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THE PROBLEM OF DEVELOPMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE IN CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

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Abstract

The relevance of the study of the problem of developing foreign language competence in children with intellectual disabilities is determined by the need for their full socialization in the modern society that is characterized by multiculturalism, particularly, from the point of view of the language environment. This article is aimed at analyzing the state of this problem in the theory and practice of oligophrenopedagogy. The leading research methods are the review of psychological and pedagogical literature, as well as the analysis of the experience of teaching English to students with intellectual disabilities. The analysis of theoretical and practical aspects of the problem has shown its insufficient coverage in theoretical sources, and existence of variable approaches to solving the problem at a practical level. The research defines the contradiction between the inability of children with intellectual disabilities to master English as a means of communication and the existing need to study its aspects at an accessible level. The data presented in the article may serve as prerequisite for development of psychological and pedagogical approaches to solve this problem, taking into account its current state and the need for solutions within the theoretical and practical context.

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1. Introduction

Russia is part of the world community, and foreign languages, English in particular, are widely used in the life spheres that are far from the linguistic field, such as social and domestic life. Therefore, it is impossible for a modern person to have no understanding of a foreign language, since competence in this field is associated with solving communicative, general developmental, and socially significant life tasks.

The educational system offers various opportunities to learn a foreign language: children and adolescents study foreign languages at schools, students in professional educational organizations/ Besides, there is a great number of subject courses aimed at people of various ages, including very young children, and adults.

2. Problem Statement

The problem of teaching a foreign language requires a special study, solution and approach when it comes to people with special educational needs. The developmental features of children with developmental disabilities do not allow them, along with their healthy peers, to master the necessary program content. Education for this group of children is based on adapted programs that meet their educational abilities. Adaptation is also required for foreign language programs.

Each type of impaired development is characterized by a certain specificity of social, communicative, educational abilities; in this regard, the methods of teaching a foreign language must be developed on individual basis, taking into account the uniqueness of the special learning needs of children with developmental disabilities.

The ultimate goal of special education for people with special developmental needs in all countries of the world is their social integration. The success of integration depends largely on the social and household competence of a person, ability to organize his or her domestic life independently, an activity that is socially determined. Therefore, to prepare a child for a self-reliant life, independent of other people's help, is the main task of a special school. In fact, the entire process of children's education and upbringing is aimed at ensuring their social adaptation in society (Gladkaya, 2003, p. 4.).

The solution to this problem is particularly difficult for children with intellectual disabilities (mental retardation). Children with intellectual disabilities often have linguistic problems, that is, a weakened ability to master a language, which leads to functional impairments in social interaction and education (Bishop, 2017). Considering speech-related, linguistic disorders, specialists note that disorders can occur without a known cause or simultaneously with a wider profile of disorders (for example, with autism spectrum disorders, hearing impairment, genetic prerequisites, intellectual impairment) (Harvey & Spencer, 2019).

The theory and practice of training and education of this group of children convincingly demonstrates the fact that due to the existing developmental features they are not able to master a foreign language, and, consequently, foreign languages are not included in the educational programs for children with intellectual disabilities. As noted above, foreign language competence is to some extent part of the socialization of a modern individual. Children with intellectual disabilities often have difficulties in adapting to environment (Kok et al., 2016); foreign language competence is considered one of the means of socialization and acculturation. When preparing people with intellectual disabilities for an independent

life, one should bear in mind that the society is diverse in a number of parameters, including the aspect of language variability.

3. Research Questions

Within the framework of the stated problem, a contradiction arises between the inability of children with intellectual disabilities to fully master a foreign language and the importance of the formation of a modern person's competences in the foreign language sphere.

Thus, the problem of developing foreign language competences in persons with intellectual disabilities is relevant and socially significant, and presents important research topic. The main research questions may be stated as follows: to what extent is the problem developed in the theory of oligophrenopedagogy?; how is the learning process for children with intellectual disabilities implemented in practice, is there any reason for its organization in the conditions of inclusion and special education?; what kind of actions should be taken in this direction.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to analyze the state of the problem of developing the foreign language competences in students with intellectual disabilities.

