

## Role of Folklore in Teaching English for Pre-School Children

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### Abstract

The article describes the role of folklore in teaching English for pre-school children. English folklore for children has some distinguishing features, which differ it from the folklore of other people. If the distinguishing feature of the German, Russian, Scandinavian folklore is fairy tales.

**Keywords:** folklore, men of Goham, groom, riddle, rhymes, minor genres: songs, amusements, accountings.

### Introduction

The English folklore has some common features with the folklore of other peoples, on the one side, and it has some distinguishing national features, on the other side. We compiled much material in the English folklore, but included into our work only some part of it. They are: poems and songs from *Mother Goose Rhymes* which appeared many years ago but remain to be popular nowadays, grooms of the famous Danish poet Piet Hein and riddles. It's difficult to imagine learning and teaching English without knowing *Mother Goose Rhymes* which were translated into Russian by the famous Russian poets S.Marshak and K.Chukovsky.

Children living in England, the USA, Canada, Scotland, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and other English-speaking countries learn by heart many poems and songs of *Mother Goose Rhymes*. We recommend this material in the English folklore for pre-school children in our country, because it will improve and enrich their knowledge, increase their motivation in learning English as a foreign language.

There are various ways and techniques of teaching English for pre-school children. The teacher's qualification, his desire to be on top of his job, to seek new methods and techniques in language teaching and not only to accept those recommended ones but to read journals and books on methods of teaching English as a foreign language. Some effective methods are: communicative method, using visual aids (pictures and charts), games, songs and poems.

Christopher Brumfit, one of the first to propose a change towards a communicative approach to ELT methodology, says this: "The question for the teacher is: how close can my teaching take pupils to their anticipated needs in the outside world?" [1:16]. If Communicative Teaching is teaching language for a purpose, then the sense of purpose needs to play a prominent part in the process of presentation and practice. Instead of teaching forms with their meanings and then going on to practice their uses, we might begin with the USE and proceed to teach examples of the forms the students require. This type of procedure might be termed communicative presentation and practice.

The procedure to be followed here would be like this:

- 1.The teacher sets up a communicative activity which demands ability to express the functions to be taught. At this stage, the teacher does not supply the language forms which the



students have to cope with whatever language resources they have available. In performing this task, they will inevitably produce errors, mistakes and much inappropriate language.

2. The teacher introduces the required language forms and does sufficient drilling to achieve a reasonable degree of fluency. Since a model interaction might be the best way to introduce these forms a suitable way to do this would be to play a taped dialogue illustrating use of the forms and functions to be presented.

3. The teacher gives students a fresh communicating task so as to provide them with an opportunity and motive to use the language forms they have learnt.

If serious errors occur, the teacher goes back to the drilling stage again. This procedure can be summarized as follows:

### Communicative

#### Task I

Children use whatever language they have at their disposal, errors are not corrected

### Presentation

#### and Drilling

Teacher presents the required forms and drills to fluency, errors are corrected.

### Communicative

#### Task II

Children are given an opportunity to use the new forms.

To solve the problem of choosing some effective methods and techniques in teaching English it's necessary : a) to help teachers in comprehending to the modern trends in foreign language teaching and in assimilating the methodological credo of the authors of the textbooks they use; b) to help teachers in accepting new approaches to foreign language teaching through exchange of experience in order to show them how to apply new methods and techniques of teaching and what results can be achieved; c) to improve teachers' training.

The sooner teachers of foreign language acquire skills in handling teaching aids and in utilizing new teaching materials, the better results in language learning may be expected.

In the history of the development of English literature for children is of a great importance. Everybody who starts learning English knows from the childhood the name of the writers –the authors of books for children- Ch.Dickens, D.Defoe, W.Scott, R.Kipling, R.Stivenson, L.Carroll, H.Wells and others.

English folklore plays a great educational role in teaching English. The term *folklore* was first introduced into science in 1846 by the English scholar William Thomas (it means *the people's wisdom*), in translation into Russian it means «народная мудрость». Folklore is the most valuable heritage of culture of different people and nationalities, it is a means of education and teaching, it is a means of moral and aesthetic impact on a person.

English folklore for children has some distinguishing features, which differ it from the folklore of other people. If the distinguishing feature of the German, Russian, Scandinavian folklore is fairy tales, English folklore is characterized by its minor forms: songs, entertainments, cock-and-bull stories and counting's. This part of folklore was included into the children's books earlier in England than in other countries according to the statement of O.A.Kapitza, one of the famous scholars who studied English literature for children [2:50]. The oldest works for



children were “Children’s poems” or “Songs of Mother Goose”. English folklore for children became famous by its minor genres: songs, amusements, accountings.

