

# Developing Grammatical Competence in Preschoolers

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**Abstract:** The article presents a theoretical review of relevant sources on the topic in question and, consequently, formulates the basic principles, obstacles and guidelines for developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers. The article contains the author's linguodidactic model for developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers, as well as pedagogical conditions for its implementation: ensuring the interrelation between the perspective trends in learning, speech activity and speech experience of children; developing preschoolers' grammatical skills using the specially developed methodology; teaching preschoolers the rules of morphology and methods of word-formation in language lessons; applying different effective forms and methods of organizing learning and speech activity for preschoolers. The article proves that the consideration and implementation of these factors have contributed to developing the suggested linguodidactic model for developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers. It has also allowed one to create and practically implement it within the framework of the quasi-experimental educational process. The article indicates certain noticeable shifts in children with high and sufficient levels in all parts of the language being analyzed. It indicates that mastering the methods of word-formation as a means of enriching vocabulary helps preschoolers to learn the rules of form change and word-formation. Besides, the article has proved the effectiveness of targeted development of grammatically correct speech in preschoolers. The article may be of interest to university teachers and theorists in teaching East Slavic languages as native (at the beginning of their study) or as foreign.

**Keywords:** *children's mental development, linguodidactic, pedagogical conditions, rules of morphology, ways of word-formation.*

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## Introduction

In classical and modern linguodidactic, the level of speech is considered one of the main indicators of children's mental development. However, the peculiarities of the preschool language reality awareness, in particular, the potential of their speech development at each age, has not been studied thoroughly enough.

In addition to many aspects of preschool linguodidactic, the issue of developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers has always been of particular importance to both theorists and practitioners. Timely and qualitative acquisition of the grammatical structure of the native language is an important prerequisite of the child's full speech development. As language becomes the subject of study from the beginning of schooling, it is necessary to develop children's conscious attitude towards oral speech as a linguistic reality already in preschool.

It requires one to take certain steps to successfully solve the issue of continuity and prospects for developing grammatically correct speech. It is necessary, first and foremost, to ensure the appropriate linguistic and speech level of training for preschoolers who are about to enter primary school, improve language training and establish logical connections between language training of preschoolers and primary school pupils. It will make it possible to prevent the duplication of curricular, emphasize the priority line of language and speech development and will finally result in creating a holistic system of developing grammatically correct speech in children both in preschools and schools.

Specialists in linguodidactic also believe that the radical changes in language education in the post-Soviet countries should rely on a different basis. Therefore, preschool language training should be changed. In the meantime, the lack of attention to the issues of continuity in the development of grammatically correct speech in children of all ages results in the duplication of programmes and violation of the natural process of mastering oral speech. It is known that language and speech preparation of children for school involves different forms and content in the senior groups in preschools depending on the curriculum regulating the activity of the institution. The analysis of the curricula in preschools and primary schools on the prospects and continuity of developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers and younger pupils shows that preschool training does not critically follow the content of schooling literacy, including the related practical grammar acquisition.

Thus, the issue of developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers in the post-Soviet space has not been specifically studied yet. The scientific and linguistic interpretation of children's remains ambiguous, which determines the relevance of the article. Thus, the article aims to identify, scientifically justify pedagogical conditions and develop the methodology for developing grammatically correct speech in the process of practical acquisition of morphology rules and word-formation methods by different age groups based on the analysis of Ukrainian and world experience.

### ***Approaches to Developing Grammatically Correct Speech in Children in the World and Post-Soviet Scientific Discourse***

The issues with early language acquisition are particularly acute in the countries or families with moderate social and income levels. However, practice shows (Dickinson, 2011) that language skills stimulated by school or preschool interventions have little effect on the further learning achievements of such children. Researchers argue that linguistic, cognitive and practical skills are determined by several educational and extracurricular conditions (family, society, preschool and school influence). At the same time, the potential of the educator cannot independently develop sufficient language knowledge and related conceptual life skills. Therefore, it is essential to consider global trends in solving the basic issues of learning grammar in early childhood.

