

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Acquisition of Abstract Nouns by Children with Visual Impairments

Sabura Shuhrat qizi Xudayarova

Doctoral Researcher, Alisher Navoiy Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature, Uzbekistan

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Abstract

This article examines the process of acquiring abstract nouns by children with visual impairments and analyzes its psycholinguistic and pedagogical characteristics. The study explores the mechanisms underlying the formation of abstract concepts under conditions of limited visual perception, highlighting the role of verbal experience, social interaction, and compensatory abilities. Furthermore, the article emphasizes the significance of multisensory approaches, contextual teaching methods, and specialized pedagogical technologies in facilitating the effective acquisition of abstract nouns by children with visual impairments. The findings substantiate the necessity of individualized approaches and specialized methodologies for the successful development of abstract concepts.

KEY WORDS

Children with visual impairments, abstract nouns, speech development, psycholinguistics, special pedagogy, abstract thinking, verbalism, inclusive education, compensatory mechanisms, vocabulary development.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary linguistics, psycholinguistics, and special pedagogy, the study of speech development and the mechanisms of language acquisition is considered one of the most relevant scientific directions. In particular, investigating the specific features of language development in children with sensory impairments holds significant theoretical and practical importance. Although the formation of speech in children with visual impairments follows general developmental patterns, the absence or limitation of the visual analyzer leads to a distinctive process in the acquisition of certain linguistic units, especially abstract nouns. Therefore, studying the mechanisms of formation, development, and acquisition of abstract nouns in blind children represents an important task in modern special pedagogy.

It is well known that human knowledge about the surrounding

environment is initially formed through sensory systems. Among them, the visual analyzer plays a leading role in receiving a large portion of external information. In children with visual impairments, the absence or dysfunction of this analyzer results in the compensation of cognitive processes through other sensory systems. However, abstract concepts are not primarily based on direct sensory experience; rather, they are formed through processes of generalization, comparison, logical reasoning, and the processing of social experience. In this regard, the acquisition of abstract nouns in blind children appears as a complex cognitive and linguistic process.

Abstract nouns in the language system are defined as lexical units that express non-tangible properties of objects, mental states, emotions, relationships, social phenomena, and

philosophical categories. Concepts such as "justice," "kindness," "conscience," "freedom," "memory," "happiness," and "pride" represent abstract categories formed at higher levels of human cognition. The acquisition of such concepts requires not only lexical knowledge but also developed thinking, social experience, and communicative competence. Therefore, the level of abstract noun acquisition in visually impaired children is directly related to their cognitive development, communicative experience, and educational environment.

In recent years, the development of inclusive education, the improvement of special pedagogical technologies, and reforms aimed at integrating persons with disabilities into society have further emphasized the need to enhance the education of children with visual impairments. In this context, there is an increasing demand for in-depth research on the mechanisms through which such children acquire not only basic vocabulary but also complex abstract concepts. Insufficient formation of abstract concepts may negatively affect a child's communicative competence, academic achievement, and social adaptation.

Another significant scientific issue in this field is the phenomenon of verbalism in the acquisition of abstract nouns by blind children. Verbalism refers to a situation in which a child actively uses certain words without a sufficiently developed semantic understanding of their meanings. As a result, linguistic units may be formally acquired, but their conceptual content remains incomplete. This highlights the need for specialized methodological approaches in teaching abstract concepts.

The aim of this article is to theoretically and practically analyze the characteristics of abstract noun acquisition in children with visual impairments, to identify the psychological, linguistic, and pedagogical factors influencing this process, and to substantiate effective educational technologies. The study examines the mechanisms of abstract concept formation, the role of compensatory processes, features of verbal development, and modern pedagogical approaches. The results of this research may contribute to the improvement of special pedagogy, defectology, speech therapy, and inclusive education practices.

METHOD

Although language and speech development in children with visual impairments follows general ontogenetic principles, the

presence of a sensory deficit leads to specific developmental characteristics. In particular, the acquisition of abstract nouns occurs through complex psychological, linguistic, and pedagogical mechanisms due to the limitation of visual perception. Abstract nouns are linguistic units that express non-observable properties of objects and phenomena, internal emotional states, interpersonal relations, and social categories. Therefore, their acquisition relies primarily on abstract thinking, generalization, and logical reasoning.

In children with visual impairments, cognitive activity is mainly developed through auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, and motor analyzers. As a result, the mechanism of acquiring information about the external world differs significantly from that of sighted children. To perceive the shape, size, spatial position, and relationships between objects, blind children rely on alternative sensory systems. However, since abstract concepts are not directly linked to sensory experience, their formation is predominantly mediated through verbal means. This significantly increases the role of verbal experience in the acquisition of abstract nouns.

