективными в настоящем образовательном пространстве, поскольку одновременно с этим позволяют развивать языковые навыки, творческое мышление и коммуникационные способности. В статье также приводятся практические рекомендации для педагогов и родителей по интеграции методов в школьную и домашнюю практику с акцентом на системность и положительную обратную связь. Работа подчеркивает необходимость интеграции нескольких методов в единую систему и рекомендует дальнейшие эмпирические исследования для оценки долгосрочной эффективности предложенных приемов. Практическая ценность статьи заключается в конкретных рекомендациях для педагогов и родителей.

Ключевые слова: мотивация, иностранный язык, младший школьник, способы повышения мотивации.

Ссылка для цитирования: Balakina I.A., Rozhkova E.V. Ways of improving motivation to learning a language in young school children // Социальные и гуманитарные науки: теория и практика. – 2025. – № 3(14). – С. 106–110. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17072/2949-5601-2025-3-106-110> EDN ZTNEKI

Studying foreign language at primary school age is becoming increasingly important in the conditions of globalization and integration into the world educational space. Motivation is one of the key factors influencing the success of mastering a foreign language, especially in primary school children, for whom learning should be not only effective but also exciting. Over the past decades, methods of increasing motivation have undergone significant changes: from traditional approaches based on discipline and constant repetition and consolidation to modern techniques focused on game and communicative approach. The purpose of this research paper is to theoretically examine the main ways of increasing motivation to learn a foreign language in junior schoolchildren, to offer relevant techniques and pedagogical tasks aimed at effective inclusion of schoolchildren in learning activities in the classroom.

From the beginning of the first pedagogical thought, “the main technique of education in school, as well as in the family, was the example of elders”, and “learning was based on endless repetition” [5, p. 19]. Only over time, other methods and techniques of teaching began to emerge and actively used in pedagogical activities. On this basis, the only ways to motivate children to learn were: personal example, awakening interest, drawing a parallel between antagonists and protagonists in works of folklore genre and cautionary stories. Over time, the situation took a different form, thanks to the works of many great educators, in particular – J.A. Comenius. In our work we adhere to the idea that this scientist, being the founder of pedagogical science, was able to significantly reorganize the way of society in the pedagogical field. Perhaps his most important merit was the formulation and justification of the principles of learning, among which he emphasized: “the principle of visibility, ease of learning, consciousness and activity” [9].

Realization and implementation of the principles of elementary education described by J.A. Comenius. J.A. Comenius' understanding and implementation of the principles of elementary education described by J.A. Comenius in his work "The Great Didactics" should have contributed to the systematization and ordering of the educational process. The main goal was to make learning comprehensible, accessible and effective for each student through the consistent presentation of material, the use of visual aids and methods, as well as the development of a natural interest in knowledge. J.A. Comenius emphasized the importance of the rational construction of lessons – from simple to complex, from general to particular, which allowed to ensure the solid assimilation of knowledge and the formation of sustainable skills. Thus, the realization of these principles was to improve the quality of education, the level of children's motivation and desire to learn, facilitate the learning process and contribute to the all-round development of the student's personality.

Modern pedagogical practice is built on the same principles, which should, it would seem, support the level of education and high learning outcomes. However, nowadays it is annually noted in educational institutions that the level of learning results is decreasing. As a rule, one of the underlying reasons is the insufficient level of schoolchildren's motivation to study school subjects, unwillingness to consolidate the material at home in the framework of self-study. Speaking of a foreign language, repetition and memorization of material after lessons, practicing the language at home is extremely necessary, because without it the development of communicative skills is impossible, the language will be forgotten, which will make it impossible to learn it. Thus, teachers now face a difficult task – not only to conduct lessons, explaining the material, but also to constantly support the interest of students to study the subject and the desire to learn new things.

We will take the following as a basis for the definition of the concept of "motivation": "motivation is an internal psychological characteristic of a person, which finds expression in outward manifestations, in relation to a person to the surrounding world, to various activities" [7].

