CHILDREN'S SECOND LANGUAGE SPEECH DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF FAMILY EDUCATION

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Abstract. The relevance of the research problem is due to the need to improve the effectiveness of listening as a type of a preschool child's speech activity. The purpose of the study was to identify the psychological and pedagogical conditions of increasing the efficiency of listening. Leading methods of the study were analytical and experimental. Main results: identified psychological-pedagogical conditions improve listening; the technology of reading children's books by parents determined a special role of a father, worked out methods of increasing the efficiency of reading and listening: the transposition and overcoming interference, uppercase, empathy and reflection, prediction, anticipation. The article may be of interest to psychologists and teachers of children's organizations, parents, college and university teachers. In the process of family reading in a second (non-native) language organization it is necessary to: strengthen father's role: text reading and interpretation of its context by a father is perceived better by children than when it is performed by a mother; provide linguistic transposition and consider interference. The process of semantic perception is always affected by the nature of a text determined by linguistic peculiarities (phonetic, grammar, lexical, stylistic) and logic-semantic structure of the text. Thus, semantic perception is primarily influenced by the complexity degree of grammar forms of thought expression. Therefore, parents need to teach family reading technology (slow reading, reading with the interpretation of the meaning, reading a retelling, etc.). At the university, we have organized special courses for parents. The undertaken research proved that only interactive strategy has positive effect on educational results. Still its curriculum should include real communication between students and teachers, it should propose using information resources in the mode of algorithmic distance tasks, supporting a student by coaching, that is professional (psychological and pedagogical) situations simulation, coordinated problems solving; a student should become a subject of interaction, take an active part in the course of studying, following his/her individual route.

Keywords: listening, preschool children, transpose, interference, uppercase, empathy, reflection, prediction, anticipation, interactive learning strategies, curriculum, coaching.

Introduction

Relevance of the issue

A family plays a big part in children's second language speech development as in a family parents can speak in a second language, read books and discuss their contents. Family reading consisting in one parent's (mother or father) reading a book in a second (usually foreign) language to a preschooler is a rare but interesting phenomenon both from the point of view of psychology and speech development methodology. The point is in this case such processes as listening, perception, understanding and speaking understudied by science are activated in a different manner.
Listening and speaking have special importance for preschool children under the conditions of bilingualism. Listening is one of the types of speaking activity providing productivity and efficiency of other types of activity such as speaking and reading aloud. In Russia this was studied by N.V.Baudouin de Courtenay, N.I.Zhinkin, A.A.Leontyev, I.A.Zimnyaya, etc., and abroad by D.E.Broadbent, G.Fant, A.Gardiner etc (Baudouin de Courtenay, 1963; Zhinkin, 1965; Zhinkin, 1967; Zhinkin, 1982; Zimnyaya, 2001; Leontiev, 1967; Broadbent, 1958; Fant, 1967). In their works these scientists set forth an idea that speech perception and comprehension form a single process. The product of listening is inference or a chain of inferences a person comes to as a result of listening. Whereas the product itself may or may not be recognised by a person. Nowadays it is known that special listening training influences the development of children's conversation hearing and speech memory, acquisition of pronunciation and spelling norms (Laswell, 1949; Miller, 1951; Osgood, Sebeok, 1954). Listening acquires special meaning in bilingual context when the task is not only to teach a child to listen but also to speak in another language. Certain classes of speech or native (foreign) language development are dedicated to this at preschool institutions. However, in families parents do not always have enough time to read fairy-tales in a foreign language to their children and in particular to organise listening process in a proper way. That is why the degree of family reading influence on a child's foreign speech development is still not very well studied.

**Tendencies in organizational-content updating of educational process**

The main peculiarities of listening as a kind of speech activity are well investigated in scientific literature (Steinberg, Hiroshi, David, 2001; Valerian, 2014a; Valerian, 2014b; Yusupova, Podgorecki, Markova, 2015): listening involves both direct interaction between the participants of communication and their indirect interaction, i.e. speech sounding in the street, on the radio, television, etc. can also be perceived aurally; listening consists of several stages: incentive-motivational, orientative, analytic-synthetic, controlling; there are some functions of listening: cognitive, regulative, aesthetic, reacting, etc. Thus, listening as a kind of a child's speech activity is a sophisticated perceptive-intellectual-mnemonic inner activity. Under the conditions of bilingualism listening is impossible without comprehension: without comprehension there is no perception and apprehension which makes speaking impossible. Four main levels of comprehension can be distinguished for children: the first level is comprehension of several words, understanding only of what the text is about, in other words awareness of the main idea of a statement; the second level is comprehension of word combinations, awareness not only of the general idea but the meaning of a particular phrase; the third level is comprehension of separate sentences of a statement; the fourth level is comprehension of the main meaning of a statement; the product of the fourth level is an inference a child comes to as a result of listening.

