

The Content of Correctional and Speech Therapy Work in Preparing Children with Visual Impairments for School

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Abstract: This article scientifically substantiates the content, stages, and expected outcomes of correctional speech therapy in preparing children with visual impairments for school. The methodology employed a formative experiment based on elements of theoretical analysis, differential diagnostics, and individual and group sessions. The results demonstrated a reduction in secondary difficulties in speech development and an increase in psycholinguistic readiness for learning. The article provides recommendations applicable to educational practice.

Keywords: Child with visual impairment, school preparation, correctional speech therapy, phonemic perception, lexical-grammatical development, multisensory approach, communicative competence.

Introduction: The successful entry of children with visual impairments into school education is a multifactorial process, in which cognitive activity, sensory experience, socialization and speech development are manifested as an interconnected system. The concept of the blind is currently considered from the point of view of clarifying the leading system of analyzers on the basis of which the pedagogical process is carried out.[1] The speech component of school readiness is of particular importance, since the acquisition of reading and writing, understanding educational tasks, and expressing one's thoughts orally and in writing directly depend on the level of development of the language system. In conditions of visual impairment, the child does not have sufficient visual support for perceiving the environment, distinguishing the properties of objects and phenomena, and perceiving spatial relationships; this situation can have a secondary impact on the formation of word meanings, grammatical generalization, understanding the text, and communication strategies [2],[3]. Therefore, correctional and speech therapy

work should be viewed not only within the framework of the articulatory apparatus or sound pronunciation, but as a system that solves the integrative tasks of sensory-communicative development. The existing scientific literature sufficiently covers the general directions of typhlopedagogical work with children with visual impairments, such as orientation and mobility, development of tactile perception, and preparation for Braille [4], [5].

In the speech therapy literature, phonetic-phonemic, lexical-grammatical, and connected speech development technologies have been developed for the correction of speech disorders [6], [7]. However, in practice, studies that demonstrate a systematic connection between typical difficulties inherent in speech development in conditions of visual impairment and the specific content of preparation for school, that is, justify an integrated program of typhlopedagogy and speech therapy, are relatively rare. Especially at the preschool age, the view of speech preparation in conjunction with psycholinguistic preparation for reading, phonemic perception, subject-experience

expansion of vocabulary, and functional mastery of the grammatical system has not become a stable standard in practice. Based on this, this article focuses on the problem of systematizing the content of correctional and speech therapy work in preparing children with visual impairments for school and empirically substantiating its effectiveness.

The content of correctional and speech therapy work was built in four interconnected directions. The first direction focused on phonetic-phonemic development, in which phonemic differentiation, syllable-sound analysis, understanding of word structure with auditory-tactile supports, and control of rhythm and intonation were set as the main tasks rather than accurate pronunciation of sounds. The second direction aimed at lexical-semantic development, clarifying the meaning of words on the basis of subject experience, teaching synonymous series in a practical context, and linking units expressing spatial and temporal relationships with sensorimotor experience [2], [8]. The third direction focused on the functional formation of grammatical construction, and word groups and grammatical forms were strengthened in situations where communication needs were associated, through small dialogues, role-playing games, and storytelling. The fourth area focused on developing coherent speech and communicative competence, focusing on listening comprehension, planned speaking, asking and answering questions, speech etiquette, and communication strategies[9]. The sessions were conducted individually and in small groups, adapted to the children's level of vision, speech profile, and psychological characteristics. When evaluating the results, the pre- and post-experimental diagnostic sections were compared, and the structure, stability, and situational dependence of speech errors were qualitatively analyzed.

The results of the study showed that the content of correctional and speech therapy work in preparing children with visual impairments for school gives significant positive changes only when it covers all levels of the language system in combination with compensatory sensory supports. One of the typical cases observed during the diagnostic phase was that in many children, errors in sound pronunciation may appear as a primary problem, but in-depth analysis, inaccuracies in phonemic differentiation, poor auditory

separation of word content, and insufficient connection of word meaning with subject experience were revealed as more systemic difficulties. In particular, the vocabulary of prepositions, adverbs, and units expressing spatial relationships, as well as generalizing concepts, was limited in many participants; this was found to reduce the language readiness that is important for understanding educational instructions and mastering mathematical concepts upon entering school. At the end of the formative experience, a significant qualitative change was noted in indicators related to phonemic perception. Since children were taught to distinguish sounds not only by hearing, but also with the help of articulatory kinesthetic perception and tactile support, they showed more stable results in operations such as separating minimal pairs, determining the number of syllables, and finding the sound at the beginning and end of a word. Importantly, these changes began to be observed not only in training, but also in everyday speech situations: children more often resorted to metacommunicative actions such as asking for a word again, clarifying, and controlling their pronunciation. This indicates that the psycholinguistic component of preparation for reading and writing is being strengthened.

