

DEVELOPING SPEECH IN CHILDREN WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SETTINGS

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Abstract

This article discusses the issues related to developing speech in children with hearing impairments within inclusive education settings. It analyzes the specific features of speech development and the influence of hearing impairments on the child's socialization and learning process. The role of special pedagogical approaches, speech therapy sessions, and modern technologies in inclusive education is examined. Additionally, the collaboration among teachers, parents, and speech-language specialists is highlighted as an essential factor in speech development. The article aims to identify effective methods for working with children who have hearing impairments.

Keywords: Inclusive education, audiovisual tools, sensorimotor activities, pictograms, didactic games, interactive activities, correction, cochlear implant.

Introduction

Currently, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, has issued several decrees aimed at developing inclusive education. One such decree, No. PQ-4860, adopted on October 13, 2020, outlines measures for further improving the education and upbringing system for children with special educational needs. The concept for developing inclusive education in the public education system for 2020–2025 and the roadmap for its implementation were approved. Based on this decree, a number of initiatives are being implemented to introduce the inclusive education system.

Inclusive Education is a system of education that ensures equal opportunities for all students by taking into account the diversity of special educational needs and individual abilities within general education institutions. Inclusive education is organized in the form of classrooms within general education schools.

Educating children with hearing impairments involves studying the laws of their upbringing and learning, improving the system of developing auditory perception,

enabling them to work in vocational fields, enhancing technical teaching aids, ensuring the continuity between preschool and school education, coordinating the work of health and public education sectors across the country, and addressing issues of early diagnosis.

The core goal behind the activities of all institutions is to prevent and correct developmental disorders in children, to shape their personality comprehensively, and to prepare them for life and work. This overarching goal guides the functioning of the entire education system and each of its branches.

Children with hearing impairments often cannot fully perceive sounds in their environment, which negatively affects their speech development. Such children may have a limited vocabulary, construct grammatically incorrect sentences, and experience pronunciation issues. Therefore, working with them in inclusive education requires special approaches.

There are two main categories of students with hearing impairments who are included in inclusive education classrooms:

Children with Hearing Impairments in Inclusive Education: Speech Development Strategies

- **First category** – children with cochlear implants;
- **Second category** – children with hearing loss up to 60 dB who do not have additional developmental disorders.

These children may already have some auditory experience and basic verbal communication skills when using hearing aids. In some cases, their speech may be developed up to 30–40%. Initially, their experience with speech and hearing is minimal. However, when auditory training is carried out after lessons using a hearing trainer, a significant improvement in speech acquisition is typically observed by the end of the first semester.

The family's role is crucial—children must remain in a continuous verbal environment at home, reinforce what they learn in class, and complete exercises aimed at improving their hearing. **Corrective sessions** for children with hearing impairments are conducted by special educators for 20 minutes daily and consist of two parts:

1. **Auditory training and hearing development**
2. **Formation and development of pronunciation and verbal speech**

Activities to Promote Speech Development in Children with Hearing Impairments within Inclusive Education:

- **Speech therapy sessions:** Focus on developing phonemic hearing, teaching correct pronunciation, and expanding vocabulary.
- **Didactic games and interactive activities:** Spark children's interest, encourage communication, and help them express thoughts through gestures, facial expressions, and speech.

- **Use of technical devices:** Hearing aids, cochlear implants, and audiovisual tools enhance auditory sensitivity and improve the ability to distinguish and comprehend sounds.

Practical experience from many preschools and general schools has shown effective strategies for working with children with hearing impairments:

- **Pictograms and visual supports:** Use of images and symbols to aid understanding—particularly helpful for children with limited or underdeveloped verbal skills.

- **Sensorimotor activities:** Exercises targeting the activation of oral, lip, and tongue muscles to improve articulation (e.g., stretching lips, lifting the tongue, sound-based games).

- **Encouraging communication:** Supporting all verbal and non-verbal (facial, gestural) communication attempts by the child.

- **Developing written speech:** Expanding vocabulary through writing and drawing, memorizing new words, and using them in sentences.

Pedagogical collaboration and monitoring

A key aspect of working with each child is creating an **individualized development plan** that considers the child's potential, hearing level, and speech capabilities. Educators and specialists evaluate the child's development in stages and adjust teaching methods and sessions based on monitoring results.

Conclusion:

Teaching children with hearing impairments in inclusive settings and fostering their speech development is a critical issue. Research shows that individual approaches, along with the use of specialized pedagogical and speech therapy methods, play an essential role in enhancing their verbal activity. Within the framework of inclusive education, teachers, defectologists, and parents must work collaboratively to ensure equal participation, socialization, and the development of communication skills. With love, patience, and the right approach, these children can be allowed to find their rightful place in society.

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