The level of motivation is a set of available motives, i.e. subjective reasons (conscious or unconscious) for this or that behavior, actions of a person, which are divided into internal and external [6].

Let's consider the concepts of types of motives in more detail.

Internal motives are "motives that develop under the influence of the trainee's own thoughts, experiences, aspirations, resulting in the emergence of awareness of internal necessity" [2].

External motives are motives that are conditioned by external stimuli – "grades, praise, awards, expectations of parents and teachers". In this case, a schoolchild is motivated not by the learning process itself and the pleasure received from it, but by receiving external acceptance from society, various kinds of rewards for success. Despite the fact that internal and external motives are quite separate in concepts, in life they exist in a bundle, although sometimes they can exist separately. Sometimes a child may have only intrinsic motives for learning a foreign language, which is associated with his desire to immerse himself in the culture of another country, to learn its cultural code, to involve himself in it. Sometimes a schoolchild may not have this desire, but at the same time he/she is motivated to learn a language, because he/she strives to please his/her parents by his/her successes in learning, getting good marks, hearing praise from the teacher.

As it was mentioned earlier, the problem of schoolchildren's lack of motivation worsens every year. This problem is especially relevant in the case of learning a foreign language. There are several reasons for this.

- Difficulty with the structure and sound of language – difficulties with grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation quickly demotivate and reduce the child's confidence in success.

- Underdeveloped phonemic hearing – if the child does not distinguish sounds well and does not memorize their features, the acquisition of speech is slower, especially at the initial stage.

- Heavy learning load – high volume of materials and fast pace of learning lead to fatigue and burnout.

- Lack of personal motivation – without understanding why the language is needed, the child rarely makes an effort; reminders from adults alone often do not work.

- Fear of making mistakes – fear of ridicule or criticism inhibits speaking, which inhibits practical application of knowledge.

- Pressure from adults – insistent demands from parents or teachers are perceived as coercive and cause resistance.

- Routine lessons – one-size-fits-all school classes, oriented to the average student, reduce learning to rote memorization and reduce interest.

- Excessive theory – overemphasis on rules and word lists without communicative practice overloads some children and reduces effectiveness.

- Irrelevant curriculum – if the topics and examples are far removed from the child's interests and daily experience, the material seems meaningless and is poorly absorbed.

All this suggests that significant changes in the educational process are urgently needed. At the present moment, teachers should actively use the inclusion in the educational process of techniques to increase the motivation of students, which will make the process of learning a foreign language in elementary school more exciting and will increase the motivation of students.

Thanks to the literature we have studied, we have identified several standard ways to increase the level of motivation in primary school students.

- One of the most successful ways to increase children's interest in lessons is pair or group work. Having differences in mastering communicative skills, schoolchildren can help each other in pair work, explaining the material to each other, working on different types of tasks [3].

- Correcting mistakes without reproach. If a child makes a mistake, it is imperative that the teacher tactfully informs the child about it and asks the child to correct it, because "when the teacher points out every mistake, students become too afraid of making mistakes. Consequently, due to excessive obsession with mistakes, children will be too reluctant to participate in communication" [3]. Some ways of correcting children's errors in foreign language lessons include: interjection, teacher's reference example in response to an erroneous statement, interjection with answer options, self-correction and others.

- Incorporating games into the educational process. "Play is a natural form of activity for younger students, through which they perceive the world, develop and learn" [4]. Specially designed for the educational process didactic games allow in a non-standard form to consolidate the already studied material, stimulate cognitive interest. It is also recommended that teachers include in the educational process role-playing games that allow "children to try on different roles, while developing communication skills, creative thinking and empathy", which is especially important for the development of communication skills in foreign language lessons at school to develop the ability to "understand the feelings and actions of others, as well as to develop strategies for behavior in different situations" [ibid].

