Peculiarities of using fine art in the development of coherent speech of students with mental and physical disorders

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Abstract

The article deals with theoretical aspects of implementation of innovative technology with the use of fine art in the development of coherent speech in children with mental and physical disorders.

Keywords: children with intellectual disabilities, secondary schools with inclusive form of education, coherent speech development, visual aids, fine arts, imaginative thinking, facilitated discussion

Introduction

According to the scientists, students perceive the work of art based on their life and artistic experience, listing first everything they see. Later on, more detailed description is added to their vocabulary. It is only at the last stage of perception when they systematize, analyse, and interpret what they have seen.
As far as our study deals with speech activity of students with developmental delay at secondary schools with an inclusive form of learning, the effectiveness of which depends on the use of visual arts, hereafter we are going consider the influence of paintings, drawings, a series of drawings that help develop eye-mindedness (visual and creative thinking) in students with special needs.

The development of coherent speech at school age, starting with a primary school, is accompanied by the formation of mental activity, enriching of emotional and speech experience, complexity of communication forms. To achieve a certain level of autonomy in practicing the gift of words, Ushinsky, K.D. (1869) advised to refer to the object, which the student says or writes about. The main purpose of this method is to create the conditions where children can observe, practice their logic and ability to properly communicate their observations and make logical conclusions. He urged to use the logic of art in order to gradually bring the student to a logical abstraction and generalization. There have been identified the main sources of children’s verbal creativity, where, along with creative exercises based on what is read or heard, it is important to use the works of art.

The purpose of this article is to prove the necessity of using visual means in the development of coherent speech in students with mental and physical disabilities.

Agreeing with the views of Ushinsky, K.D., Stoyunin, V.Ya. (1892), another prominent Russian pedagogue, emphasized that “...a child naturally develops only in close connection with nature and art.” He advised the wide use of various reproductive exercises based in the material of fine art related to nature and life around, recommended taking students on tours in order to enrich their sensory experiences, replenish their vocabulary and develop thinking. Researcher Zymnia, I.O. (1973) focuses on the meaningful relations between speech and the world of art and nature. She notes that means of fine arts are essential both for the learning content and for the methods of speech activities. She suggests that a teacher-practitioner should motivate and integrate general and partial objectives of each of the subjects in the curriculum that is the core program of training, development and education. She notes that they can be used to detect common grounds in substantial and procedural, i.e. operational and activity context, since visual-creative thinking dominated among primary school students. According to the scientist, visibility (visualization) is just one of the characteristics of the learning tools.

Hraborov, A.I. and Kashchenko, V.P. (1992) made an attempt to organize work aimed at speech development in students, to define clearly the types and techniques of the word with word, logical statement, using such tools as fine art.

It should be emphasized that the activities of a teacher are based on the ex-
perience of children, their vocabulary and stylistic stock, formed skills, namely the ability to explore the topic and the main idea of a statement, to communicate coherently the content of a picture in different forms – using description, narration, or argument.

Kashchenko, V.P. has emphasized the importance of having lessons with the use of visual aids in special schools for children with intellectual disabilities. The scientist pointed out that a remedial developmental class should be conducted on an integrated basis; however, visibility should not vary mechanically, it should promote students’ thinking operations, and, above all, analysis, synthesis, generalization, abstraction, and comparison.

In experimental studies, scientists-special education teachers (speech pathologists) describe that students with special needs should pay more attention of the means of fine arts, because such students poorly perceive the works of art.

A renowned scientist-special education teacher) indicates that when one uses learning tools, he should take into account the relations that exist between the system components and the specific characteristics of each component. He proposed to classify visual aids in one of the most logical way into:

1) natural visualization:
   — imagery (shaped) visualization – pictures, paintings, and photographs of a subject or a scene character;
2) illustratively-shaped visibility:
   — schematic visualization – charts, diagrams, graphs, object-operational plans;
   — graphic visualization – graphical and textual plans, tables;
3) audio-visual media:
   — symbolic ones – formulas, models, associative symbols, icons and so on.

In our study, we use illustratively-shaped visualization consisting of imagery, schematic, graphic, and symbolic ones. The imagery visualization includes pictures, paintings, photographs of a subject or a scene character.

It should be stressed that Hraborov, OM. emphasizes the emotional side of the work with fine art. “When we show a picture, children are able to perceive it as a whole, and then to analyse it and study in every detail, and then we come back again to its holistic perception. Secondly, the perception will be much clearer, more differentiated. It develops thinking and observation” (Hraborov, O.M., 1961, p. 183).

Research of the scientists shows that in the process of schooling verbal material is absorbed by students in a particular sense, or is separated from the visual experience. Hence, there is a possibility to demonstrate verbalism characteristic of younger students learning and inadequate use of knowledge in practice. Learning should increase the level of speech in children, enhance their mental development. Therefore, in the centre we have those learning tools that allow gradual increase of the visual
content of educational material up to the level when it is possible to switch to abstraction and generalization inherent to visual and imaginative thinking.