Since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the so-called “random learning” of language and grammar, in particular, has become popular in Europe. It lies in developing skills in language marking, recognition, naming and description in the natural interaction between children and educators. An experimental study of children's spontaneous speech during playing reveals the independent development of skills in creating imperative and complex sentences, which are pragmatically necessary for communication (Hart, & Risley, 1975). The addressee of such statements (nursery teachers, teachers or other children) acts as the source of meeting children's needs or interests. In addition to grammatical development, one can observe lexical and phraseological self-enrichment of children in the play polylogue. It indicates the effectiveness of creating spontaneous (random) grammatically oriented play situations in preschool and primary school.

When children acquire grammar, they may deal with the issue of “impoverished stimulus”. It is so because the acquisition of words and expressions have a more specific reference correlation with the world. This particular issue has a profound neuropsychological nature associated with

Chomsky's teaching. Indeed, generative grammar assumes that the form for expressing rules is intrinsically limited, and the only predictable limitation is structural dependence (Crain, & Nakayama, 1987). It has been experimentally proven that the child's psyche creates resistance to the study of grammar due to insensitivity to the semantic properties of the grammar of words and sentences. Thus, the teacher's task is to explain and convey that grammar is a generalized meaning (semantics), not a structurally dependent realm.

A study on psychological profiles in children learning a language proves that vocabulary and syntax show a moderate cognitive deficit and morphology a deeper one. At the same time, a study in two control groups of Italian and English-speaking children (one group was formed by age and another one by the average duration of utterances) finds certain difficulties in mastering and using the categories of number and person. In turn, it requires teachers to work in the context of "basic grammar" where such a deficit is not observed (Leonard, Caselli, Bortolini, McGregor, & Sabbadini, 1992). In general, the neuropsychological approach to detecting deficits in the lateral profile of children can provide rich material for the diagnosis of grammatical skills as the most reflexive and unconscious.

It is also vital to analyze the process of identifying levels of grammar skills in preschoolers. It must be noted that structured tasks show the greatest validity in children of different linguistic and cultural identities. This especially applies to knowledge about the same grammatical forms in different language units, as well as about previously learned grammatical rules (Anderson, 1996).

Importantly, the abstract study of grammatical categories and forms as a separate aspect of language should not occur in preschool and primary school. The main aim of all grammatical influences is to help the child become more comfortable in understanding and using syntax and morphology for conversation, narration, presentation and other textual genres in both written and oral modality (Fey, Long, & Finestack, 2003). The educator must always choose "intermediate goals" on the path of holistic language acquisition. Using communicative needs and functional readiness of a child of a certain age, the teacher can manipulate the linguistic, objective and social environment to create "a grammatical situation". The latter should be perceived as a background of relevant objective, social or communicative relations. Some scholars also advise using imitation, complete constructions, as well as the opposition of simple and more complex forms. These and other recommendations are included in the ten

facilitative principles of teaching grammar to children (Fey, Long, & Finestack, 2003).

Nowadays, methodologists offer to use methods of implicit grammar teaching with children aged 5 and more. For one, one can associate certain colours or objects with grammatical sequences. The EG children turned out to be acquiring both characteristic features and abstract relational information about objects. However, this method worked was effective only with children aged 5 between 5 and 7. Interestingly, 8-year-old children demonstrated a more complex profile of knowledge associated with the development of abstract thinking and the already autonomous ability to learn grammar rules (Witt, & Vinter, 2012). This experiment confirms the connection between thinking and the sensory sphere, which are syncretic and mutually reinforcing each other at a young age.

Thus, global trends indicate the prevalence of alternative, innovative and syncretic forms of learning grammar, which helps one to avoid major difficulties.

Similar trends began to penetrate the post-Soviet scientific space. Now, the important starting principle in developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers is the assumption that speech experience covers, firstly, practical proficiency in the native language, and secondly, “the empirical generalization of observations of the language, obtained by a native speaker regardless of the special knowledge about the language”. It corresponds to the phenomenon of “linguistic intuition” (Bozhovich, 1997; Sokhin, 2008).