- The alternation of lessons of different types, implying active inclusion of pupils in a communicative situation: "lesson-quiz, lesson-competition, lesson-journey, lessons-discussion of different topics; lessons-communication on the Internet (effective as a variant of independent preparation); round tables; mini-conferences in groups; lessons-tests; lessons-presentations" and so on [2].

- The use of information and communication technologies. "Computer-based training programs have many advantages over traditional teaching methods. They allow to train different types of speech activity and combine them in different combinations, help to realize linguistic phenomena, form linguistic abilities, create communicative situations, automate language and speech actions" [1].

- Project activity in teaching. In recent years, foreign language teachers increasingly offer schoolchildren to perform a project on a selected or given topic, because project-based learning contributes to the increase of educational achievements due to interactive forms of work. "In the process of this activity, the teacher with students finds difficult moments in learning, poses a problem relevant to students, thinks about connections with other objects and phenomena, and also develops a vision of practical application of the received knowledge, as a result of which the motivation for learning activity increases" [8].

In addition, we would also like to offer our own set of ways and motivational tasks for elementary school children to get them interested in learning a foreign language in elementary school [10].

- Story puzzle: the teacher distributes cards with words/phrases and pictures, the children's task is to put the pairs together and make short sentences.

- Quest race: teams are given a route of several points with tasks (find an object, say a sentence, repeat a phrase, etc.). The team with the most completed tasks wins.

- Foreign Bingo: the teacher hands out picture cards. The students take turns naming one of the pictured objects, and the others paint or mark the cell with the object that stands for the named word.

- Sound detective: the teacher says a few words, the task of children is to hear words with the right sound and mark those in which it is, suggesting that children perform some action after hearing a word with a given sound. This task can be organized as a phonetic warm-up.

- Creative project "My Day" in which children draw a picture of their day and describe their routine.

- Creative project "Dream Collage", in which children have to collect pictures of things they dream about and sign them in English, then tell a short story.

- Creative project "Word Hunt": pupils need to find unusual objects in the house and translate them into a foreign language, make a photo and tell about them in class. Such a task will allow not only to memorize new words, but also to transfer the language to the real environment.

- Speed-chat – inclusion in the educational process of 1–2 minute dialogs by alternating partners on simple topics (name, age, favorite food) in order to reduce the fear of communicating in a foreign language.

- Interview messenger – students interview each other and prepare a short class note about each student.

- Video diary – ask pupils to keep a video diary in a foreign language by recording short videos about their day. The results can be presented in class, for example, when going through topics that involve telling about their daily routine. This task is also suitable as an additional task to overcome the fear of speaking.

- Interactive quests – using online games/platforms to complete tasks with instant feedback. Unfortunately, not all modern schools are equipped with information and communication technologies that allow to perform such tasks directly in the classroom. Therefore, a teacher can assign such tasks as homework, which will allow not only to consolidate the material learned in lessons, but also to include gamification, which allows attracting attention and generating interest in the performance of tasks, in the educational process.

- Stickers and stickers as a system of rewards given for achievements (speaking, successfully completed tasks, active participation and other). This method can be realized in the following way: offer children different types of activities during the lesson. Provided that they are included in each of them, correctly completed tasks they receive encouraging stickers. In case a pupil accumulates 5 stickers, he/she gets a mark 5 in the journal. This system will help to form the habit of active work at lessons and form positive reinforcement.

The above interactive, personalized and communicative tasks increase pupils' engagement in learning a foreign language and keep them motivated. Regular positive feedback and emphasis on successes will develop a positive attitude towards the learning process and improve children's progress. Taking into account the peculiarities of child development (short attention span, need for movement and emotional response), the tasks that keep children motivated should be age-appropriate, varied and focused on the success of each student.

The implementation of the methods and techniques discussed in our work to increase the motivation of schoolchildren requires systematic and reflective behavior on the part of teachers and, if implemented correctly, leads to a sustainable interest in a foreign language and better long-term learning results.

