

ПСИХОЛОГІЯ. СОЦІАЛЬНА ПЕДАГОГІКА. РОБОТА З ОБДАРОВАНИМИ ДІТЬМИ

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Alla CHERNIY,

*Philosophy Doctor in Political Sciences,
Associate Professor,*

*Rector Rivne Regional Institute
of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education,
Rivne, Ukraine*

ORCID: 0000-0002-7258-248X

e-mail: a.chernij@roippo.org.ua

Oksana KOLODYCH,

*Philosophy Doctor in Special Psychology Sciences,
the Chief of the Inclusive*

*Education Supporting Resource Centre,
Rivne Regional Institute
of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education,
Rivne, Ukraine*

ORCID: 0000-0001-8909-782X

e-mail: kassana17@ukr.net

COMMUNICATIVE-ORIENTED STUDY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES BY CHILDREN WITH MENTAL RETARDATION

Abstract. *The research revealed the problem of learning language as a means of social interaction. Today in the special psychology and methods of psycho-pedagogical support of children with special educational needs a new area of support is developing, called «communicative approach» to learning foreign languages as a means of overcoming speech disorders. The communicative approach to the study of foreign languages is considered, the difficulties of which are due to the fact that the communication process is an extremely complex phenomenon, goes beyond the field of linguistic analysis.*

It was described the purpose of a communicative approach to learning foreign languages by children with mental retardation can be formulated as the acquisition of language and speech competence.

The psychological and pedagogical system of support for children with mental retardation are formed significantly expands the semantics of the term «speech competence» and allows distinguishing such concepts as: verbal-communicative

competence, linguistic competence, social competence, etc. Communicative-oriented teaching of foreign languages to children with mental retardation is aimed at overcoming the shortcomings and limitation of already known methods, especially audio lingual is considered. The communicative principle of formation of speech competence in the study of foreign languages is a further development and logical continuation of methods that focus on teaching oral foreign language to children with mental retardation.

Thus, communication for children with mental retardation is the main source of acquiring knowledge about the surrounding reality, a means of gaining experience, a way to improve the language means used in practical speech activities. Communication is a major factor in overcoming disorders in children with mental retardation and promotes the formation of thinking and self-awareness.

Key words: *children with mental retardation, speech competence, the level of formation of oral speech, the method of correction, overcoming disorders, self-awareness.*

Алла ЧЕРНІЙ,
кандидат політичних наук, доцент,
ректор Рівненського обласного інституту
післядипломної педагогічної освіти,
м. Рівне, Україна
ORCID: 0000-0002-7258-248X
e-mail: a.chernij@roippo.org.ua

Оксана КОЛОДИЧ,
кандидат психологічних наук, доцент,
завідувач Ресурсного центру
підтримки інклюзивної освіти
Рівненського обласного інституту
післядипломної педагогічної освіти,
м. Рівне, Україна
ORCID: 0000-0001-8909-782X
e-mail: kassana17@ukr.net

КОМУНІКАТИВНО-ОРІЄНТОВАНЕ ВИВЧЕННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ ДІТЬМИ ІЗ ЗАТРИМКОЮ ПСИХІЧНОГО РОЗВИТКУ

Анотація. У дослідженні розкрито проблему вивчення мови як засобу соціальної взаємодії. Доведено, що сьогодні у спеціальній психології та методиці психолого-педагогічного супроводу дітей з особливими освітніми потребами розвивається новий напрям підтримки, що одержав назву «комунікативного підходу» до вивчення іноземних мов як засобу подолання мовленнєвих порушень. Окреслено, що комунікативний підхід до вивчення іноземних мов, труднощі якого обумовлені тим, що процес комунікації є надзвичайно складним явищем, виходить зі сфери лінгвістичного аналізу.

Мету комунікативного підходу до вивчення іноземних мов дітьми із затримкою психічного розвитку обґрунтовано як оволодіння мовною та мовленнєвою компетентністю.

