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BILINGUALISM AND SPEECH DISORDERS IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN: CHALLENGES IN DIAGNOSIS AND SPEECH-LANGUAGE INTERVENTION

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Abstract. Bilingualism is common in early childhood, yet diagnosing speech and language disorders in bilingual preschool children remains challenging. Differences in language exposure, proficiency, and communication environments may complicate the distinction between typical bilingual development and language impairment. This article examines diagnostic challenges and approaches to speech-language intervention for bilingual preschool children. The study uses theoretical analysis of scientific literature, comparative analysis, and theoretical generalization. The review focuses on distinguishing language differences from disorders, assessing abilities across languages, narrative assessment, and intervention practices. The analysis indicates that assessment should consider children's language experience, abilities in both languages, and everyday communication contexts rather than rely on a single-language evaluation. The literature emphasizes individualized intervention, attention to the child's linguistic background, and cooperation among speech-language therapists, families, and preschool educators. Bilingualism itself should not be regarded as a cause of language disorder. Further research on Uzbek-Russian bilingual preschoolers may inform appropriate assessment and support.

Keywords: bilingualism, preschool children, speech and language disorders, language assessment, speech-language intervention, bilingual development.

Аннотация. Билингвизм широко распространён в раннем детстве, однако диагностика речевых и языковых нарушений у детей-билингвов дошкольного возраста остается сложной задачей. Различия в языковом опыте, уровне владения языками и коммуникативной среде могут затруднять разграничение типичного билингвального развития и языковых нарушений. В статье рассматриваются основные трудности диагностики и подходы к логопедической помощи билингвальным дошкольникам. Исследование основано на теоретическом анализе научной литературы, сравнительном анализе и теоретическом обобщении. Особое внимание уделяется разграничению языковых различий и нарушений, оценке речевых возможностей на обоих языках, нарративной диагностике и логопедической интервенции. Анализ показывает, что диагностика должна учитывать языковой опыт ребёнка, его способности в обоих языках и повседневную коммуникативную среду, а не ограничиваться оценкой одного языка. В литературе подчеркивается значение индивидуализированной помощи, учёта языкового окружения ребёнка и сотрудничества логопедов, родителей и воспитателей. Билингвизм сам по себе не следует рассматривать как причину языкового нарушения. Дальнейшие исследования

узбекско-русских дошкольников-билингвов могут способствовать разработке более подходящих диагностических и коррекционных подходов.

Ключевые слова: билингвизм, дошкольники, речевые и языковые нарушения, диагностика речи, логопедическая помощь, билингвальное развитие.

Annotatsiya. Bilingvizm erta bolalik davrida keng tarqalgan hodisa bo'lib, maktabgacha yoshdagi bilingv bolalarda nutq va til buzilushlarini tashxislash murakkab vazifa hisoblanadi. Bolananing til tajribasi, tillarni egallash darajasi va muloqot muhiti o'rtasidagi farqlar odatiy bilingval rivojlanishni qiyinlashtirishi mumkin. Ushbu maqolada maktabgacha yoshdagi bilingv bolalarda nutq buzilishlarini tashxislash muammolari hamda logopedik yordam ko'rsatish yondashuvlari ko'rib chiqiladi. Tadqiqot ilmiy adabiyotlarni nazariy tahlil qilish, qiyosiy tahlil va nazariy umumlashtirish usullariga asoslangan. Asosiy e'tibor til rivojlanishdagi farqlarni nutq buzilishlardan ajratish, bolaning ikkala tildagi nutq imkoniyatlarini tekshirish va logopedik aralashuv masalalariga qaratilgan. Tahlil natijalari bolaning muloqot muhitini hisobga olish zarurligini ko'rsatadi. Ilmiy adabiyotlarda individual yondashuv, bolaning til muhitini e'tiboriga olish hamda logoped, ota-onalar av tarbiyachilar hamkorligining ahamiyati ta'kidlanadi. Bilingvizmning o'zi nutqiy buzilishlarning sababi sifatida qaralmasligi lozim. O'zbe-rus bilingv muhitida tarbiyalanayotgan maktabgacha yoshdagi bolalarni o'rganish kelgusida samarali tashxislash va korreksion yordam usullarini ishlab chiqichga xizmat qilishi mumkin.