Stages of the study. The study includes the following stages: 1. Review of psychological and pedagogical literature and sources; 2. Analysis of the experience of teaching English to students with intellectual disabilities; 3. Qualitative analysis of the results.

The experimental base of the study. The study was conducted using the case of the school No. 530 for students with intellectual disabilities. The participants of the study included high school students (grades 5-9) with a slight degree of mental retardation (clinical diagnosis F-70), and disability specialists (10 teachers).

It should be noted that the problem of teaching foreign language to children with special learning needs is less covered in the psychological, pedagogical and methodological literature than the same issue regarding children with normal development. However, given the relevance of the identified problem, researchers and educators pay certain attention to this issue in scientific literature.

5. Research Methods

In accordance with the purpose of the study, the following research methods were determined: review of the psychological and pedagogical literature and analysis of the experience of teaching English to children with intellectual disabilities by conducting relevant conversations with students and teachers, and monitoring the subject-related work .

The issue of teaching a foreign language to children with special learning needs is considered in both research articles and theses (Belova, Baryshnikova, Makarova, Nesterenko, Profatilova, Torsunva, Talalaeva, Shargorodskaya, Chirvo, etc.). Researchers consider the problems of teaching a foreign language to children with visual, hearing, speech, autism spectrum disorders, motor disorders. A special feature of these publications is that most of them are authored by practicing teachers (mainly teachers of inclusive

classes). The published works consider the issues of teaching foreign languages to children with special learning needs, methodological approaches to the organization of the learning process. The authors describe the experience and results of learning using play resources and project activities, information technologies, and other methods and techniques of working with children with various types of impaired development.

It is important to emphasize that the literature review has revealed publications on the problems of inclusive foreign-language education, such as the works of Isaeva, Morozova, Makarova, Pribylova, Sorokovyh, Somovaya, Staritsyna, Simmons et al. contributed to the scientific newsletter taken as the primary source for both practical expertise and fundamental knowledge “Inclusive foreign language education today” (Makarova, 2017; Molchanova, 2018; Molchanova, 2019). The authors note the relevance of teaching foreign languages to children with special learning needs and, at the same time, the specificity of this task, and the insufficiency of methodology. In this regard, they are actively searching for productive approaches to teaching foreign children in inclusive learning conditions. However, it should be noted that the issue of teaching a foreign language to children with intellectual disabilities is barely considered in psychological and pedagogical literature. There are only several publications related to this group of children. For example, Kojaeva (2016) considers foreign language lessons as a potential for corrective work involving children with intellectual disabilities. Denisova (2018) analyzes the specificity of teaching English to children with Down syndrome. The author highlights the strengths of this group of children, on which the teacher can rely in the process of work: good mechanical memory, imitative abilities, musical memory, curiosity, interest in the environment. A study by international scientists Lund, Young, and Yarbrough, (2020) provides evidence that co-treatment may be effective for vocabulary teaching for some children with Down syndrome, particularly those with relatively high non-verbal intelligence.

Little attention to this problem in the special literature may be explained by the facts that due to the existing developmental features, children, adolescents and adults with intellectual disabilities cannot fully master a foreign language and therefore, foreign language subjects are not included in educational programs and, accordingly, are not studied by persons with intellectual disabilities.

Summarizing the results of the review of psychological and pedagogical literature and sources, we can conclude that the problem of teaching foreign languages to children with intellectual disabilities is almost not covered in scientific literature. However, there is a number of publications related to this topic. The available data on the problem indicate that in educational organizations teachers are faced with the need to teach this group of children a foreign language, mainly English. In this regard, it is necessary to study the practical experience of teaching English to children with intellectual disabilities (Nuruzzaman, 2016).

The studying of the practical experience of teaching English to children with intellectual disabilities yielded the following results. In accordance with the requirements of the Federal Law of the Russian Federation “On Education” (No. 273 of 12/29/12) (“Zakon RF ob obrazovanii...”, 2012), parents have the right to choose the educational organization where their child will study. In turn, each educational organization must create the necessary conditions of children's upbringing, regardless of their disabilities and developmental characteristics. Thus, children with intellectual disabilities, in accordance with the request of their parents, can study in both special and regular educational organizations, i.e. in the conditions of inclusion. Outside Russia, conceptual frameworks are also being developed to attract parents as teachers

and educators and involve them in the psychological and teaching process at schools (Fogle et al., 2020). The research shows that parents' intervention may reduce a child's emotional and behavioral problems (CEBP) and improve the parent-child relationship (Fang et al., 2020).