Сформовано психолого-педагогічну систему засобів психолого-педагогічної підтримки дітей із затримкою психічного розвитку, що значно розширює семантику терміна «мовленнєва компетентність» та дозволяє виокремити такі поняття, як: «вербально-комунікативна компетентність», «лінгвістична компетентність», «соціальна компетентність» та ін. Розглянуто комунікативно-орієнтоване навчання іноземних мов дітей із затримкою психічного розвитку, що спрямоване на подолання недоліків і обмеженості уже відомих методів, зокрема аудіолінгвального. Комунікативний принцип формування мовленнєвої компетентності у процесі вивчення іноземних мов визначено як подальший розвиток і логічне продовження методів, які концентрують увагу на навчанні усної іноземної мови дітей із затримкою психічного розвитку.

З'ясовано, що недостатнє володіння мовленнєвими навичками перешкоджає дітям із затримкою психічного розвитку опанувати навчальний матеріал, поєднується із неналежним рівнем сформованості усного мовлення або комунікативної компетентності, але педагоги не завжди можуть визначити причини

таких порушень та їх проявів, а отже, надати відповідну допомогу. Застосування звичайних методів корекції не завжди є ефективними.

У результаті проведеного дослідження доведено, що спілкування для дітей із затримкою психічного розвитку є основним джерелом надходження знань про навколишню дійсність, засобом набуття досвіду, способом удосконалення мовних засобів, що використовуються у практичній мовленнєвій діяльності, головним фактором подолання порушень, який сприяє формуванню мислення і самосвідомості.

Ключові слова: діти із затримкою психічного розвитку, мовленнєва компетентність, рівень сформованості усного мовлення, метод корекції, подолання порушень, самосвідомість.

Statement of the problem. The relevance of learning language as a means of social interaction, interest in the problems of foreign language communication is an expected result of development of linguistics, psychology, sociolinguistics, because «communication always involves the exchange of views, exchange of information, because such communication satisfies practical and intellectual needs of the person in the course of his professional and social activity» (Omelchenko, 2015, pp. 375–385). This is extremely important for children with special educational needs, especially for children with mental retardation.

Analysis of research and publications. In modern special psychology, the problem of mental retardation is one of the most important. A number of studies in this field are devoted to the etiology – N. Bastun, M. Bachernikov, L. Prokhorenko, the course – T. Vlasova, T. Ilyashenko, K. Lebedynska, T. Sak, the search for means of correction – A. Kolupayeva, V. Lubovskyy, N. Makarchuk, M. Rozhdestvenska, the development of communicative competence – O. Babyak, M. Konovalova, I. Logvinova, I. Omelchenko, O. Sementsova.

In the studies of the mentioned authors on the problem of mental retardation, many important issues were passed over. In particular, the place and role of learning a foreign language in the system of psycho-pedagogical correction of disorders in mental development, the possibility of forming speech competence in children with mental retardation in the process of its study.

The use of the term «communicative competence» in the methodology is directly related to the focus on communicatively oriented learning of a foreign language, with the transfer of emphasis from the forms of speech phenomena to their function.

Communicative competence, as D. Hymes says, is a competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner (Hymes, 1966, pp. 114–158).

Such an interpretation by D. Hymes of communicative competence denotes the intuitive skill that a native speaker acquires as a result of language practice (Hymes, 1972, pp. 269–293).

Today in the special psychology and methods of psycho-pedagogical support of children with special educational needs a new area of support is developing, called «communicative approach» to learning foreign languages as a means of overcoming speech disorders, the occurrence and development of which is connected with the names of scientists such as C. J. Brumfit, M. Canale and others (Brumfit, 1984; Canale, 1983).

Currently, there are many definitions of communicative competence, but in their essence they all come to the same thing: the ability to use language correctly and appropriately in different communication situations.

The purpose of the article. Considering this, the purpose of the study is the need to substantiate the concept «speech competence in children with mental retardation».

Presentation of the main study material. The communicative approach to the study of foreign languages, the difficulties of which are due to the fact that the communication process is an extremely complex phenomenon, goes beyond the field of linguistic analysis (Sak, 2005). Participation in the communication process requires from communicators more than just understanding the logical and grammatical structure of expression, as well as its lexical content. The process of speech competence (especially foreign language competence) is such a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that its analysis is hardly possible within one science. The process of teaching children with mental retardation foreign language communication will be no less difficult, as it requires the development of methodologically substantiated recommendations based on the latest research in the field of psychology, pedagogy, linguistics, sociolinguistics, etc.