The results obtained in the lexical-semantic direction showed that semantic accuracy and the use of words in a situational context increased rather than a quantitative increase in vocabulary. Not only naming the object, but also forming an understanding by touching it, separating its parts, discussing its function, and comparing it with other objects led to a deepening of the vocabulary. Also, as a result of teaching spatial terms together with movement, direction, and tactile exploration, the use of units such as "on", "under", "between", and "next to" became more accurate and less erroneous. These changes are important from the point of view of school preparation, since the correct understanding and implementation of spatial instructions during the lesson is the main condition for educational activity. The results on grammatical construction showed that children's syntactic planning ability in constructing sentences increased. At the beginning of the experiment, there were often cases of teleshort sentences, the use of plural and declension suffixes interchangeably, and the use of verb tenses ambiguously. However, at the end of the experiment,

skills such as expanding sentences in accordance with the needs of communication, expressing cause-and-effect relationships, and maintaining sequence became relatively stable. The role of the functional approach was clearly seen here: when grammatical forms were taught not as separate “rules”, but as a means of creating meaning in conversation, story, and game situations, their mastery accelerated. The results of connected speech and communicative competence also showed significant changes. Children achieved more accurate results than before in skills such as maintaining attention during listening comprehension, distinguishing the main idea of the text heard, and telling important details sequentially. Pragmatic skills such as asking questions and responding appropriately to questions in dialogic speech, listening to the interlocutor without interrupting, and clarifying what they did not understand strengthened. These changes are also inextricably linked to psychological readiness for school, meaning that the child will have more resources to actively respond to teacher instructions and adapt to classroom communication norms.

The study showed that the content of correctional and speech therapy work in preparing children with visual impairments for school is highly effective when it is aimed at developing phonemic perception, lexical-semantic accuracy, grammatical construction and coherent speech as a whole system. The multisensory approach, that is, teaching language units in a functional context based on auditory, tactile and kinesthetic supports, strengthens psycholinguistic readiness for school, enriches communication strategies and expands the possibilities of understanding educational instructions. Theoretically, the article substantiates a modular content model for the integration of typhlopedagogy and speech therapy, and practically provides directions for organizing individual and group classes in preschool institutions. In the future, it is advisable to expand research in the area of various degrees of visual impairment, concomitant disorders and factors of adaptation to an inclusive classroom. One of the important factors in ensuring the effectiveness of correctional and speech therapy work is the establishment of an early diagnosis and differential approach. Difficulties in speech development in children with visual impairments are often latent, hiding deeper psycholinguistic problems behind minor errors

in external speech. Therefore, speech therapy examinations should include a comprehensive assessment of the level of formation of the phonemic hearing, auditory memory, speech planning, and semantic system, not only at the level of the articulatory apparatus or pronunciation.

Practical experience shows that when working with children with visual impairments, methods based on traditional visual materials are not sufficiently effective. Therefore, the systematic use of a multisensory approach, that is, providing knowledge through auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic channels, is of paramount importance. For example, when teaching sounds, it is effective to strengthen not only the differentiation through hearing, but also the perception of articulatory movements by hand (tactile control), and the understanding of muscle movements during sound production (kinesthetic perception). This approach, along with developing phonemic awareness, also has a positive impact on the formation of writing skills.

Also, the use of game technologies should be an integral part of correctional speech therapy work. Role-playing games, didactic games and movement exercises increase speech activity in children, increase motivation to communicate, and allow them to use the learned language units in real situations. In particular, through plot-role-playing games, children master social roles, which contributes to the development of communicative competence.

Cooperation with parents is also an important component of the correctional process. Simple but systematic exercises performed at home - for example, describing objects, composing stories, and verbally explaining everyday situations - significantly accelerate the speech development of children. Therefore, speech therapists and educators should methodologically support parents and give them individual recommendations.

In addition, special training of teachers is also important in preparing children with visual impairments for school in inclusive education. Teachers should organize the lesson process taking into account the peculiarities of speech development, give clear and systematic verbal instructions, and use tactile and auditory supports when necessary. This will facilitate the child's adaptation to educational activities.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, in the process of preparing children with visual impairments for school education, it is important to organize the content of correctional speech therapy based on a systematic and integrative approach. The harmonious formation of the phonemic, lexical-semantic, grammatical and communicative speech components of speech development serves to strengthen the psycholinguistic readiness of children. A multisensory approach — methods based on auditory, tactile and kinesthetic supports — expands compensatory capabilities in conditions of visual impairment and helps to effectively develop speech and communicative skills.

Adapting individual and small group classes to the developmental characteristics of children, the widespread use of game technologies, and the use of communication-oriented methods increase speech activity and ensure the practical application of language units. At the same time, establishing cooperation with parents and working with teachers based on a special approach facilitate children's adaptation to the educational process.

This approach serves to effectively organize correctional and speech therapy work in the preschool education system, strengthen children's readiness for educational activities, and ensure their successful participation in inclusive education.

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