There is certain ambivalence in the situation of teaching foreign languages at school. In special schools, foreign languages are not included in the curriculum in contrast to the regular school, where teaching foreign languages is mandatory. Accordingly, teachers at regular schools have to teach a foreign language to all children without exception. At the same time, in accordance with the requirements of the law, students with intellectual disabilities must be trained using an adapted program. Thus, for children with intellectual disabilities, an adapted foreign language program must be developed by school teachers.

An analysis of practical experience shows that such adapted programs are developed by teachers on the basis of traditional methodological developments in teaching English to students with normal development. However, teachers face various difficulties, as most of them do not have sufficient experience in the field of teaching children with such disabilities, or special competencies required for development and adaptation of curricular and methodological frameworks for students with special learning needs. As a result, the tasks and purposes of such programs do not always correspond to the possible learning needs of students with intellectual disabilities. It should be noted that these programs do not take into account the fact that children with intellectual disabilities cannot learn a foreign language as a means of communication due to their developmental challenges. Students can be assigned with overwhelming tasks such as to find a description of where the plot takes place in the English text, use transcriptions, language guess, etc. However, the positive features of the developed programs include an adequate description of the psychological and pedagogical characteristics of children with intellectual disabilities, which may serve as a valid methodological and pedagogical guide for teachers. This aspect helps to increase the effectiveness of the programs due to accumulated experience of teaching such children. The programs contain the correctional-developmental component of English lessons aimed at developing children's higher mental functions. The play method is often considered as the leading one. The advantage of some of the adapted programs is that their content is based on development of elementary communicative competences in children: rewriting, correct writing of the English letters, writing down extracts from texts. Another advantage is the distinction of the minimum and sufficient levels of proficiency in the learning content. A significant drawback is that the noted trends corresponding to children's special educational needs are not consistently included in the programs but are fragmentary and part of developments of various authors. Thus, at the moment, there is no systematic approach to teaching foreign languages to children with special learning needs in the context of inclusion.

In special schools, despite the absence of foreign language subjects in the curriculum, attempts are being made to teach high school students aspects of the English language. Thus, an analysis of the activities of special school No. 530 showed that disability specialists organize optional English language classes for high school students (starting from the 6th grade). Students are introduced to the simplest elements of the English language, without any requirements to the level of their knowledge and skills. Teachers explain this trend by the fact that they recognize the need for students to shape understanding of certain aspects of the foreign language sphere, and that the children themselves show a certain interest in this subject. Moreover, teachers develop adapted program and methodological content for students, but they do it with

higher quality, in comparison with teachers of regular schools, due to their qualification and experience in defectology.

Thus, the attempts of teachers to introduce students with intellectual disabilities to the English language are made in two directions, featuring the method of adaptation. The first as a forced necessity in the conditions of inclusion engaging the teachers with insufficient defectological qualification. The second, as a response to the tangible need to teach students English, and the expedience of such programs in special schools, developed and taught by personnel with special defectological training, which contributes to their greater effectiveness.

It is important to note that the teaching activity is complicated by the fact that there are no special textbooks, teaching aids, scientific or programmatic and methodological developments on the issues of teaching a foreign language to children with intellectual disabilities.

Moreover, there is an urgent demand in disability specialists, which is a worldwide problem faced by other countries, for example, the USA (Lee, 2018).