The use of visual aids, in particular fine art, enhances the quality of education, forms cognitive interest in a school subject and in the learning process in general. This is pointed out in the works of Russian pathologists Zankov, L.V., Dulnev, G.M., Perov, M.M., Puzanov, B.P., et al. These issues have not gone unnoticed by Ukrainian researchers either.

Thus, Sak, T.V. (2009) mentions that visual aids represent an important tool for implementation of this method. They are a powerful source of information and corrective influence on the processes of perception, mental activities of students with special needs, and are used at all levels of presentation of the educational material. At the informational and operational level, visualization is used for describing connections between objects, phenomena, their functional components in order to comprehend their core meaning; as well as a means to help students master the mode of action and its components embodied in a materialized form.

According to Vavina, L.S. (2001), the object of communication (a picture, a fairytale character, a toy, etc.) activates the speech of students, encourages them to use various types of communicative phrases.

In order to generate coherent speech by means of fine art, it is relevant to understand the conceptual and specific relationship between the subjects of humanitarian and natural cycle. In particular, the coherent speech lessons and integrated course “Fundamentals of Healthcare” in primary school are an example of such connections. Notional connections are divided into factual and conceptual-specific ones. The factual connections are established between the development of speech, visual arts and music.

Musical accompaniment in the class of coherent speech encourages a verbal, creative activity, fills it with emotional and sublime mood and thus, it becomes an active motivational component. In the process of music perception and identification of emotions, children with special needs learn to realize their aesthetic experience, to conduct a parallel between the subject of speech (after observation in nature) and the nature of music. Listening to music with closed eyes gives students an opportunity not only to imagine, feel the image, but also represent in memory the things imaginable on canvas. It stimulates the desire to verbally convey their feelings, emotions, things they have seen and heard, and this promotes natural development of coherent speech. As it is confirmed in the studies by Dmitrieva, I.V., Zymuldinova, A.S., Skrypnyk, T.V., the means of fine arts advocate the unity of teaching and education, they implement a comprehensive approach to the subject-based learning system.
Thus, the use of visual arts in the classroom helps students of 1-4 grades master the basic content of elementary education, by integrating knowledge from different disciplines, and at the same time, by accelerating the penetration of students into the world of art and nature, it focuses on productive speech activity.

One should note that the links between music and visual arts affect the level of speech culture of students, reveal opportunities to enrich their vocabulary, and stimulate both general and speech development of primary school children with special needs. This link is based on the use of scientific and natural study texts for stylistic and textual analysis. When students work with science-fiction texts, they can delve deeper into the content, enrich their vocabulary with terms, and learn logical and structural features of the texts.

Obviously, the use of interdisciplinary connections of a language and visual arts allows teachers to integrate the content of learning material and then to conduct integrated lessons, thereby providing intensive development of coherent speech.

Since most of changes in educational activities are in line with the technology of educational process, we should analyse the trends that have been lately defined in modern elementary school. It is necessary to stipulate that the technology of educational process means anything that is related to the content selection and structuring of educational material to be studied, including the principles and means of the process of learning itself.

It should be noted that the German educational theorist Kerschenschteiner, G.M. (1914) proposed an original method for organizing classes of coherent speech and drawing on an integrated basis. The researcher believed that just like every lesson should be the first language lesson, every branch of knowledge should provide some material for drawing. For primary school children drawing is associated with a clear and meaningful learning.

Rudolph Arnheim (2001), a prominent American psychologist and aesthetician, proved in his studies that coherent speech of primary school children cannot develop without the aesthetic perception of works of art. And this should occur by passive observation, but as an active dynamic process that is carried out in accordance with the organic laws of perception, the main of which is to maintain the overall balance of the general and its elements, for example in the form of a certain composition.

As a result of scientific research, the program “Visual Understanding in Education” (“Visual Thinking Strategies”) was offered by American researchers Abigail Housen, Philip Yenawine, Elaine Chu, Karin DeSantis (http://vtshome.org/). The program is based on the integration of coherent speech and art lessons. It enhances the role of art in school and in life of a young generation, makes
it possible to develop their ability to explore, to express their views and listen to
others, enables them to hone their observation and communication skills.

According to Ukrainian researchers (Vashulenko, M., Masol, L., Bibik, N.,
Zaiika, A., et al.), this program develops coherent (connected) speech in students,
teaches them tolerate different opinions in the course of collective search, encour-
gages discussion, enriches their aesthetic experience while discussing the works of
art of different times and nations, forms their individual attitude towards art.

These scientists believe that when you use a coherent (connected) speech
session within the integrated course syllabus by means of fine art, the basic mech-
anism is the method of steering debate or, in other words, facilitated discussions.
Facilitated discussion is an important way to adjust cognitive activity, stimulate vis-
ual-imagery and verbal-logical thinking of children who exchange ideas and expe-
riences in relation to works of art during the coherent speech lessons and during
extra-curricular educational activities.