Kalit so'zlar: bilingvizm, maktabgacha yoshdagi bolalar, nutq va til buzilishlari, nutq diagnostikasi, logopedik yordam, bilingval rivojlanish

Introduction. Bilingualism is a common phenomenon in modern society, and many children begin using two languages from an early age. Preschool children may communicate in different languages at home and in educational settings. Although bilingualism provides opportunities for language and communication development, it can also create difficulties in the assessment of children's speech and language skills. In particular, it may be challenging to distinguish typical bilingual development from speech and language disorders.

The diagnosis of speech and language disorders in bilingual preschool children requires a comprehensive approach. A child's language abilities may differ depending on the frequency of language use, the age of language acquisition, and the communication environment. Therefore, difficulties in one language do not necessarily indicate a developmental disorder. At the same time, genuine language difficulties may remain unnoticed if the assessment focuses on only one language. These factors highlight the importance of considering the child's overall language experience.

Another important aspect is the organization of appropriate speech-language interventions. Support should be based on the individual needs of the child and should take into account their linguistic and social environment. Cooperation between speech-language therapists and preschool educators is also important for creating consistent opportunities for communication and language development.

The aim of the article is to examine the main challenges in diagnosing speech and language disorders in bilingual preschool children and to consider approaches to speech-language intervention.

Particular attention is given to the distinction between typical bilingual development and language disorders, the assessment of bilingual children's language abilities, and the importance of individualized support.

Literature Review. The study of bilingual language development has attracted the attention of researchers in linguistics, psychology, and speech-language pathology. Researchers have examined how children acquire two languages, how their language abilities develop, and what difficulties may arise when bilingual children have speech or language disorders. The findings of these studies are important for understanding the needs of preschool children who grow up in bilingual environments.

Johanne Paradis (2007) made an important contribution to the study of bilingual children with language impairment. Her research examined the language development of bilingual children specific language impairment (SLI) and compared their grammatical performance with that of monolingual children with the same disorder. Paradis emphasized that bilingualism does not necessarily exacerbate language difficulties and that bilingual children should not be assessed solely according to assumptions based on monolingual development. Their language experience, exposure to each language, and proficiency in both languages should be considered during assessment and intervention.

Kohnert (2010) emphasized the importance of understanding both typical bilingual development and the characteristics of primary language impairment. She noted that bilingual children may demonstrate different levels of proficiency in their languages, and such differences should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of a disorder. At the same time, when a developmental language disorder is present, difficulties may affect both languages. Therefore, it is essential to examine the child's overall language abilities rather than focusing on one language in isolation. Kohnert's work provides a valuable theoretical foundation for developing appropriate diagnostic and intervention approaches for bilingual children.

Caroline De Lamo White and Lixian Jin (2011) reviewed different approaches to speech and language assessment in bilingual children. The authors considered standardized tests, criterion-referenced assessment, dynamic assessment and sociocultural approaches. Their work highlights the limitations of using a single assessment method with children from different linguistic backgrounds. In particular, the child's cultural environment, language exposure, and everyday communication experience should be taken into account. This perspective suggests that comprehensive assessment may provide more reliable information than the use of one standardized test alone.

The assessment of narrative skills is another important direction in research on bilingual children. Natalia Gagarina and her colleagues developed the Multilingual Assessment Instrument for Narratives (MAIN), which is designed to assess narrative comprehension and production in children acquiring one or more languages. The instrument includes parallel story materials that make it possible to examine a child's narrative abilities across languages. MAIN provides information about both the content and organization of children's stories and can be used in research and clinical assessment.

Elin Thordardottir (2010) reviewed the available evidence on intervention practices for bilingual children with language impairment. The author emphasized the importance of basing clinical decisions on research evidence while also considering the individual characteristics of each child. Thordardottir highlighted the potential benefits of addressing both languages in intervention, although she noted that the available evidence was limited and did not provide clear guidance on the most effective treatment

methods for different bilingual populations. These findings suggest that speech-language intervention should take into account a child's linguistic background and individual needs rather than rely on a single universal approach.

Methodology. The study is based on a theoretical analysis of scientific literature concerning bilingual language development, speech and language intervention in preschool children. The research methods included literature analysis, comparative analysis, and theoretical generalization.

The selection of scientific works was guided by their relevance to the main objective of the article: examining the challenges involved in diagnosing speech and language disorders in bilingual preschool children and identifying approaches to appropriate speech-language support. Particular attention was given to studies addressing the distinction between typical bilingual development and language impairment, the assessment of language abilities in bilingual children, and intervention practices.