The methodological foundations of the analyzed problem include the following statements and concepts: concepts of development and correctional-developmental education of students with intellectual disabilities (Vygotsky, Zabrannaya, Lubovsky, Malofeev, Pevzner, Strebeleva, Schiff, Clarke, Lewi, Luke Watson, Randy Uzzel, Paul, Scharnhorst, Buchel, Williams, etc.); personality oriented and activity oriented approaches (Amonoshvili, Leontyev, Elkonin, etc.); theories emphasizing the role of the motivational component in the structure of activity (Bozhovich, Morozova, Rutkovsky, Slastenin, Shchedrina, etc.); concepts of teaching foreign language vocabulary (Atamanova, Bazina, Batsenko, Bibin, Gnatkevich, Gredasova, Grisheleva, Gurvich, Davydova, Zalevskaya, Stetsenko, Sukhareva, Tarasova, Taranova, Tkachenko, Shamov, etc.), general pedagogical methods of teaching foreign language communication skills (Bazina, Bankevich, Batsenko, Belyaev, Bukhbinder, Gez, Gurvich, Davydova, Zapevskaya, Korostelev, Rakhman, Stetsenko, Shamo, etc.).

To analyze this problem, at first it is necessary to define the framing for specific components of the foreign language competence, which should be developed in students with intellectual disabilities. This task is connected with the fact that it is impossible to teach children with impaired development English at a comprehensive level because they are unable to master English as an integral language system.

To solve this problem, we must consider in more detail the special aspects peculiarities of the development of children with intellectual disabilities.

A child with intellectual disabilities is characterized by permanent and irreversible impaired cognitive activity due to the organic brain damage. The immaturity of higher intellectual processes combined with excessive inertness of behavior creates a fundamentally unique picture of mental development. Conditioned connections which are the basis of learning are fragile and develop slowly, while differentiation of these connections is difficult. The higher nervous system of such children is marked by considerable inertia, decoupling of the first and second signal systems, slow excitation and inhibition. Over the years of life, during their life, children's development is supported by the targeted corrective and developmental education, which offers an optimistic view on the prospects of working with them. Children are characterized by slow learning, difficulties in analyzing and processing their own experience. They lack cognitive and, orientational activity, cognitive interests and processes are poorly developed. The deficiency

of visual, auditory and life experiences, poor development of speech – all this deprives a child of the necessary basis for cognitive development. Their cognitive abilities are characterized by inconsistency, weak regulatory function, noncriticality, solidity concreteness, weak generalizing function, and inability for abstract thinking. Children quickly forget the perceived information, cannot timely use the acquired knowledge, their memory is characterized by the weak storage abilities and inaccurate reproduction. The mediation of memorization is also extremely weak. However, they may have a good mechanical memory. They are characterized by poor initiative, suggestibility, difficulties in overcoming drives, low motivation, indifference, and poverty of emotions (Rubinshtein, 1970). As a result, the holistic activity and development of a person is disrupted.

Special attention must be paid to the speech development of this group of children. The slowed pace of speech development and its imperfection complicate and severely limit communication of such children with others. A child faces difficulties in differentiating speech sounds by hearing, does not absorb new words and phrases: familiar and unfamiliar words are not clearly perceived. Weak development of phonemic hearing makes it difficult to develop the sound-producing aspect of speech, sound-syllabic analysis and word synthesis. The articulation is characterized by slow development. By the time speech must be used as a means of communication and a thinking tool, it is in an extremely underdeveloped state. Children have an extremely poor vocabulary, while the acquired vocabulary remains inferior, because the used words mostly do not correspond to their true meaning. The grammatical system is very imperfect. All this negatively affects the coherent speech of children (Rubinshtein, 1970).

Thus, children with intellectual disabilities experience significant difficulties in the process of development and learning, cannot fully master even their native speech and language system, need special conditions for training and education, which mainly include adapted educational programs and special teaching methods (such as the use of extended variations of visibility, frequent repetition of the studied content, etc.) (Shalock & Daffy, 2010). These developmental features are an obstacle that does not allow children to learn a foreign language successfully. However, taking into account children's potential for development in the conditions of special corrective developmental education and upbringing, a certain degree of educability, one can talk about the possibility of introducing students to certain aspects of the English language in order to solve practical problems.

There is another significant factor to be noted. The content of educational programs for children with intellectual disabilities, in accordance with the Federal State Educational Standards of the Russian Federation (FSSES), is defined by the two key components: academic component (related to the study of general educational subjects) and life competences (knowledge, skills and abilities that a child needs at the current life stage). The priority in the program content is given to the life competences.