The purpose of this discussion is to excite the curiosity of children, to en-
courage the birth of new questions, to evoke their willingness to communicate
with the works of art. During the facilitated discussions teachers can adjust stu-
dents’ cognitive attitudes, emotions and volition.

The form of facilitated discussion helps educators be open to new experi-
ence, methods and techniques of working with students in the current educational
environment. During the discussion, a teacher acts as a facilitator, his/her ques-
tions and feedback to the answers of children is a strategy, while the artwork in
question during the lesson is an incentive.

The strategy supports facilitated discussion, as it is based on specifically de-
finied questions, for instance:

— What is happening in the picture?
— What else is going on?
— What exactly do you see in the picture that makes you think so?
— What makes you feel pleased?
— Have you got any other questions?

Thus, the list of questions consists of questions-stimulus and questions-
energizers that lead to the most comprehensive coverage of the topic. Scientists be-
lieve that a significant factor in capturing this method is the ability to recognize not
only the content of students’ statements, but also to differentiate the types of arguments
— observations, additions, associations, clarifications, etc. This allows to paraphrase
correctly (make a clear and concise presentation of the main idea close to the subject
matter) and to select the most appropriate linguistic means. Due to the paraphrase,
a teacher is able to express his/her respect and trust, recognition of every thought; to
encourage active participation in the discussion; to observe the process of students’ thinking (linking together their thoughts and means of expression).

Thus, the paraphrase is an important instructional technique that triggers the whole program strategy aimed at the formation of both visual thinking and speech. It should be stressed that during the facilitated discussion every utterance made by students is accepted and taken into account, students’ feedback, action and behaviour are analysed, and introspection is carried out. Purposeful, deep impact on the basic sensory analysers (sight, hearing, touch, taste) inadvertently makes students share their comments and remarks, while the teacher – as a verbal model – teaches them to speak out, to form phrases and make them successful, meaningful, and accurate. It is worth noting that the facilitated discussion is a pro-paedeutic course for learning communication skills, and the visual thinking strategy (VTS) is an alternative methodological way to develop coherent (connected) speech of students with special needs by means of fine art.

Based on our analysis and development of guidance on the implementation of integrated lessons of coherent (connected) speech and visual arts in secondary schools with inclusive form of education, we touch upon the issue of replacing the traditional subject-based system with the integrated one. The bottom line is to introduce synchronous (slow) and simultaneous assimilation by students of several logically related, similar in content knowledge that in combination provides a complete picture of a certain part of the world, instead of sequential and personified mastering of certain subjects of the curriculum.

In terms of the organization of special education of students with special needs, Mendel, B., Weiss, W., Demor, J., Montessori, M., followed by other pathologists such as Her’ye, Ye.V., Gracheva, K.K., Chekhov, M.V., and other researchers in their theoretical work and practical activities emphasized the significance of works of art in the process of teaching the lessons of coherent (connected) speech.

Scientists-pathologists have found out that school-age children have very low speech activity during the perception of the works of art (Vavina, L.S., Sak, T.V., et al.). They experience difficulties in comparing objects, with perception and cognition, that is why speech is often transformed into a simple enumeration of objects (Zvereva, M.V., Lypkina, A.I.); generalization of objects is too broad, there is no need to name objects and their properties (Zankov, L.V., Petrova, V.G., Tarasenko, M.V., et al.). The scientific and methodological literature describes the conditions for increasing the efficiency of use of the works of art in a special school for the purpose of intellectual development of schoolchildren and correction of their emotional sphere, for the formation of speech and aesthetic development.
When scientists consider pictures and drawings as a means of visual aids in teaching language, they recommend using them with a small number of objects depicted. They also emphasize the importance of different questions related to the content of the story. Thus, the researcher Leniv, Z.P. (2007) notes that students in special schools are characterized by high fatigue; and repetitive activities lead to the formation of stereotypes. She suggests introducing various types of integrative lessons using visual means. In each lesson, the researcher recommends learning new material only in one subject; the rest should be repeated, made more profound, and consolidated. During a lesson, it is necessary to productively use action-oriented didactic games, to recite poems, to guess riddles, to listen to interesting stories, view slides, movies, TV shows, to sing and more.

**Conclusion**

While elaborating the system for the coherent speech development in students of special secondary schools during their communication according to pictures, we believe that first great propaedeutic work should be carried out during the first language lessons, interpretative reading, extracurricular activities, and only then teachers can familiarize their students with the works of art (Kashuba, L.V., Leniv, Z.P). Students receive tasks in advance: spelling, pronunciation, texts, poems, their own pictures on the subject of communication. When selecting the paintings (pictures) for discussion, one should take into account the following principles: consideration of the ideological content of the picture and its educational influence; the picture should not contain a large number of characters and objects; the picture should match the age of students and should be intelligible to them. The aforementioned methodological definitions are fundamental to our research, as far as children with special needs require intensive remedial training.

**References**