Some scholars believe that preschoolers master the grammatical structure of their native language inseparably from their mental development in integration with their substantive and practical activity, thinking and communication. The development of a grammatical component of linguistic intuition is rather spontaneous. Its driving forces are an internal contradiction to the relationship between the child and the environment. The contradictions between goals and available means of communication, the desired and the achieved, the form and the content of the expression play the leading role in children’s mastering a language. The main prerequisite for the emergence and resolution of these contradictions is the child’s communication with an adult, who prompts and encourages the use of grammatically correct speech. The final goal of mastering a native language is the perfect command of speech means. It implies grammatical correctness as a sign of high culture of speech, the awareness of word meanings and literary forms, as well as the ability to use them appropriately and precisely depending on the speech situation context aimed at the

listener. When preschoolers master skills of coherent speech, much importance is given to their practical acquisition of grammar and their ability to use the words belonging to certain lexical-grammatical groups following the tasks of communication.

Psychological patterns in the development of grammatically correct speech have been studied by many researchers (Blonsky, 2001; Vygotsky, 1999; Zakharova, 1975). Also noteworthy are the studies on the mechanisms of children's grammar acquisition by clarifying real relations underlying abstraction and codification of grammatical meanings and their realization in formal means. Particular studies (Arushanova, 1999; Behas et al., 2019; Bezliudnyi, Kravchenko, Maksymchuk, Mishchenko, & Maksymchuk, 2019; Gerasymova et al., 2019; Kalmykova, 2000; Maksymchuk et al., 2018; Melnyk et al., 2019; Nerubasska, & Maksymchuk, 2020; Sheremet, Leniv, Loboda, & Maksymchuk, 2019) have allowed one to define pedagogical conditions for developing the mechanism for grammatical structuring of meanings (morphological, derivational and syntactical) and practical acquisition of grammar by preschoolers and also prompted prospects for further research.

Arushanova (1999), Karpova (1967) emphasize that the possibility of developing a linguistic attitude towards the word in preschoolers and primary school pupils is much higher than it has been before. The analysis of the current curricula, which regulate the activity of preschools, has revealed that significant reserves of children's speech development have not been considered properly. In classical and modern linguodidactic, the level of speech is considered one of the main indicators of children's mental development. However, the peculiarities of the preschool language reality awareness, in particular, the potential of their speech development at each age, has not been studied thoroughly yet. The study of the issue in question is relevant both for the general development of preschoolers' speech and their preparation for schooling.

### ***The Optimal Conditions for Teaching Grammar to Preschoolers***

*The main prerequisite* for the effective development of grammatically correct speech was specifically organized learning content in a quasi-experimental group of preschoolers. It was based on the use of certain forms of language and speech, as well as on the creation of a *cultural speech-related environment*.

Importantly, the research followed appropriate ethical rules. First, all ethical requirements were considered before conducting the research. Next, the authors of the research obtained the consent of the ethics committees of

the participating educational institutions. Then, the participants were informed about the goals and objectives of the research. They were also informed that participation in the research was voluntary and they were entitled to withdraw from it at any time.

The linguodidactic model for developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers relies on a set of factors, such as a specific organization of the educational process based on personality-oriented interaction between its participants; the system of children's learning, speech-related and independent speech-related activities.

The consideration and implementation of these factors have contributed to developing the suggested linguodidactic model for developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers. They have made it possible to create and practically implement *pedagogical conditions*: ensuring the interrelation between the perspective trends in learning, speech activity and speech experience of children; developing preschoolers' grammatical skills using the specially developed methodology; teaching preschoolers the rules of morphology and methods of word-formation in language lessons; applying different effective forms and methods of organizing learning and speech activity for preschoolers.

*The content of the training* covered several areas. They involve determining the amount of specific lexical material to be acquired; practical (pre-theoretical) knowledge about certain morphological forms and ways of word-formation acquired by children during intuitive generalization of the lexical-grammatical material selected by the teacher; the ostensible way of repeating the adult's speech (visual demonstration of words, examples of use) in mastering linguistic information; the scope of the acquired grammatical skills, assessment and control actions which the child should acquire at the end of the specially organized training.