One of the oldest books for children is *Mother Goose Rhymes* or *Nursery Rhymes* [2:50; 48:5-8]. Every child in Great Britain, the United States of America, Canada, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, in a word, in all English-speaking countries knows her nursery rhymes by heart. Prominent statesmen, public figures often quote Mother Goose. Famous prose writers and poets allude to Mother Goose in their works.

And today *Mother Goose Rhymes* are as popular as they were 200, 300 and 400 years ago. *Mother Goose Rhymes* are also known to children in our country.

It’s impossible to learn English without knowing *Mother Goose Rhymes*

Nobody knows when *Mother Goose Rhymes* first appeared. First *Mother Goose Rhymes* appeared in France in 1650, and in 1697 Charl Perro published the fairy tale under the title of «Mother Goose Fairy tales». These fairy tales were translated into English in 1729. Some scholars explain the origin of the name *Mother Goose* from the name of the heroine of the old French fabliau, who had goose paws. Brothers Grimm connect this name with the French legend about Bertha with the goose paws.

Mother Goose appeared in England about two hundred years ago. The title *Mother Goose* appeared first in the collection of poems by John Newbury, published between 1760 and 1765 including 52 poems. The book was a great success. Some of Mother Goose rhymes are even older. “The Three Little Kittens” was known as far back as 400 years ago. And “Three Wise Men of Gotham” was popular as far back as the XVI-th century.

Many countries have a village or district whose inhabitants are proverbial for a kind of wisdom which differs from that of their neighbors. England boasts of several such places. For more than five hundred years, however, the merriest tales have been told about Gotham, where the villagers built a fence round the cuckoo so that they might keep her, and have summer all the year round. Yet the traveler who arrives at this village and inquires, “Is this the Gotham where the fools come from?” must be prepared for the reply, “No, sir, this is the Gotham that the fools come to”.

Here’s the nursery rhyme “Three Wise Men of Gotham”:

<i>Three wise men of Gotham</i>	<i>Три мудреца</i>
Three wise men of Gotham	Три мудреца в одном тазу
Went to sea in a bowl	Пустились по морю в грозу
If the bowl had been stronger	Будь попрочнее старый таз
My song had been longer	Длиннее был бы мой рассказ

The use of such stylistic device as pun is typical for English folklore. In one and the same joke we can see a riddle, a pun and an counting’s at the same time. S.Y.Marshak, a famous Russian poet in his interview with the English journalists, told «У англичан чувство юмора похоже на наше собственное. Большинство русских любят такие нелепицы, хотя есть некоторые страны, где у людей нет вкуса к подобным вещам» [4:343]. Many Russian-speaking children got acquainted with the poems of *Mother Goose Rhymes* (*Humpty-Dumpty*, *Robin the Bobbin*, *Jenny*, *The House that Jack built*) thanks to their translation from English into Russian by Samuel Marshak and Korney Chukovsky. One of the oldest rhymes from Mother Goose Rhymes is “Hey diddle diddle”.



Hey diddle diddle,  
The cat and the fiddle,  
The cow jumped over the moon  
The little dog laughed  
To see such sport,  
And the dish ran away with the spoon.

The term *folklore* was first introduced into science in 1846 by the English scholar William Thomas (it means *the people's wisdom*), in translation into Russian it means «народная мудрость». Folklore is the most valuable heritage of culture of different people and nationalities, it is a means of education and teaching, it is a means of moral and aesthetic impact on a person. M.E.Suholuzskaya points out, that the use of folklore materials promotes to the change of the role of the native language in the study process and makes it an instrument for intercultural comparisons and analogies [3:178]. stations of this famous nursery rhyme by S.Marshak and Y.Khazanov.

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Prominent statesmen, public figures often quote Mother Goose. Famous prose writers and poets allude to Mother Goose in their works. And today *Mother Goose Rhymes* are as popular as they were many years ago, they are also known to children in our country in their translation into Russian. It's difficult to imagine learning English without knowing *Mother Goose Rhymes*. Besides *Mother Goose Rhymes* we recommend some grooms for learning by heart of the famous Danish poet and writer Piet Hein and riddles for guessing.

Today with the development of informational technologies and scientific progress, there are many opportunities to use various methods and techniques in teaching English as a foreign language for pre-school children.

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