The purpose of a communicative approach to learning foreign languages by children with mental retardation can be formulated as the acquisition of language and speech competence. The concept of «communicative (or speech) competence» was proposed by D. Hymes in contrast to the «linguistic competence» of N. Chomsky and provides a set of speech skills and abilities, the possibility of their practical use, depending on the situations and conditions of speech (Hymes, 1972; Chomsky, 1965).

In modern linguistics and psychology, the concept «speech competence» refers to the level of mastery of

linguistic competence, if a certain amount of speech skills, the ability to compare language means with the tasks and conditions of communication, and the ability to organize communication taking into account the social norms of interaction and communicative expediency of expression.

Further development of psycho-pedagogical support for children with mental retardation significantly expands the semantics of the term «speech competence» and allows to distinguish such concepts as: verbal-communicative competence, linguistic competence, social competence, etc.

Interpretation of speech competence of O. Sementsova is not exhaustive, as a large amount of studies are currently devoted to this problem, but it reflects the opinion formed in the psychological and methodological literature on the concept of «speech competence» and allows to come to conclusions about the main characteristics of communicative approach to learning a foreign language by children with mental retardation (Sementsova, 2010, pp. 177–180). The issues of the types and levels of speech competence has not yet received a proper substantiation and unique practical solution. This is especially true of the formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation.

However, the further development of the theory of speech competence has led to the emergence of a communicative approach of learning foreign languages, which makes it possible to adapt children with mental retardation in the language environment. It became firmly established in the methodology of teaching foreign languages due to the works of C. Candlin, M. Short, H. G. Widdowson and other authors (Short, Candlin, 1989; Widdowson, 1998, pp. 3–14).

Communicative-oriented teaching of foreign languages to children with mental retardation is aimed at overcoming the shortcomings and limitation of already known methods, especially audio lingual. The communicative principle of formation of speech competence in the study of foreign languages is a further development and logical continuation of methods that focus on teaching oral foreign language to children with mental retardation.

Insufficient mastery of speech skills prevents children with mental retardation from mastering educational material, combined with an inappropriate level of formation of oral speech, or communicative competence, but teachers can not always determine the reasons for such disorders and their manifestations provide appropriate assistance. The use of conventional correction methods is not always effective.

Overcoming speech disorders in children with mental retardation is carried out in the process of learning foreign languages through active work on all aspects: on pronunciation and phonemic perception, on sound analysis and writing, on enriching students' vocabulary and practical mastery of grammatical language structure.

The formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation is aimed at developing the skills of practical use of language structures with their communicative functions in everyday communication situations. Thus, for successful communication in a foreign language, students with mental retardation must master not only a certain set of knowledge of linguistic nature, general concepts of language, language structures, but also be able to apply received knowledge in practice, because in the process of communication it is impossible to separate phonetics,

vocabulary or grammar. Thus, an integrated approach is important for the formation of speech competence of children with mental retardation, which allows to rationally combining learning of different kinds of language activities with a common goal – communication in a foreign language.

Speaking of teaching spoken language, it should be taken into account that there is a difference between teaching material and language means used for the process of everyday communication, information exchange, but until recently it was not taken into account in teaching foreign languages, especially for children with mental retardation. Most of the existing methods of learning foreign languages form only some practical skills of language use, without taking into account real communication situations. The complexity of the development of speech competence, learning the skills and abilities of foreign language communication of children with mental retardation depends on the process of communication connected with different kinds of social, mental, educational activities. The analysis of the phenomena of spoken language and the accompanying paralinguistic means of communication is connected with difficulties and cannot be performed with the help of linguistic categories and concepts. Teaching different kinds of speech activity to children with mental retardation should correspond to real communication; develop the ability to move from one kind of speech activity to another, depending on change in communication conditions.

