

TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

The majority of visually impaired persons have some degree of vision. However, there are those persons who have no sight at all. Some people have visual issues because of an eye ailment; others have visual problems because the neural pathways that carry information from the eyes to the brain are impaired; this is known as CVI (cerebral visual blindness).

- Blind or visually impaired children, like any children, can have a variety of linked difficulties such as specialized language impairments, childhood apraxia of speech, cleft palates, learning disorders, and intellectual disabilities. They may also suffer from hearing loss. They might have Down’s condition or another condition that is or is not connected with blindness. Blindness or visual impairment can be acquired such as a result of facial or head injuries from a car accident, or from a disease such as cancer of the eye or complications of diabetes.

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Vision provides information about nonverbal communication as well as meaning to words. Students with visual impairments require frequent hands-on encounters with real-world things, as well as auditory labels and descriptions and a rich reading environment (print and/or braille, depending on the student’s specific requirements).

This article examines the theoretical elements of teaching strategies that may be used in the classroom to teach language learners with visual impairments and help them enhance their language abilities.

Key words: vision, games, interaction, communication, vocabulary, creativity, teamwork, speech therapy, verbalism, visual impairment.

INTRODUCTION

Toddlers often experience rapid language development as they learn to establish connections and vocally label and describe items. Blind or visually impaired children would not have the same chance to casually watch and develop connections with

gestures and items in their surroundings. Language development will likely be delayed unless the pupil was actively taught through direct experiences linked with language.

It is critical for students to be exposed to appropriate language models in an active learning environment in order to stimulate language development. The following tactics can assist a learner in improving their language skills:

- Use proper language as an example.
- Practice taking turns.
- Use units to help students grasp subjects and combine skills.
- Give kids options within activities; • Create a pattern to assist students anticipate transitions and build language; and • Incorporate language into all of the student's experiences.
- Look for strategies to assist the student in participating in all activities.

Common linguistic issues Language difficulties are prevalent among children with visual impairments. They are verbalism, echolalia, pronoun trouble, and frequent inquiry.

Verbalism

It is typical for a learner to speak about people, items, and events without fully grasping the concepts. Verbalism is the possession of a vocabulary or language without comprehension. It is the capacity to speak about a subject without having any notions or comprehension of it. If the learner is not given numerous hands-on experiences, he or she may struggle to comprehend topics.

Echolalia

Many blind or visually impaired pupils learn to speak by repeating or replicating phrases or sentences they do not comprehend. They may repeat words heard earlier in conjunction with a certain subject or event, or they may echo what they just heard. Speech and Language Pathologists can assess and decide if a pupil requires guidance and support in enhancing their language understanding.

Excessive Inquiries

Many visually impaired pupils ask numerous inquiries that are either unsuitable for the discourse or improper in the social setting. This is frequently a learnt manner of beginning encounters or checking to see whether the individual is still close. Students must understand when it is permissible to ask questions and when it is necessary to wait for a suitable moment to ask them. Students who ask questions to find comfort and reassurance in the presence of another person should be encouraged to communicate their sentiments directly rather than via inquiry.

Maintaining Conversations

Students who are blind or visually challenged may often struggle to maintain discussions. They may be preoccupied with their own hobbies and look uninterested in others. Students may require formal teaching in order to participate in conversations. This is a skill that the Speech and Language Pathologist or the school's guidance counselor may address by modeling and practicing skills.

Children who are blind or visually challenged must read and be read to!

Book reading is an effective technique for youngsters to acquire vocabulary, grammar, narratives, and scripts (e.g., beginning, middle, and end). They learn to forecast (what will happen on the following page or at the conclusion) and to infer. They learn about literacy, such as the existence of sounds, words, phrases, and punctuation. The list of things we learn from being read to and reading is enormous. Margaret Mead famously stated that learning to read is the best thing that has happened to the human intellect since it opens up an unlimited realm of study.

Children who are blind or visually challenged do not require pictures, but they do require attention to be maintained in other ways.

Their very first books can be tactile and handcrafted. A book is made from ten pieces of cardboard stapled together.

Audiobooks are excellent, but they cannot replace being read to by an adult who asks questions, points out things, laughs with a kid, repeats the pages, modifies the scripts, adds his or her own small touches, and uses hilarious voices and accents.

CONCLUSION

It is much simpler for blind individuals to cope in the world if they can utilize language to mediate their learning and negotiate their surroundings. We utilize language to inform the youngster about what is going on in the world. We utilize language to help blind youngsters understand their surroundings. We utilize words to communicate with children because they cannot read our facial expressions and, in some cases, cannot understand context because they cannot see it.

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