A positive result of such learning activity was the implementation of the stages for developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers, namely, *propedeutically preventive, productively differential, normatively adaptive and actively creative*.

Each stage had its specific purpose implemented by using appropriate priority tasks, methods and techniques.

Enriching preschoolers' speech with complex grammatical structures (morphemic, derivational, syntactical) is important for two reasons. Firstly, the richness of a child's speech is the key to the development of intelligence and thinking. Secondly, the variety of grammatical constructions simultaneously implies correct speech, and correctness is the first prerequisite of speech culture.

*The reasons for violating grammatical norms* include the pressure of a language system which preschoolers realize and acquire at the practical level, sometimes too straightforwardly (systemic mistakes); undeveloped grammatical linguistic intuition; the influence of the language-speech environment, in which the child is being brought up (mistakes of the norm). *The objective factor* influencing the occurrence of grammatical mistakes may be identified as the complexity of speech. *The subjective one* implies the inability of children of junior and middle preschool age to acquire the primary orientation in the language material (phonemes, morphemes, words) and that of senior preschoolers to comprehend a holistic and differentiated way of word perception (phrases, coherent speech).

The elaborated and validated content of the experimental programme for developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers is viewed not only as a complete methodological system. It is also considered as a scheme of the linguodidactic quasi-experiment, which enables one to test the suggested approaches.

Thus, the criteria for selecting participants in the quasi-experiment were not intended to single out any specific groups. Both quasi-experimental groups (selected by blind selection) and random groups (the other groups) did not differ in any psychological, didactic or other aspects. This is, participants were selected from preschoolers almost identical in age and gender, intellectual data, the structure of interpersonal relations, temperament (based on the psychologists' data) to ensure the necessary purity of the experiment to obtain valid results of the programme implementation. Experimental, random and quasi-experimental groups of children worked under the same conditions, following the only educational programme, called "The origins of Speech Development in Preschoolers" (Bogush, 1997). The distinction was that the teaching methods used in the groups during each next term (three months) differed significantly in content.

Thus, the group's factor was levelled, while one could trace only the influence of methodological approaches, their effectiveness or, conversely, underdevelopment or inaccurate use. The experimental work involved the implementation of a clear procedure for selecting and combining methods at different stages of developing grammatically correct speech. The procedure also included the definition of the purpose, content and volume of the suggested grammatical material, which would correspond to the pedagogical feasibility principle; the identification of the basic content units to be assimilated; the elaboration of the nomenclature of possible methods for developing grammatically correct speech; a comparative analysis of the



opportunities of those methods which can be leading at a particular stage of developing grammatically correct speech; the modelling of appropriate combinations from the selected list of methods, taking into account their properties; the incorporation of combinations of methods in the educational process, regarding children's increasing readiness for acquiring the suggested grammatical material (Venger, 1977).

Thus, nursery teachers who worked with the children in quasi-experimental groups planned activities under the experimental programme, which differed significantly from traditional in the procedural aspect (means, methods and ways of developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers), rather than in the content-related one. In control groups, such planning was based on the current programmes of development, training and upbringing of preschoolers. In these groups, lessons fundamentally differed from those in typical preschool education institutions by nature and duration.

Individual lessons enabled the exact fixation of each child's speech characteristics, as well as the peculiarities of acquiring both separate grammatical forms and grammatically correct speech as a whole. The duration of an individual experimental lesson did not exceed 10-15 minutes depending on the child's age and their typological peculiarities.

Planning the stages of the work, the experimenters took into account the mode of life activities in a particular age group. First, they observed the duration of lessons, which did not exceed the time specified in the mode plan. It was regulated by nursery teachers depending on the type, nature and content of the tasks, the form of organization and the state of children's physical and mental health. The interval between lessons was up to 12-15 minutes, and the time allocated for lessons and intervals was not increased. The nursery teachers who worked in the quasi-experimental groups were informed about the signs of fatigue in children (especially in the groups of children of junior and middle preschool age), which may appear as a result of extremely prolonged or monotonous activities that exceed the performance of a particular child's nervous system.