Undoubtedly, foreign language competence including all relevant knowledge and skills cannot be considered of vital importance. In fact, this is the competence without which one can live, especially if the chosen profession and the main type of activity do not require the knowledge of a foreign language. However, certain components of the foreign language competence, as mentioned above, have communicative, social and domestic relevance. The lack of such competence may significantly complicate the life of a modern person.

Considering the fact that children with mental retardation cannot fully master a foreign language, it is necessary to define the possible degree of efficiency of teaching English to this group of children.

There is such expediency and it is due to the following statements.

Education is designed to help students become independent citizens who are able to make a deliberate right choice in a real-life situation and take an active part in society (Bessarabova & Bokova, 2019, p. 36). A competency-based approach to education involves the development of students' social competence.

Social competence is a system of knowledge about social reality and oneself, a system of complex social and interaction skills, and behavioral scenarios in typical social situations (Voronova & Medvedeva, 2019). The ability of a person to interpret and understand their social environment determines the specifics of social interaction, and knowledge of the relevant patterns and scenarios of social behaviour acts as a necessary internal resource, allowing a person to be socially competent in terms of choosing a social role in a particular social situation (Voronova & Medvedeva, 2019).

The understanding of certain elements of the English vocabulary is, to a some extent, a part of the socialization of a modern person.

English is actively present in various areas of modern Russia:

- common phrases (startup, challenge, mentor, etc.);
- names of brands, goods, products (Puma, Basilur, Glade, Sony, etc.);
- relevant advertising;
- inscriptions phrases on clothes and shoes (We are not lost, More taste than money, etc.);
- website names (mos.ru, mosenergosbyt.ru, etc.), etc.

The words borrowed from English sometimes do not have Russian equivalents. When children with intellectual disabilities study in an inclusive learning environment, they get involved in the learning process associated with learning a foreign language. Due to its mentioned significance, it is inappropriate to completely exclude it from the program, and illegitimate to teach it without any adaptation to the needs and capabilities of children. Teachers are faced with the need to adapt the programs to the capabilities of children. Since teachers of regular schools, as a rule, do not have a special (defectological education, their programs have drawbacks and inconsistencies. Therefore, there is a need to provide an inclusive educational process with corresponding methodological developments of higher quality.

The interest in learning English is also expressed by students with intellectual disabilities. Students note that they feel discriminated because their curriculum does not have English, while students from regular schools study this subject. Such a need to introduce students to a foreign language enables to use the motivational component in the structure of activity (Domyei, 2013). Students have both the need, and a certain individual potential in learning the aspects of a foreign language. Sizemina (2009) emphasizes that educational motivation is considered to be a determining factor in the process of forming lexical competence. It is due to the fact that a change in the motivational sphere causes changes in the attitude to the learning process, and directly to the studied content. If there is a motivation, the studied subject becomes not just an object of study, but a means of satisfying the needs and interests of the student. Gainutdinova (2011, p. 99) offers an algorithm of motivation development in a given mood (development of motivational dynamics): perception of the significance of a subject (do I need this?); awareness of one's own abilities

(can I?); self-control abilities. Thus, the motivational component can be regarded as the leading in the development of the aspects of foreign language competence among high school students with intellectual disabilities.

It is thus relevant to determine the substantive characteristics and the scope of foreign language competence.

In scientific literature on the subject there are various definitions in relation to the aspects of foreign language competence of students: foreign language communicative competence, language competence, lexical competence.

The term “foreign language competence” has been shaped relatively recently as a derivative of the term “communicative competence in the field of a foreign language”. Experts from the member states of the Council of Europe have included the communicative competence of an individual in the structure of cultural and professional competences. The experts of Council of Europe defined the threshold level of foreign language proficiency as basic, and identified six components in the structure of communicative competence: linguistic, sociolinguistic, sociocultural, strategic, discursive, social competences (Carter, 2006; Krasilnikova, 2009; Tretyak, 2005).

According to Tretyak (2005), the various types of competences are defined in the following way. The linguistic competence is understood as the possession of a certain amount of knowledge and corresponding skills in various language aspects: vocabulary, phonetics, grammar.

Sociolinguistic competence is the ability to make a choice of language forms, use and transform them in accordance with the context.

