

Technology and its Impact on Our Youngest Learners

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Abstract:

This article highlights the importance of modern technology for healthy preschoolers and mentally retarded children. Creativity and learning are fast-paced for high-quality early learning and early childhood learning. Technology is an additional opportunity for children to show creativity. They can be transported from touch screens with interactive media experiences designed to develop new experiences and enjoy creative activities. Technology provides another way for children to play, develop themselves, and develop their academic and social-emotional development.

Keywords: disabled, children, technology, education, modern, defect, youngest, learners, relationships, development.

Technology is used in early childhood classrooms to document progress and growth, assist in learning and communication with children with special needs, complement and supplement learning experiences, provide additional play opportunities, and contribute to a variety of learning modes.

Today, the development and improvement of the preschool education system is one of the priority directions of our state policy. It is especially important to organize a quality and effective educational process for children with special needs, to ensure their adaptation to society and a fulfilling life in the future. Among these, the issue of increasing the vocabulary of preschool children with mental development problems is also relevant.

Children with mental retardation often have difficulties with speech and language acquisition. This creates obstacles for them to communicate with others, express their thoughts and gain knowledge. Therefore, developing the vocabulary of such children is important not only for the development of their speaking skills, but also for their overall development and future success in life.

Creativity and play are critical to high-quality early education and to young children's learning. Technology provides an additional outlet for children to demonstrate creativity. They can use touch screens with developmentally appropriate interactive media experiences to develop new experiences and enjoy creative engagements. Technology provides children with another way to play, express themselves, and cultivate academic and social emotional skills.

Technology in early childhood education classrooms provides opportunities for young children without access to technology at home to have opportunities to learn and become comfortable with these tools. This can have positive impacts on their attitudes toward learning, improve their sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy, and improve kindergarten readiness skills. With technology use becoming more prevalent in K-12 education, early exposure and comfort is a key component to school readiness. Technology can also assist children with special needs, dual language learners, and other children who may benefit from help communicating and expressing emotions, and with social emotional as well as academic development.

Technology can provide greater access to resources, more innovative teaching methods, and a variety of active learning environments—and it allows teachers to create learning opportunities that are accessible to all children. By creating lesson plans and activities that reach children with a range of multiple learning styles and levels, technology can help young children:

develop and strengthen fine motor skills with touch screens and fine motor movements;

improve coordination and reaction time;

improve social and emotional development;

promote collaboration and relationships;

build cultural awareness;

assist language and literacy development;

provide opportunities for information processing;

strengthen relationships among parents, families, early educators, and young children;

build problem-solving and self-efficacy skills;

practice persistence;

take risks and set goals;

encourage communication and collaboration with others; and

increase cultural awareness.

Recommendations based on the existing research include:

using technology to capture visual images of concrete physical creations, artwork, and dramatic play and projections to share with children and parents as well as for documentation of development;

using technology to develop lesson plans that are accessible and reach young children with multiple learning styles and levels;

supporting additional research into how technology can best integrate and expand play and educational play purposes;

increasing investments to support expansion of technology into a wider variety of early childhood education settings;

providing teachers with more training on how to use technology for educational purposes;

providing additional support and education to identify and select developmentally appropriate technology tools for teachers and administrators; and

expanding the use of technology beyond classroom management to be more engaging for innovative educational, play, and creative teaching tools.

The use of technology varies across early childhood education settings, which also gives rise to concerns. These include challenges of extended screen time, passive use of technology, and non-developmentally appropriate applications. When technology is used in a passive, non-interactive way, the impacts for young children are less positive. Passive technology use is associated with sleep disruptions, focus, and attention problems

Parents play a vital role in modelling positive screen time behaviours themselves, serving as role models for their children to emulate. Co-viewing educational content, playing interactive games together and discussing online safety practices are just a few examples of how parents can engage with their children constructively. Moreover, open communication between parents and children regarding technology use is essential for building trust, fostering transparency and addressing any concerns or challenges that may arise.

Ultimately, parental involvement is key to creating a healthy relationship between children and technology. By actively engaging with their children, setting clear expectations and promoting mindful engagement with digital media, parents can shape their children's digital habits and ensure that technology enriches rather than detracts from their overall development. Comparative analysis of technologies used in Uzbekistan and abroad:

Significant changes have taken place in the field of preschool education in Uzbekistan in recent years. In particular, the state curriculum "Ilk Kadam" was introduced, which involves the use of modern pedagogical technologies (Ministry of Preschool Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2018) [9]. This program focuses on vocabulary development and uses game technologies, interactive activities, and multisensory approaches. Looking at foreign experience, the Head Start program in the US is widely used for preschool children, especially for children from families in a difficult socio-economic situation. This program uses a variety of innovative methods to develop vocabulary, including digital technologies and personalized instruction (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2020) [10].

When comparing the experience of Uzbekistan and foreign countries, a number of similarities and differences can be seen. For example, the method of learning through games is used in almost all countries. However, the level of use of digital technologies varies. While digital technologies are widely used in developed countries such as the USA and Finland, this field is just developing in Uzbekistan.

At the same time, traditional pedagogical methods, such as memorizing poems and telling stories, are still widely used in Uzbekistan. These methods help to increase vocabulary, taking into account the specific features of the Uzbek language.

In conclusion, technology has undeniably become an integral facet of modern childhood. It exerts a profound influence on how children learn, play and connect. From interactive educational apps to immersive virtual experiences, digital technologies offer children unprecedented opportunities for enrichment, exploration and creativity. However, alongside these opportunities come significant challenges. Excessive screen time, passive media consumption and concerns about the impact of social media on mental health underscore the need for mindful engagement with technology and the establishment of clear guidelines for healthy technology use.

By promoting media literacy, fostering critical thinking skills and encouraging a balanced approach to screen time, parents, educators and caregivers can help children responsibly use technology

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