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ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM OF CREATING PREREQUISITES FOR SPEECH PRODUCTION IN YOUNG PRESCHOOLERS WITH GENERAL SPEECH UNDERDEVELOPMENT THROUGH ART ACTIVITIES

It is crucial to prioritize teaching speech production to children with general speech underdevelopment at the initial stages of speech therapy, as it is in the early preschool age that the basis is laid for subsequent mastery of the means of communication.

The beginning of this period coincides with the onset of one of the age crises, which is accompanied by a sharp and radical restructuring of the existing personal characteristics in children and transition to a new type of relationships with others. The characteristic features of this age include stubbornness, disobedience, obstinacy, and negativism.

Underdevelopment of the basic components of the speech system – phonetic-phonemic, lexical-grammatical, prosodic – determines the peculiarity of the course of this stage of development in children with general speech underdevelopment. Insufficient speech activity of children in this category negatively affects all aspects of a child's personality: the development of cognitive activity is hindered, all forms of communication and interpersonal interaction are disrupted. Non-verbal characteristics of children in this category include a decrease in the level of verbal intelligence, insufficient concentration, limited attention span, significant lag in the development of explicit memory, weak regulation of voluntary activity, motor underdevelopment, and emotional immaturity (I.T. Vlasenko, Y. F. Garkusha, N. S. Zhukova, R. I. Lalaeva, R. E. Levina, I. Yu. Levchenko, E. M. Mastyukova, O. G. Prikhodko, E. F. Sobotovich, O. N. Usanova, T. B. Filicheva, G. V. Chirkina, etc.). The presence of secondary deviations in children creates additional difficulties in acquiring coherent speech.

According to clinical, psychological, and pedagogical studies this group of children has been found to be highly diverse not only in terms of the extent to which their speech defects are evident, but also in terms of the structure and mechanisms of these defects. In this regard, the study of the formation of prerequisites for speech production in young preschoolers with general speech underdevelopment becomes particularly important, i.e. the conditions under which the formation, generation, and further development of speech occur.

Although the problem of correcting speech underdevelopment has been sufficiently researched (L.S. Volkova, N.S. Zhukova, R.I. Lalaeva, E.M. Mastukova, O.S. Orlova, T.B. Filicheva, G.V. Chirkina, S.I. Shakhovskaya, A.V. Yastrebova and others), it is essential to improve and incorporate new elements into existing methods as well as to develop fundamentally new approaches. Thus, one of the goals of the State Program for the Development of Special Education in the Republic of Belarus for 2012-2016 is to improve the system of special education, enhance its quality and accessibility for individuals with psycho-physical development peculiarities. The development of program-methodological support which takes into account the needs and capabilities of the children is one of the priority tasks. The implementation of modern scientific and methodological solutions in educational practice will improve the overall quality of special education.

Utilizing art as a means for corrective development is a valuable approach to help children acquire social experience. Serving as a specific tool for understanding reality, visual art activity is of great importance for intellectual and, in particular, speech development. Its practical nature creates favorable conditions for enhancing children's potential abilities, ensuring the effectiveness of corrective work at all stages of development.

Recently, art along with play, has been attracting more attention from specialists in the field of corrective pedagogy and psychology (G.M. Galaktionova [1], A.V. Kiseleva [5], G.V. Kuznetsova [6], E.A. Shilova [8], etc.), becoming the leading activity for preschoolers. The results of their research are actively being implemented in modern educational practice. Thus, engaging in art activities is used as a valuable tool for children with intellectual disabilities and sensory impairments (visual, auditory, tactile-kinesthetic), as it can aid in the development of visual representation, creative thinking, fine motor skills and speech abilities.

However, insufficient attention is paid to art activities as an important corrective tool in working with children with speech underdevelopment. There are only a few works addressing this issue in detail, such as "Correction of optical and motor impairments of writing among primary pupils using art" (T.V. Astakhova) and "Educational technology for developing voluntary regulation of speech activity in preschoolers with stuttering through drawing" (E.G. Karaseva). The results of these studies confirm the positive impact of this productive activity in correcting stuttering and difficulties with written language.

Researchers have noted that children tend to engage in verbal communication while drawing. It should be underlined that children's actions accompanied by speech become more advanced, meaningful, purposeful, regulated, and rhythmic. The correlation between a child's verbal expression during drawing and their intellectual level has been established. (E.A. Ekzhanova [2], 2003; A.N. Orlova, 2000 [7]). Narrating their actions and intentions during drawing allows children to understand and highlight the qualities of the depicted object; by planning their actions, they learn to establish their sequence. It is also important that a child relies on several analyzers (tactile, visual, auditory) simultaneously during productive activities, which also positively influences

language development. From what has been said, it can be concluded that art and speech activities are not isolated from each other but closely interconnected [3, p. 45-46].

Mastering drawing is mastering sign activity, which includes the acquisition of sign functions as designation and communication, allowing graphic messages to be complemented by verbal ones. Products of art activities can be regarded as texts carrying a certain message. This is the implementation of the communicative function: at different age stages, a child uses different artistic means, gradually mastering the functions of designation, representation, disclosure of reality, and expression of emotional and evaluative attitude towards it [4, p. 190].

The creativity demonstrated by a child activates the learning process: developing independence during art activities encourages children to acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities, and develops the ability for self-education and self-development.

Based on the above, it can be assumed that including elements of art activities in therapy sessions will contribute to creating prerequisites for speech production in children of early preschool age: cognitive, psycho physiological, emotional-personal, and language-related. The process of drawing facilitates the development of all higher mental functions, sensory motor skills, enriches emotional experience, and forms motivational and regulatory processes.

Thus, the problem of creating prerequisites for speech production of young preschoolers with general speech underdevelopment requires the development and implementation of special correctional approaches in practice, taking into account both distinct speech pathology and underdevelopment of personality and cognitive sphere. Art activities can be one of the effective means aimed at solving this problem. Their implementation should not be the responsibility of only psychologists, psychotherapists, and educators. It should be emphasized that the possibilities of practical application of art activities in speech therapy are quite broad and require further study in order to increase its effectiveness.

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