In the context of various activities, it was reasonable to allow children to realize personal interests and creative tasks. Thus, speech-related influence on children in experimental groups followed certain requirements.

One of the tasks within the study on the level of the grammatically correct speech in preschoolers was to verify *the current validity* of the developed diagnostics by the contrasting groups method (different age

groups – junior, middle, senior preschool age; differences in gender and place of residence).

Given the procedure of analyzing speech parts adopted in current Ukrainian grammar, this research analyzes the place of derivatives in the adjective's paradigms in the following sequence: substantivized, adjectivized, verbalized, adverbialized. Word-formation paradigms of adjectives were selected, taking into account *the following criteria for vocabulary selection for preschool children*: semantic value, word-formation ability, ambiguity, compatibility, frequency, stylistic differentiation. Thus, it is important to know which adjectives preschoolers use in word formation to name the relations between characteristic features of the objective reality, in addition to purely derivational interest, in order to clarify the awareness and use of this part of speech by preschoolers. The current validity (suitability) was used as a characteristic of the diagnostic technique. The latter reflected its ability to differentiate the respondents based on their diagnostic features. The results from the diagnostic of each age group proved the validity of the specified differences in the average in the samplings compared. The possibility of overlapping (or vice versa) intervals was used to verify the null hypothesis for randomness (or not randomness of difference similarity of the obtained data. The statistically significant difference between selective arithmetic averages was assessed with the help of *the Student's t-test*, whose empirical value was calculated based on the well-known formula. The procedure for calculating all the obtained data was quite similar.

Table 1 confirms the changes at each level. The data is analyzed in two areas: according to parts of speech (adjectivized nouns) (1) and levels of development (2). Thus, the children in quasi-experimental groups demonstrate rather positive changes in the course of the research.

**Table 1.** *The Levels of Grammatically Correct Speech in Children of All Age Groups (mean value, %)*

Source: developed by the authors' conception

Parts of speech (1)	nouns		adjectives		verbs		adverbs	
	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG
<b>Random groups</b>								
High	6.9	6,9	3.0	3.2	3.0	2.75	2.0	1.75
Sufficient	10.4	10.4	15.8	17.0	6.7	6.75	4.5	4.93
Average	12.1	12.1	15.6	14.5	12.0	12.0	6.3	6.52

Below average	12.1	12.0	34.6	35.8	30.0	30.5	48.0	47.5
Low	58.5	58.6	31.0	29.5	48.3	48.0	39.2	39.3
<b>Quasi-experimental groups</b>								
High	12.7	7.1	7.4	3.5	7.8	3.0	5.1	1.8
Sufficient	19.1	11.7	27.3	17.9	14.9	7.5	11.4	5.2
Average	27.5	14.3	25.8	15.3	25.3	13.7	15.6	6.9
Below average	7.5	12.0	20.4	34.3	21.8	29.8	39.3	46.9
Low	33.2	54.9	19.1	29.0	30.2	46.0	28.6	39.2

Before the programme, only 6.9% of children in quasi-experimental and random groups were *at a high level of grammatically correct speech* (verbal nouns as indicators). At the final stage, the number was 12.7% in the experimental and 7.1% in the control groups. This is the most significant increase in the high-level indicator of all the analyzed indicators (nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs) in comparison of two groups (EG and CG)

The analysis of adjectivized nouns acquisition concerning *children with a high level* indicates some positive shifts: 7.4% of children in quasi-experimental groups (at the ascertaining stage – 3.0%) and 3.5% in random groups (at the control stage – 3.2%). Significant changes also occurred in the acquisition of adjectivized adverbs: 5.1% of children in quasi-experimental groups (at the ascertaining stage – 2.0%) and 1.8% of them in random groups (at the control stage – 1.75%). Insignificant changes in random groups are predetermined by age peculiarities of children and limited lexicon, which influences the development of comparative and superlative degrees of comparbs.