The reviewed studies were compared according to several aspects, including children's language exposure and linguistic background, the assessment of abilities in both languages, the use of different diagnostic approaches, and the organization of speech-language intervention. Particular attention was given to the Multilingual Assessment Instrument for Narratives (MAIN) as an example of a tool for assessing narrative comprehension and production in multilingual children.

Results and Discussion. The analysis of the selected scientific literature revealed several interconnected challenges in the diagnosis and speech-language intervention of bilingual preschool children. The findings indicate that accurate assessment requires consideration of both languages, while effective intervention should be based on the child's individual linguistic and developmental characteristics. A comparison of the reviewed studies also demonstrates that no single assessment method can provide a complete understanding of bilingual children's language abilities. Therefore, the combination of different diagnostic approaches appears to be more appropriate than relying on one test or one language.

One of the main challenges in assessing bilingual preschool children is distinguishing typical bilingual language development from a speech or language disorder. The analysis of the literature indicates that children may demonstrate different levels of proficiency in their languages depending on the amount and context of language exposure. Therefore, limited vocabulary or grammatical difficulties in one language cannot be considered sufficient evidence of a developmental disorder. These findings highlight the importance of examining language development in relation to the child's linguistic experience rather than comparing bilingual children directly with monolingual.

Bilingual children may demonstrate code-switching, lexical gaps, and interference between languages. These phenomena can be part of typical bilingual development and should not be considered signs of a disorder without further assessment. Therefore, speech-language evaluation should examine the child's abilities in both languages and consider the influence of the dominant language.

A comprehensive assessment should include the analysis of phonetic-phonemic development, vocabulary, grammatical structures and communicative abilities. The use of standardized tools, language samples, parental interviews, and observation in natural communication settings can provide a more accurate understanding of the child's language development.

Speech-language intervention for bilingual preschool children should be based on the child's individual needs and linguistic background. The main objective is to support communication skills while preserving the child's ability to use both languages.

Intervention may focus on the development of sound pronunciation, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, grammatical structures, and coherent speech. The choice of language used during therapy should depend on the child's language proficiency, family communication patterns, and educational environment.

A flexible approach that combines support in the dominant language with opportunities to develop the second language can be beneficial. At the same time, bilingualism itself should not be regarded as a cause of speech disorders, and families should not be advised to abandon one of their languages without sufficient clinical justification.

Play-based activities are particularly important in speech-language intervention for preschool children. Communicative games, role-playing, storytelling, picture-based tasks, and rhythmic activities create natural opportunities for practicing speech and language skills.

Family cooperation is also essential. Parents can support speech development through everyday communication, shared reading, storytelling, and the use of familiar languages in meaningful situations. Collaboration between speech-language therapists, preschool teachers, and families helps ensure continuity between therapeutic activities and the child's daily communication.

The reviewed studies also indicate that there is no single intervention model suitable for all bilingual children. The choice of therapeutic methods should depend on the child's language experience, individual difficulties, and communication environment. This highlights the need for further research, particularly concerning Uzbek-Russian bilingual preschool children.

Thus, effective speech-language assistance for bilingual preschool children requires an individualized, comprehensive, and family-oriented approach. Accurate assessment of both languages and the use of developmentally appropriate intervention methods can help distinguish typical bilingual development from genuine speech and language disorders.

Conclusion and Recommendations. The analysis of scientific literature has shown that working with bilingual preschool children requires a careful and individual approach. The use of two languages does not mean that a child has a speech or language disorder. However, differences in language development can make it difficult for specialists to identify existing problems. For this reason, it is important to consider the child's abilities in both languages rather than focus on only one of them.

The reviewed studies also demonstrate that the assessment of bilingual children should take into account their language experience, communication environment, and individual development. These factors can help specialists better understand the child's difficulties and choose appropriate methods of speech-language support. In addition, cooperation between speech-language therapists, parents, and preschool teachers plays an important role in supporting children's communication skills.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that specialists use assessment methods suitable for bilingual children and consider their language background during the diagnostic process. Speech-language intervention should be planned according to each child's needs and abilities. Particular attention should also be given to the child's home language and the language used in preschool. Further

research on Uzbek-Russian bilingual children may help develop more appropriate approaches to their assessment and speech-language support.

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