References

1. Abulaisova N.A., Abdurakhmanova P.D., Magomedova U.A. [Means of increasing motivation to learn a foreign language among primary school students]. *Mir nauki, kul'tury, obrazovaniya* [The world of science, culture and education], 2019, issue 2(75), pp. 293–296, available at: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/sredstva-povysheniya-motivatsii-k-izucheniyu-inostrannogo-yazyka-u-mladshih-shkolnikov> (accessed: 10.07.2025). (In Russian) EDN: KHC OBJ
2. Borichevskaya E.M. [Ways to increase motivation in English lessons]. *Vestnik Donetskogo pedagogicheskogo instituta* [Bulletin of the Donetsk Pedagogical Institute], 2018, issue 3, available at: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/puti-povysheniya-motivatsii-na-urokah-angliyskogo-yazyka> (accessed: 07.08.2025). (In Russian) EDN: ZSOWSB
3. Gusaeva S.B., Agalarova R.I. [Ways to Increase Motivation in Teaching a Foreign Language]. *Molodoj uchenyj* [Young Scientist], 2020, issue 25(315), pp. 388–389, available at: <https://moluch.ru/archive/315/71943/> (accessed: 11.08.2025). EDN: BMNHIZ
4. Zakharova O.A. [Game as a Means of Influencing the Academic Motivation of Primary School Students]. *Molodoj uchenyj* [Young Scientist], 2024, issue 40(539), pp. 142–147, available at: <https://moluch.ru/archive/539/117993/> (accessed: 11.08.2025). (In Russian) EDN: DDSJJW
5. *Istoriya obrazovaniya i pedagogicheskoy mysli za rubezhom i v Rossii: ucheb. posobie dlya stud. vyssh. ped. ucheb. zavedenij* [History of Education and Pedagogical Thought Abroad and in Russia: a textbook for students of

higher pedagogical educational institutions] (Ed. by I.N. Andreeva, T.S. Butorina, Z.I. Vasilyeva, et al.), Moscow, Academy, 2006, 432 p. (In Russian) EDN: SYQATR

6. Kodzhaspirova G.M., Kodzhaspirov A.Yu. *Slovar' po pedagogike* [Dictionary of Pedagogics], Moscow; Rostov-on-Don, MarT, 2005, 448 p. (In Russian)

7. Nigmatullina G.R. [Methods of increasing motivation in teaching English to younger students]. *Molodoj uchenyyj* [Young scientist], 2017, issue 16(150), pp. 474–476, available at: <https://moluch.ru/archive/150/42482/> (accessed: 11.08.2025). (In Russian) EDN: YLNXIF

8. Pautova I.V. [Project activities of students as one of the techniques for increasing motivation to learn English]. *Materialy Vserossijskoj nauchno-prakticheskoy konferentsii «Nauka i sotsium»* [Proceedings of the Russian scientific and practical conference "Science and Society"], 2017, issue 2, pp. 148–151, available at: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/proektnaya-deyatelnost-uchaschihsya-kak-odin-iz-priemov-povysheniya-motivatsii-izucheniya-angliyskogo-yazyka> (accessed: 02.08.2025). (In Russian) EDN: YTFWNL

9. Sokolova L.A. [Formation of educational motivation: from antiquity to modernity]. *Vestnik YuUrGPU* [The Herald of South-Ural state Humanities-Pedagogical University], 2012, issue 6, pp. 115–124, available at: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/formirovanie-uchebnoy-motivatsii-ot-drevnosti-do-sovremennosti> (accessed: 10.08.2025). (In Russian) EDN: PBSHJT

10. Shenkevich V.A. [Motivation. How to Increase a Child's Interest in Learning]. *Sovremennoe pedagogicheskoe obrazovanie* [Modern Pedagogical Education], 2017, issue 1, pp. 17–19, available at: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/motivatsiya-kak-povysit-interes-k-uchube-u-rebenka> (accessed: 07.08.2025). EDN: ZXHOBT