



Original Contribution

**INVESTIGATION OF THE DIFFERENT ALTERNATIVE
COMMUNICATIVE APPROACHES FOR LANGUAGE EDUCATION OF
DEAF CHILDREN WITH DEAF AND HEARING PARENTS**

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ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the influence of the family factor (deaf or hearing parents) on the unknown text perception from hearing-impaired children. Special attention is paid to the understanding of the taught material through using of different communicative approaches for language education.

Key words: communication, deaf children, sign language, verbal speech, dactyl

Family as a microsystem deals with one of the most important processes, namely the formation and development of the child's personality. With the parents' assistance child gains its first life experience, elementary knowledge about the environment, different skills, habits and etc.

According to many authors significant factor that influences the formation of the child's personality as well as its attitude towards the environment actually appears to be the atmosphere in the family, the presence of emotional contact between the parents and between them and the child.

Families of children with impaired hearing nevertheless, whether they can hear or not, differ significantly from the normal families where everybody can hear.

Having a child with impaired hearing leads to significant emotional problems for the parents and the other relatives.

Finding that there is a problem with hearing at first shocks the parents and disturbs for a while the child-parent connection. And exactly at that moment appears the problem about the communication in the family. Or we have the so-called communication crisis.

Such a crisis does not appear in children brought up by hearing-impaired families who practice gesture language and communicate actively through it. K. Medow (1981) studied the character of communication between deaf

mothers and deaf children and found that communication between them was normal and spontaneous just like the one between the hearing mothers and hearing children.

The investigation of deaf children with deaf parents also showed that their emotional profile, to a great extent, corresponded to that of their hearing coevals. Deaf parents are not very stressed by the fact that their children are deaf and do not show strong emotional reactions. The communication is diversified, reasonable and cheerful as the conventional symbols of the gesture language are used. Deaf children master spontaneously the gesture language and use it as a way to satisfy their cognitive and social needs. Social standards and values become available because of the possibility for joint actions with the parents. They are more predisposed to formation of independence and control over the behaviour.

If we look in detail at the interaction "parent-child" in deaf children with hearing parents, we can see that deafness essentially changes them.

R.Gross (1980) observes that mothers of the deaf children speak more, use not typical intonation, apply preceptorial strategies and very rarely praise; they are more dominant in communication with their hearing-impaired children and expect, to a great extent, submission. This probably reduces the interest in verbal language in natural communication and purposeful learning (Popzlateva, Ts., 1999).

School offers the small student many new things: new people (children, teachers),

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new environment, new requirements which differ from those at home and in the kindergarten. The child has to adapt itself to all that – to get to know it, accept it and build correct attitude and to learn successfully the new school activities. The success of the school education of the child with impaired hearing depends on the extent of its adaptation to the new environment. And all this depends on the child's communication skills, parent's and teachers' attitude and as well on their competency and desire to collaborate.

There are two variants for children with impaired hearing to enter school: special school for children with impaired hearing or general school. Nevertheless which school will be chosen will give rise to problems of different character but here, besides parents and children, significant role will be played by the teacher.

A study was carried out in order to determine the parameters of the above-mentioned problem. It was conducted in the following four schools: schools for hearing-impaired children in Plovdiv and Turgovishte, auxiliary school for hearing-impaired children in Muglitzh and integrated hearing-impaired children at P. Yavorov primary school in Bourgas, all in Bulgaria. 110 students from the primary course took place in the study - 89 among them had hearing parents and 21 had parents with hearing problems.

The linguistic material that was used was suitable for the syllabus and students' age. The whole process is recorded on videotape and the assessment was done on the basis of the written work of the students.

Three unfamiliar texts were taught in each class. One of the texts was presented only through verbal speech without using gesture or dactyl, the second – only through gesture without verbal speech and the third – all combined. The levels of comprehension and abilities to reproduce them in written form were reported. The various mistakes and levels of difficulty were also noted.

As the study was very detailed, here we will present only one of the factors and only one of the hypotheses.

The working hypothesis was that understanding of an unknown text varies, to some extent, according to the fact whether the children have deaf or hearing parents. It was provoked by the fact that mastering of the language rules of every language was dependent on biological and social factors, part of which were strongly dependent on the family. When parents can communicate with their children, nevertheless gestures or verbal

speech, the child's development is normal without any crises.

The assessment was done from 0 to 4 on the basis of the written work of the students.

Different statistical methods were used to analyse the study data. These were: χ^2 - analysis, relative structure quantities, test of the statistical hypotheses for difference between two average arithmetic values in independent and dependent extracts, one factor disperse analysis, statistical tables, statistical graphic pictures and etc.

Having in mind the results we definitely can claim that hearing/deaf parents' factor influenced the differences in the test results in presenting a text through the alternative method, could not be accepted as very clearly expressed, i.e. impaired-hearing children with hearing or deaf parents showed equally high marks when the material was taught through the combined method.

There is enough evidence to claim that all students from different grades and towns show high results when the unknown text is taught by the combined method.

This method leads to minimum differences in the effectiveness of education, which are dependent on the biological and social factors (family with deaf or hearing parents) and is the optimal variant for educating hearing-impaired children.

Everything we have done (the investigation, data obtained, its analysis and interpretation) have the aim to find the difficulties and the unsolved problems, as well as to find the most convenient way for their solution.

In order for a deaf child to be successfully integrated in the society, great importance should be attached to the methods used in its education, which have the aim not only to develop child's language abilities, but also to ensure its linguistic competency.

We should not draw categorical conclusions from the above since the number of children with impaired-hearing and deaf parents was too small – only 21 families, compared to the number of hearing families with children having hearing problems, which was 89. As far as the differences could go, they could not cross the limit of the casual deviations.

In order for such study to be reliable, it should be more comprehensive and should include children from the whole country.

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