The communicative function of language plays a particularly important role in the formation of abstract nouns. During everyday communication, blind children acquire new concepts through interactions with adults, teachers, and peers. Concepts such as "kindness," "friendship," "responsibility," "conscience," and "justice" are not typically introduced through direct demonstration, but rather through conversations, explanations, social experiences, and communicative contexts. Therefore, the richness of the communicative environment has a direct impact on the effectiveness of abstract noun acquisition in visually impaired children.

Research shows that blind children may have an adequately developed vocabulary in quantitative terms; however, in some cases, the semantic content of words is not fully formed. This phenomenon is known as verbalism. In cases of verbalism, a child may actively use certain words without a sufficient understanding of their meaning. For example, a child may use terms such as "independence" or "freedom" in speech but may struggle to explain their essence based on real-life examples. Verbalism is one of the key pedagogical challenges in the formation of abstract concepts in children with visual impairments.

The factors influencing the acquisition of abstract nouns in blind children are multifaceted. The first factor is the social

environment and family communication. Active interaction, explanations, and a rich linguistic environment within the family positively contribute to the formation of abstract concepts. The second factor is the educational system and pedagogical technologies. In the absence of specialized methods, the process of acquiring abstract concepts may become significantly slower. The third factor is individual psychological characteristics, including memory, cognitive development, and intellectual abilities.

MULTISENSORY APPROACHES AND EFFECTIVE ACQUISITION OF ABSTRACT NOUNS

Multisensory approaches play a crucial role in the effective acquisition of abstract nouns. This approach is based on the integrated use of different sensory channels. For instance, in order to form the concept of "friendship," it is not sufficient to provide only a lexical explanation; it is also effective to organize real social situations, conduct role-playing activities, use dialogic exercises, and discuss personal experiences. Similarly, the concept of "kindness" is more effectively acquired when it is taught through practical activities, emotional experiences, and communicative situations.

In the formation of abstract concepts in children with visual impairments, special pedagogical technologies also play an important role. Braille-based learning materials, audiobooks, interactive discussions, problem-based learning methods, and contextual teaching strategies enhance the semantic acquisition of abstract nouns. In particular, dialogic teaching technologies expand children's ability to use abstract concepts in active speech processes, thereby contributing not only to formal acquisition but also to meaningful understanding.

Furthermore, the development of abstract thinking in children with visual impairments occurs gradually. Initially, knowledge is formed based on concrete experiences, which is later generalized and transformed into abstract categories. Therefore, in teaching abstract nouns, it is essential to follow the principle of progression from concrete examples to abstract concepts. Such an approach enables the establishment of logical connections between the child's existing experience and new knowledge.

Thus, the acquisition of abstract nouns in children with visual impairments is a complex, multi-stage process closely associated with cognitive development, communicative experience, the educational environment, and compensatory mechanisms. Organizing this process through scientifically

grounded methods can significantly improve the speech development and social adaptation of children with visual impairments.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the acquisition of abstract nouns in children with visual impairments is a complex and multifactorial psycholinguistic and pedagogical process. Due to the limitation of the visual analyzer, this process is primarily mediated through auditory, tactile, communicative experiences, and compensatory mechanisms. Since abstract concepts are formed not through direct sensory perception but through thinking, generalization, and social experience, their acquisition presents specific challenges for visually impaired children.

The analysis shows that the phenomenon of verbalism may occur in the process of acquiring abstract nouns, meaning that children may actively use certain words without fully understanding their semantic content. Therefore, the formation of abstract concepts should not be limited to lexical explanations but must be connected with real-life situations, social experiences, and communicative activities.

The research findings confirm that multisensory approaches, dialogic teaching methods, contextual learning technologies, and individualized pedagogical strategies have a positive impact on the effective acquisition of abstract nouns. In particular, the principle of gradual transition from concrete experience to abstract thinking is one of the key conditions for developing conceptual cognition in visually impaired children.

At the same time, the level of abstract noun acquisition is closely related to the family environment, quality of education, communicative experience, and individual psychological characteristics. Therefore, strengthening cooperation between special educators, speech therapists, and parents, as well as the broader implementation of modern pedagogical technologies and individualized approaches, is of great importance.

Overall, the correct and meaningful acquisition of abstract nouns by children with visual impairments is one of the key factors ensuring their speech competence, intellectual development, social integration, and adaptation to independent life. Consequently, expanding scientific research in this field, developing innovative methodologies, and implementing them in educational practice remain urgent scientific and practical tasks.

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