*The sufficient level* has demonstrated positive changes (on the example of adjectivized nouns: in random groups – 19.1% (only 10.4% – at the beginning of the quasi-experiment), in control groups – 11.7% (also 10.4% – at the beginning of the quasi-experiment). It must be noted, however, that children with high and sufficient levels more often demonstrated verbal innovations than other children. One could observe noticeable shifts in the vocabulary; sometimes, the sentences were even overloaded with assimilated grammatical forms.

Besides, there have occurred noticeable shifts in children with high and sufficient levels concerning all parts of speech subject to analysis. This

proves that mastering ways of word-formation as a means of enriching vocabulary enables preschoolers *to learn the rules of developing word-forms and words without assistance*.

*The average level of grammatically correct speech* has also undergone quantitative changes. After the implementation of pedagogical conditions (on the samples of nouns), there were 27.5% of children with the average level in quasi-experimental groups (the ascertaining stage – 12.1%); 14.3% – in random groups (the ascertaining stage – 12.1%). The difference has proved to be indeed significant. Thus, acquisition indicators (nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs) were 12.1%, 15.6%, 12.0% and 6.3% at the beginning of the research and 27.5%, 25.8%, 25.3%, 15.6% at its final stage. The significant increase in the number of children with an average level of grammatically correct speech can be caused by two reasons, both objective and subjective. *The objective reason* is the lack of competence in using holistic and differentiated methods of word perception (sentences, coherent speech) in children with an average level. This reason almost disappeared in quasi-experimental groups after the respondents did some special exercises. At the same time, children in random groups continued working under the current programmes, which did not involve such forms. In the beginning, the acquisition of adjectivized parts of speech (nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs) was equal to 12.1%, 14.5%, 12.0% and 6.52%. At the final stage, these results were already respectively 14.3%, 15.3%, 13.7% and 6.9%.

*The subjective reason* is the attitude of teachers working in the control groups up to “the average level”. The traditional distribution of children into three levels (high, average and low) is nothing but a pedagogical cliché, which prevents the teacher from realizing that children with the average level demonstrate the above low level of speech development based on the minimum quantitative indicators and the below high level based on the maximum quantitative indicators, which the adult follows when characterizing the child’s speech. In most cases, nursery teachers focus on their vision of qualitative characteristics of children’s grammatically correct speech. After the ascertaining quasi-experiment, the number of EG children with the below-average level (on the examples of adjectivized nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs) was equal to 7.5% (at the ascertaining stage – 12.1%), 20.4% (34.6%), 21.8% (30%), 39.3% (48.0%). The reason for minor positive shifts in the control groups is the speech environment in which the child’s grammatically correct speech was developed. In this case, mistakes may occur as a consequence of adults’ negative speech impact.

The most significant shifts have occurred in the speech of children with a *low level of grammatically correct speech who studied under the experimental programme*.

Thus, children of junior and middle preschool age form the names of bearers of features from the stems of adjectives mostly using suffixal morphemes. The nucleus of this word-formation category is constituted by word-formation types with suffixes *-ok*, *-yk*, *-ets*, *-k(a)*, *yts(ya)*. The most recurrent among adjectivized nouns in the speech of children of all age groups are units with the derivational meaning of “the bearer of features”. Preschoolers form mostly monosemantic words. Most units within derivational meaning of “incomplete expression of features” in the speech of children of middle and senior preschool age have the same meaning and differ by a sphere and frequency of use or emotional colouring. The speech of young preschoolers has the most vivid emotional colouring due to such suffixes as *-esenk-*, *-isink-*, *-usink-*.

The most frequent adjectivized verbs among those coined by preschoolers are adjectives with suffixes *-i-*, *-nu-*, with the derivational meaning “to acquire features”. Children of the junior preschool age found it difficult to form a verb with the derivational meaning “to allocate features”. The speech of *middle and senior preschool age children* mostly includes adjectival units with the derivational meaning “to acquire features”, expressing the external features of something or someone, which mostly differ in scope and frequency of use or emotional colouring.

