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## Preventive Measures against Speech Disorders in Early Childhood

Natalia A. Platokhina\*, Irina V. Samarina, Natalia N. Abashina

*South Federal University, Bolshaya Sadovaya st 105/42, Rostov-on-Don, 344066, Russia*

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### Abstract

This article investigates the theoretical and practical aspects of speech disorders in early childhood. The article contains both the analysis of young children's speech diagnostics results and main aspects of a preventive kids' program "I learn how to speak correctly". The program is aimed at improving gross, fine and articulatory motor skills, psychical processes (memory, attention, thinking, perception), impressive and expressive kids' speech, developing parents' pedagogic behavior concerning the speech development problem in early childhood.

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**Keywords:** Speech development; Kids' speech disorders; Preventive program "I Learn how to speak correctly"

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\* Platokhina N.A.: Tel.: +79034720958;  
E-mail address: [natasha-platohina@rambler.ru](mailto:natasha-platohina@rambler.ru)

## 1. Introduction

Early childhood is a sensitive period in the development of psychical processes and all speech aspects. Such scholars as M.M. Alekseeva, B.I. Yashina [1], A.M. Borodich [2], E.M. Mastukova [3] and others define the following stages of young children's speech: Stage 1 is the process of phonic speech development (the 1st month of life); Stage 2 is cooing (2-4 months); Stage 3 is babbling (5-8 months); Stage 4 is a passive vocabulary development (9-15 months); Stage 5 is an active vocabulary development (18 months-3 years).

There are several important backgrounds for the proper speech process in early childhood. They include speech apparatus maturity, emotional and auditory reaction to adults' speech, primitive understanding of addressed speech, an ability to distinguish between the forms, colors, sizes, sounds and tactile sense of objects, a definite level of attention, perception, memory and thinking development, active imitation of an adult's speech.

The analysis of research work on the problem of speech development in early childhood shows that the early stage is characterized by a situation where an infant may «get stuck» at the babbling stage, his passive and active vocabulary may be enriched poorly, moreover he may be reluctant to use new words in communication and faces problems mastering the verbal lexicon.

The scholar E.M. Mastukova [3] emphasizes that the lexicon of infants includes: pronunciation of monosyllabic or disyllabic words; pronunciation of frame words including 1-3 syllables; use of onomatopoeic words in speech and fragmented words including the names of animals, objects and actions.

L.V. Bondarko, L.A. Verbitskaya, M.V. Godina [4] point out the fact that the first words of abnormal speech in young children are classified as follows: 1) fragmented words - when an infant pronounces only parts of words, e.g. "mako" (instead of "moloko" - milk), "yaba" ("yabloko" - apple); 2) onomatopoeic words - when a young child tries to denote some objects, actions or situations, e.g. "beep" (a car), "booh" (to fall); 3) frame words - when a baby is able to pronounce correctly prosodic elements such as the stress, the number of syllables, e.g. "tititiki" ("kirpichiki" - little bricks), "papata" ("lopata" - a shovel); 4) words which don't correspond to the words of his mother tongue or their fragments.

We can distinguish important diagnostic signals of deviating speech development in early childhood. They are the absence of 2 - 3 syllables words in speech, passive behaviour in dialogue-making; one-word answers to questions; frequent or constant usage of adults' words in speech; long-term lingering at a particular speech stage; constant distortion of sounds; problems in pronouncing polysyllabic words, pauses in pronouncing expanded phrases and separate words; numerous repetitions of separate syllables and sounds accompanied with some tension in their muscles. It is necessary to mention that the above characteristics are not of equal ranking.

## 2. Methods

In order to detect the stage of young children's speech development we used diagnostic I.A. Smirnova's methods [5]:

- Speech comprehension (a child answers when called by name, points to an object correctly, shows all parts of a doll's face and body as well as his own, fetches the right object, etc.);
- Volume of his active vocabulary (a child recognizes and names pictured objects, including such topics as clothes, furniture, vegetables, birds, etc.);
- Recognition of sounds (a child names a word according to the associated sound in the beginning, middle or end of a word);
- Active vocabulary (a child examines a picture and speaks about it);
- State of contextual speech (a child examines a picture and tells a story using different parts of speech);
- State of speech grammar (a child uses different types of sentences: simple, expanded - with direct, indirect or prepositional objects, etc.).

According to the above criteria we detected 3 levels of speech development in young children:

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