**Relevance of educational process technological updating**

The research tasks are: to organise monitoring of speech development of the children whose parents read texts in a second language at home; to determine these children's levels of speech comprehension in a second language; to elaborate a reading technology for parents; to determine the influence of this technology on the development of children's speech in a second language; to elaborate recommendations for family reading organisation.

**Methodological Framework**

We have been observing the families of preschool children in the city of Kazan (Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation) for 6 years (2008-2014). Some families identified themselves as Russian but one of the members (sometimes both members) of the family knew a second language as native or foreign, i.e. could read, understand and interpret the content of a children's book text in Tatar or English). Other families identified themselves as Tatars but one of the members (sometimes both) new a second language (Russian) as native (i.e. could read, understand and interpret the content of a children's book text in Russian). Parents responsibly read to
their 4-5-year-old children literary works (fairy-tales, poems, short stories) in a second language (in English - 106 families, in Tatar - 37 families, in Russian - 185 families, in other languages - 32 families). The function of a reader was more often fulfilled by mothers only (63%), fathers only (22%) and mothers and fathers in turn (15%). Upon children's reaching 6 years we traced a corresponding comprehension level with the help of questions to the texts that were read. The authenticity of the selection for 6 years of data proceeding proved to be mathematically accurate (according to Pearson formula).

Results and Discussions

Levels of a second language understanding before the experiment

As a result we have the following picture (see table 1, diagram 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who reads</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Fourth level</th>
<th>Third level</th>
<th>Second level</th>
<th>First level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both, in turn</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father only</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother only</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we see the results are quite curious: the highest level of comprehension (comprehension of the main idea of a statement and the ability to make inferences in a second language) is achieved by children who discuss a literary work with their father (14%), mother - 8%; with both of them in turn - 5%; the third (a lower) level is when separate sentences are understood better from father's reading (31%), worse from mother's (23%) and even worse when both of them read in turn (17%). Thus, a gender aspect emerges unexpectedly: father's text interpretation is more efficient than mother's. From the point of view of Gender Pedagogy the question is poorly studied. However, the general picture of empiric data proves that both for mothers and fathers the lowest levels - the first and the second - are predominant, when children understand only separate words and word combinations: fathers - 43%, mothers - 69%, in turn-based variant - 68%. The ability to listen is one of the most difficult communicative phenomena relevant to the culture of com-
communication. There are two kinds of listening according to the way of exercise: disperse, passive (non-reflexive) when a child is distracted by something; and concentrated, active (reflexive) when attention mechanisms are alert. In the process of verbal communication a child can have passive listening. Observations allowed projecting a family reading technology recommended afterwards to parents.

**Reading technology**

The technology includes the following methods:

1. Transposition and interference overcoming. Transposition is a positive transition of similar concepts from a native language to a second one. Interference is negative influence of unknown concepts on comprehension.

2. Apperception or influence of previous experience on listening and perception process.

3. Empathy and reflection: the highest level of development of the ability to listen is empathic listening. Empathy is compassion to other people, the ability to feel what a child feels, understand him or her not by the mind but by the heart.

4. Predication: the place of predication (voice emphasising of informative centres) influences memorising. The significant information expressed at the beginning of the text is characterised by the highest percentage (about 80%).

5. Anticipation: the dependence of perception on previous experience enables a child to make some forecasts in the process of perception which allows him or her to anticipate the future to some extent.

**Levels of a second language understanding after the experiment**

As a result of collaboration of children's organisations with families, where the components of this technology were used, the picture started changing (see table 2, Fig. 2).

