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A Study On Verbalism Among Visually Impaired Children In Andhra Pradesh



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Abstract

Verbalism is especially a problem in the education of blind children since they are limited to the use of senses other than vision. They depend extensively upon tactual observations for concrete experiences. Verbal learning without appropriate formation and concrete experience has been frequently mentioned in the literature as one of the major problems in the education of the visually impaired. Verbalism arises due to acquisition of abstraction resulting from insufficient sensory experiences. Vocabulary acquisition is a continuous and comprehensive ability to be developed systematically through various pre-requisite skills and planned numerous vocabulary acquisition activities. Reading comprehension, listening comprehension and vocabulary development are the essential components of language development for the visually impaired child. Language development for the visually impaired is based on LSRW skills. A study was conducted on 1198 visually impaired children from 24 schools in Andhra Pradesh. Variables chosen are Gender, Age, Level of study, SES, Management and Area of residence. The Gates List verbalism test was used to collect the data. This paper includes the detailed concept of verbalism, major findings of related studies, suggestions to overcome the major obstacles in verbalism and also cites the innovative strategies in teaching learning process which are helpful to the personnel dealing with differently abled in general and visually impaired in particular.

Keywords: Verbalism, differently-abled, visually-oriented-verbalism, visual impairment

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1. Introduction

Verbalism is defined as lack of meaning of visually impaired children's word, whereas, visually oriented verbalism existed when a child employed a word referring to color or brightness to define the name of a given object from a list. Verbalism has been mentioned as a definite problem in the literature on the education of blind, through the available research was scanty and incomplete.

Verbal learning without appropriate foundation in concrete experience has been frequently mentioned in the literature as one of the major problems in the education of the blind. Concern has been expressed that excessive dependence on verbal learning may have negative effects upon both academic learning and personality development. The child may often accept verbal descriptions of others instead of gaining the necessary impressions from concrete experiences through the senses. Child may be able to verbalize quite readily about objects and tangible materials that could not tactually or otherwise, identify if given the opportunity. Subsequently abstraction built upon abstraction resulting in hazy and inaccurate understandings of environmental surroundings. The child accepts visually oriented descriptions in lieu of impressions from own senses. The acceptance of borrowed descriptions may lead to lose faith in the worth of real experiences and to feel devaluated. The resulting depression may be generalized to other areas of adjustment.

Communication ability of the child is based on vocabulary development, social experience in home and environment, social experiment, opportunity to use language in different contexts, self-initiative to improve the language abilities, the assistance extended by the regular teacher, resource teacher, peer groups and personnel involved in teaching plus curricular activities. Generally, communication proceeds smoothly on two conditions that the path of the message is without obstacles and that the code is genuinely shared by the sender and the receiver. Phonological development, acquisition of vocabulary and development of syntax are the three important phenomena in language development and communication skills.

2. Problem Statement

Is there any threat of verbalism among visually impaired children in Andhra Pradesh?

3. Research Questions

Is there any influence of gender, age, management, level, area and socioeconomic status on intelligence quotient, experience, adjustment and visually oriented verbalism?

4. Purpose of the Study

This study aims on reporting detailed concept of verbalism, major findings of related studies, suggests how to overcome the major obstacles in verbalism and cites the innovative strategies in teaching learning process which are helpful to the personnel dealing with differently abled in general and visually impaired in particular.

5. Research Methods

Descriptive Survey method was used to collect the data from a sample of 1198 visually impaired children from 24 schools in Andhra Pradesh. The Gates List verbalism test was used to collect the data. Variables chosen are gender, age, level of study, socio economic status SES, management and area of residence. Simple statistical techniques were used for analysis.

6. Findings

Verbalism, consisting of visually oriented responses, was found to exist among blind children by several experiments. A type of verbalism may occur if children are able to define or use words acceptability but are unable to identify items which the words represent. Studies stated that verbalism may be caused by inaccurate and vague concepts resulting from insufficient sensory experiences.

Research concerning concept development was cited indicating that age, intelligence and other factors may be related in varying degrees to concept formation. A positive relationship between Intelligence quotient, experience, adjustment and visually oriented verbalism was found. Girl child, rural, lower socio economic status, government school children needs more improvement in concept development than their counterparts.

Researcher feel that there are number of strategies can be used to overcome verbalism in visually impaired children. They are tactile skill development, association of concrete object for abstract, developing mental imagery, perception of linguistic profile, emergent literacy and teaching deep word knowledge etc. The researcher recommended the following suggestions based on the findings of the study to improve verbal skills and the teaching vocabulary factors involved in verbalization.

7. Conclusions

Verbalism is uttering words without knowing the real meaning. In children with total blindness, the visual deficit is perception. They have a delay in exploration and experiences which leads to a delay in play and concept development. Unless the totally visual impaired

child engages in play and exploration the child tends to acquire blindisms or mannerisms. In addition children with Visual Impairment developed verbalisms to use some words without appropriate underlying concepts. Like cognitive development the language development of children with Visual Impairment progress at slower rate, but delays less significantly or disappear altogether by school age.

The absence of vision influences and delays the process of language acquisition. Reading and listening comprehension and vocabulary are the essential components of language development for the visually impaired child. Child relies more on auditory and tactual exploration and perception. Heavy reliance on verbal descriptions of others as a means of developing concepts about environment also results in verbalism. Visual impairments limit the development of children in many ways. Experience and language are two key areas to the development in the early stages of life. Language is developing at this time, a child can only acquire a limited meaning for certain words. As a result of limited language development will result in limited experiences impacting acquisition of verbalism.

In pre-linguistic stage, the language communication may be slower to develop the ability to interact with and create change in the environment. Due to the inability to share attention, omits the use of visual cues, such as eye conduct and smiles, to initiate and maintain interactions may skip the stage in which they use idiosyncratic forms to express concepts, use significantly more tables than functional words, acquire a limited meaning for words, exhibit delayed ability to form categories related concepts are all expressed by the child. These difficulties will affect the language development of the children with Visual Impairment.

One of the most common misconceptions about children with visual impairment is that they are equally or more adopt in language skills than their normally sighted peers in reality savior and early impairments are likely to affect the language development. The differences are in part due to limited access to the environment and to differences in verbal feedback from people around them. They lack visual references and have reduced integration of information from their parents. More studies have found that the language of children with Visual Impairment is more oriented and that the word-meanings are more limited than that of normally sighted children.

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