Teachers who work with children with mental retardation and promote the formation of speech competence through foreign languages should explain how the communication process takes place, the appropriateness of the use of gestures and facial expressions, the need for distance between communicators, the intended reaction of the addressee and much more, which is the main part of speech behavior and is the concept of «speech competence». Such information is necessary and crucial for the success of communicative interaction between children with mental retardation and the environment, and is necessary in terms of methods of teaching foreign languages for this group of children, starting from the first level of education. Children with mental retardation do not understand all the statements, but it should be taken into account that this is a long process of developing ideas about intonation, rhythm, tone, speech rate, gestures, facial expressions and other features of conversational style, learning which in the following stages will not be successful if you do not focus on it.

The formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation opens important prospects for the correctional and developmental process. In particular, the consideration of the language phenomena not only in terms of language structures, grammar, vocabulary, but also a large list of communicative functions. The formation of speech competence does not mean a refusal to master grammar or vocabulary, but significantly expands the possibilities of traditional teaching methods based on knowledge and use of language structures and determines the choice of language material, according to the purpose and objectives of communication, allows to reduce the amount of educational material to the required minimum. Thus, H. G. Widdowson criticizes «grammar curricula», made on a structural basis, for «comprehensive nature», which includes phenomena and structures that are irrelevant for communication

purposes and that are inaccessible to children with mental retardation (Widdowson, 1998).

A distinctive feature of speech competence of children with mental retardation is the selection of educational material on a conceptual, semantic basis, when attention is paid to the semantic rather than the formal aspect of expression. The study of D. Wilkins «Notional syllabuses: theory into practice» identified the further development of this area in the process of correctional work with children with mental retardation (Wilkins, 1976, pp. 5–17).

The author analyzes two strategies for the formation of speech competence in the process of learning foreign languages: a) a synthetic way of learning by the principle of gradual acquaintance with individual aspects of the phenomenon, which form a holistic picture; b) an analytical method of learning (less clearly defined) is reduced to the idea of the whole, on the basis of which students will later be able to independently synthesize the private aspects of this phenomenon.

The organization of educational material on a conceptual or semantic basis, as D. Wilkins believes, provides the semantic aspect of expression, meets the principle of communicative orientation in learning and is more effective for the formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation.

The term «speech competence», which was defined by D. Wilkins as a concept to describe communicative needs, has become widespread in the methodological and psychological literature (Wilkins, 1976, pp. 5–17). In the process of forming speech competence in children with mental retardation while learning foreign languages, it is advisable to agree on the choice of means of communication for the purpose of the communicative act and the function that language will perform in a particular case: agreement/disagreement, invitation, request, greeting, information exchange, etc. The functional use of communicative means reflects the essence of the concept of speech competence, where functions and purpose are two inseparable aspects of this process.

Thus, «concepts» are «elements of meaning» that can be denoted by nouns, pronouns, verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, adjectives or adverbs. At the same time, the categories of the communicative function depend exclusively on the purpose of communication; the concepts depend on the choice of functions, elements of speech and the topic under discussion. The essence of the process of formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation during the study of foreign languages involves consideration of language structures in terms of their functions and concepts transmitted by them, within a specific communication situation.

The functional-conceptual approach is based on the practical purpose of language use. Any communicative action will be functionally organized for a specific situation and a specific topic, will combine situation-specific and topic-specific concepts. The selection of educational material for children with mental retardation on the basis of functions and concepts will correspond to the speech or communicative tasks of learning more than the educational material selected by a structural basis. Any approach in the process of formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation should be systematic. The functional-conceptual approach takes into account the

communicative needs of children with mental retardation, who study and has a fairly high level of organization. General criteria for choosing functions and concepts in the process of selecting educational material for children with mental retardation will promote the acquisition of flexible speech competence and communicative behavior.

The terms «functional-conceptual» and «communicative» approaches should be considered as close in meaning, synonyms, this is how they are interpreted in the scientific literature. The practical use of one or another method in the collection educational process for children with mental retardation is connected with the structuring of educational material in the sequence that corresponds to the purpose and objectives. Regarding the formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation, such methods are especially relevant because the tasks that are defined in the educational process require a more specific and complete structure of educational material and the creation of communicative educational programs. Implementation of these tasks using other programs deprives of the benefits and prospects that open. Existing educational programs for learning foreign languages do not sufficiently take into account the requirements for the formation of communicative competence in children with mental retardation and contain a set of certain phonetic, lexical, grammatical forms that students must master. The consequence of this is a violation of the integrity of the perception of language material by children with mental retardation, which contradicts their ability to compare certain language forms with one or another meaning, if semantic (meaningful) concepts are stratified into a number of other meanings. Combining meanings into concepts for children with mental retardation is the greatest difficulty in the process of communication in foreign languages.