**Table 2. Levels of a foreign text understanding in the context of family reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who reads</th>
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<th>Third level</th>
<th>Second level</th>
<th>First level</th>
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<td>25%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father only</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother only</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 2. Levels of a foreign text understanding in the context of family reading after the experiment**
On the fourth - the highest level - listening to fathers by children improved up to 7%, mothers - 2%, on the third level - listening to fathers up to 6%, mothers - 3%, whereas the figures of the first and second levels decreased.

**Experimental resources**

The experiment was conducted at the Kazan Federal University. Participants in the experiment were students of the correspondence department. The research demonstrates that both in Russia and foreign countries higher education professors use traditional (about 35%), distance (about 30%), interactive (15%), none (20%) strategy. When polling professors of several Kazan universities about the strategy used in their academic activity (traditional, distance, interactive, none) we discovered that 43% chose distance strategy, 39% - none, 10% - traditional, 8% - interactive one. As we can see, most of the professors chose either distance strategy or teaching without any strategy. These are only the poll results. Observation of teachers work (176 teachers of different institutes) show that most of them prefer working not remotely but traditionally and they note that the increasing requirements and reports on digital education tasks don’t let them specify the strategic meaning of their T&E activity. In the survey of students (327 people) of correspondence departments at different universities with distance educational system we saw an interesting situation. Most off-campus students (78%) have adjusted to this system and they like it, because there is no need to spend time for study, but they worked out malpractice: A group of students asks a student (usually an excellent full-time student) to perform all the tasks for them. As a result they all have good marks. In the sample group of 447 testee students (studied in 2014, 2015, 2016), we could prove the correlation between the strategies and the education outcomes (see Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. The results of using (non-using) education strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levels of education outcomes (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows: interactive strategy is the most effective (high result of 52%); it combines with features of live communication between a teacher and a student, and different forms of distance interaction: 52% of students confirm their high results in learning. The second best is traditional strategy: High results are confirmed by 35% of students, though within this strategy teachers avoid distance interaction and prefer to work in an old manner (using lectures and practice along with seminars). Distance form (in its pure form) proved to be not very effective: Independent testing showed that 5% of students have high results, and 38% have zero-point results. The group of teachers who don’t use any strategy don’t differ much in results (7% and 36% respectively). Therefore, non-strategic and distance interaction between a teacher and a student is rather risky for the educational process aimed at results.

**Conclusions**

In the process of family reading in a second (non-native) language organisation it is necessary to:

1. Strengthen father's role: text reading and interpretation of its context by a father is perceived better by children than when it is performed by a mother.
2. Provide linguistic transposition and consider interference. The process of semantic perception is always affected by the nature of a text determined by linguistic peculiarities (phonetic, grammatical, lexical, stylistic) and logic-semantic structure of the text. Thus, semantic perception is primarily influenced by the complexity degree of grammar forms of thought expression. This is tes-
ified by in particular a certain increase in the time of a child's reaction to more complicated grammar forms.

3. Consider apperception caused by the fact that perception of a literary work depends on many factors: knowledge of a language, subject being discussed listening practice (not to mention a general level of culture, education, a child's age, etc.)

4. Empathise and build reflexive relationship with a child. Empathic comprehension learning can be enhanced by the ability to read facial expression, gestures, poses, looks, handshaking, father's or mother's manner of walking. Reflexive listening consists in active interruption of father's or mother's speech, in helping them to express their thoughts and feelings, in creation of favourable communication conditions.

5. Realise predication taking into account: articulatory characteristics of a speaker (articulatory clarity, degree of reduction, etc.); time of performance (the period of the text of a literary work reproduction), tempo of reading (average syllable length) and the degree of father’s or mother's eagerness to be understood expressed by emotionality, clarity of narration logic emphasising and adequacy of intonational thought arrangement.

6. Consider anticipation: the mechanism of speech utterance forecasting consists in the fact that in the process of listening a child having perceived the first word of a phrase can presuppose (unconsciously, of course) which word will most probably follow it. That is why he or she needs to be given an opportunity to try to realize this presupposition, i.e. complete the phrase.

Guidance

The results of the undertaken research can be of interest to pedagogues, kindergarten psychologists, parents and pedagogy college and university teachers. Kindergarten psychologists and pedagogues can recommend to parents the reading technology for a second language teaching to children.

References


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