*Regarding children of all age groups*, the difficulty lies in forming adjectivized verbs with the derivational meaning “to allocate features”. The analysis of adverbs use by junior preschoolers reveals that the prevailing derived adjectives were suffixal derivatives, formed using the suffix *-o* (*-e*); confixes *-po-...-omu*; *z-(s)-...-a* (*-u*); *na-...-o*. The speech of children of middle and senior preschool age mostly demonstrated units formed by adding suffixes *-o* (*-e*), *-y*; confixes *-po-...-omu*, *z-(s)-...-a* (*-u*), *na-...-o*, *za-...-ky*.

## Conclusions

The core of the experimental system is the linguodidactic model and methodology for developing grammatically correct speech. It consists of the four interrelated stages, namely, *propedentially preventive*, *productively differential*, *normatively adaptive* and *actively creative*. At each stage, grammatical categories were consistently introduced in preschoolers’ speech. The system of developing grammatically correct speech in preschoolers is much more

difficult than that in primary school pupils. It must be noted that the research highlights the continuity of developing grammatically correct speech, as well as principles, means, methods and techniques of forming grammatically correct speech in preschoolers at each of these stages.

Certain positive shifts in all levels of random groups can be explained by children's natural inclinations, as well as by the influence of traditional methods which nursery teachers in control groups used. The expediency of organizing relevant training at a certain age and achieving high and sufficient levels of grammatically correct speech in children is proved by the requirements of the state documents for preschoolers' speech activity. Grammatical competence is viewed as a key one (Bazyma et al., 2020; Kruty, 2004; Zdanevych, & Kruty, 2019) since it is manifested in the unconscious use of grammatical forms of the native language in accordance with laws and rules of morphology, word formation and syntax, as well as in the sense of grammatical correctness, skills to correct speech according to grammatical norms.

The analysis of the results from the quasi-experimental work has allowed one to reveal the patterns in the development of grammatically correct speech in preschoolers:

1) productivity and efficiency of acquiring grammatical categories of nouns depend on both morphological features of this part of speech (gender, number, case) and levels of children's linguistic and speech skills;

2) acquisition of grammatical categories of adjectives, rather than vocabulary, is related to the child's cognitive development, speech activity and autonomy (i.e., there exists a correlation between the enrichment of vocabulary and acquisition of correct grammatical forms);

3) the pace of acquiring adjectivized nouns, adjectives, verbs (their quantitative and qualitative characteristics) depends on the level of children's awareness of the semantic-derivational structure of adjectives with a certain derivational meaning, while the pace of acquiring adjectivized adverbs depends on the level of the children's awareness of the invariability of this part of speech;

4) speech activity and practical use of rules of morphology and word-formation depend directly on the preschoolers' awareness of the semantic and derivational structure of the used adjectivized nouns, adjectives, verbs; practical use of adverbs directly depends on the children's awareness of opportunities and means of realizing the derivational potential;

5) acquisition of semantic-derivational meanings in the structure of adjectives with such derivational meanings as "incomplete expression of features" and "vivid expression of features", adjectivized verbs with such

meanings “to acquire features” and “to allocate features” have certain difficulties; the cause of these difficulties is limited vocabulary (hence the sensory experience), as well as the psychological features of each age.

The acquisition of the grammatical structure of a native language has a definite sequence. One first acquires everything typical, all productive forms from the sphere of morphology and word formation. It must be noted that children reject everything atypical, exceptional, extraordinary, violating the norms of the language system. Language samples are gradually imbued holistically by emulating the human environment.

The study determined the *tendencies* in the development of grammatically correct speech in preschoolers. Indeed, the daily experience of speech communication is an internal background on which the child’s awareness of linguistic phenomena is developed during the participation in various activities.

The results of the experiment prove the following: the working hypothesis has been confirmed; the objective has been achieved since the development of grammatically correct speech has become effective due to the special organization of learning and speech activity, which combines structural, cognitive, grammatical and communicative aspects; the created cultural speech-related environment has made it possible to develop children’s grammatically correct speech, as a basic level of linguistic personality, in preschool education institutions.

Further research should be aimed at studying quantitative and qualitative shifts in children’s linguistic and speech-related development in the process of acquiring the syntactic level of languages.

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