Communicative approach to the formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation can be described as a promising area that has become the most influential in modern psychology and methods of corrective influence on children with special educational needs. Although many problems of the communicatively oriented educational process are not sufficiently solved, there are potential opportunities for intensification and improvement of the quality of education in children with mental retardation. That is, children with mental retardation should know that the following forms can be used to greet in English: Hi!, Hello!, How do you do!, Good morning!, Good evening!, Good afternoon! and be able to appropriately use these forms in communicative interaction. It should be noted that the difference between the form and content of speech is a special difficulty for children with mental retardation. For example, the sentence «Would you like some more tea?» can be used as an intention to treat someone and as a hint that the guest should go.

Thus, the use of language means with the use of language rules in the process of communication requires not only grammatical correctness, but also compliance with the communication situation and involves the development of two types of skills:

- 1) the ability to choose the right form of sentence in accordance with a certain communicative context;
- 2) the ability to recognize what function a sentence performs in a speech situation.

The formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation does not involve the ability of students to express their thoughts in sentences or other lexical forms, but includes the ability to respond in communication situations both verbally and mentally, because «mental reaction is the basis of verbal reaction» and demonstrates direct connection of speech and thinking. Thanks to thinking there is a choice and use of language means and ability to apply various means of expression of the same thought that allows to formulate it exhaustively. Children with mental retardation in the process of learning foreign languages through thinking determine the content of expression and the choice of language means, which contributes to the successful formation of skills and abilities of communicative interaction (Xiaoju, 1984, pp. 62–79).

Thus, communicative competence is combined with knowledge and skills to adhere to accepted norms and rules of speech behavior. That is why during the educational process it is necessary to stimulate the communicative activity of students with mental retardation. To this purpose, it is necessary to create tasks that would reproduce real communication situations and require speech behavior (communicative behavior). Only if such learning structure is provided language competence can become communicative.

In order to improve the process of learning foreign languages by children with mental retardation, it is necessary to form certain knowledge about language etiquette as a socially important aspect in the rules of communicative interaction. In addition, during the educational process it is necessary to provide information about the country whose language is being studied, about its residents, customs and traditions. Country-specific information, understanding of language etiquette, norms of socially acceptable behavior, non-verbal means of communication – all these are direct components of communicative interaction, which must be mastered by children with mental retardation.

Conclusions. Thus, speech competence is a way of performing speech actions based on the knowledge and skills acquired in the process of educational activities while learning foreign languages. The main principles of formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation are the following:

- formation of a system of knowledge about language, speech and its types, about the rules of construction of utterance, text, language styles, language etiquette;
- mastering the speech competence of children with mental retardation allows to comprehend the purpose of activities, techniques and means of practical use of acquired knowledge;
- formation of such indicators as mentality, awareness, completeness, stability of speech competence;
- the relationship of speech skills and norms of behavior in society, which allows the use of principles used for the development of abilities: the speech process is not of reproductive but of creative nature, meets the principles of correctional and developmental learning, is determined by positive motivation.

Thus, communication for children with mental retardation is the main source of acquiring knowledge about the surrounding reality, a means of gaining experience, a way to improve the language means used in practical speech

activities. Communication is a major factor in overcoming disorders in children with mental retardation and promotes the formation of thinking and self-awareness.

Prospects for further studies. The carried out study does not cover all aspects of the complex and multifaceted problem of the formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation while learning foreign languages. The prospect of further study is to develop a holistic psychologically substantiated concept of the formation of speech competence in children with mental retardation in the process of learning foreign languages. Educational programs aimed at creating conditions for successful social adaptation of children with mental retardation in the process of learning foreign languages need further development.

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