Sociocultural competence is the readiness and ability to conduct a “dialogue of cultures”; understanding how the geographical position and climate of a country determine its way of life, economy, etc., knowledge of the main stages in the development of its history, outstanding events and personalities, religious beliefs and traditions.

Strategic (functional) competence includes the skills and abilities to build a message in such a way as to achieve the goal, using adequate means; the choice of means for constructing a description, narration, commentary, etc.

Discursive competence is the skills and abilities to organize speech taking into account a specific topic, cause and effect connections, etc.

Social competence is the willingness and desire to interact with others, showing respect, tolerance, empathy.

Phonological competence is the skills that enable to recognize and produce speech.

Lexical competence is the possession of a vocabulary that allows solving communication problems in various spheres of life.

Grammatical competence is the abilities and skills of competent grammatical design of speech.

It is also worth highlighting the following: competence includes the ability to choose language and speech means appropriately for a given situation; knowledge of the sociolinguistic features of the language and speech etiquette; knowledge and understanding of domestic culture and other country-specific features; knowledge of the outstanding people and the history of the countries of the studied language; the ability to achieve the goal of verbal interaction using adequate means; the ability to perceive and implement

statements in accordance with the internal plan using adequate linguistic and speech means; the ability to connect speech coherently and logically; the ability to use linguistic and speech means to create emotionality of speech; the willingness and ability to maintain communication; the ability to compromise and show empathy.

Children with intellectual disabilities cannot master the totality of various aspects of a foreign language; accordingly, it is not possible for them to fully absorb foreign language tools to solve communicative problems.

Within the parameters defined by Tretiak one component may in a certain volume be available to students with developmental disabilities provided that there are clear learning content and adapted educational process. This component includes the lexical language competence. However, children cannot master it fully. There is a need to select from this component those aspects that are appropriate and possible to be learned by children. It should be noted that work in this direction can be productively carried out among high school students.

Foreign language lexical competence (it is not advisable to speak of integral foreign-language competence here) of people with mental retardation can be defined as proficiency in elementary, mainly lexical representations from the English language sphere, formed not for communicative tasks, but with the goal of solving social problems and increasing the level of socialization. Moreover, it is the lexical component that comes to the fore, because it carries a personally and socially significant content. Thus, one can consider social integration as the trigger for development of lexical foreign language competence, however such competence primarily includes teaching individual word meanings and contextual clues (Steele, 2020).

Thus, there arises the question of determining the amount that children can master.

1. First of all, it is knowledge of the English alphabet. In the context of social and everyday orientation, this knowledge is accessible to children and is a necessary skill for working with a computer. So that if required they can enter website addresses, including those related to household purposes (for example, to access a website to pay the apartment bill). Children need to have an idea of how letters are written and read, where they are located on the keyboard, how to switch languages from Russian to English and vice versa.

2. The ability to read and name individual English lexical units correctly. Applied to the household sphere, these may be the names of various products and goods. Such knowledge and skills are necessary for a person to name goods correctly when making purchases so that the seller understands what exactly the buyer wants to buy. The teaching of this component may be supplemented by a specially developed Russian-English dictionary (how words are written, defined and read in the Russian language), methods of global reading, means of mechanical memory, which is often well-developed among students.

3. Teaching how to use an English-Russian dictionary. For example, to translate an English text written on the clothes that one wants to buy.

4. Work in this direction will also be significant in the context of multicultural development.

The question of the training mode can be solved by organizing elective classes, or integrating the relevant foreign language content into the lessons on social skills.

6. Findings

The results of the study include the following outcomes and conclusions.

1. Review of the psychological and pedagogical literature on the research problem leads to the conclusion that the scientific sources dedicated to the problem of developing foreign language competence among students with intellectual impairments are insufficient and mainly published as articles in peer-reviewed journals and collections of research papers. 2. Analysis of the teaching experience showed that it is the teachers who develop optional and adapted programs for teaching English to high school students with intellectual disabilities. Moreover, components of the English language are taught at elective classes in special schools, taking into account the proficiency level available to children. However, this practice is not systemic. This tendency is due to the fact that teachers consider teaching the components of a foreign language required for the socialization of students with special needs. In the process of selecting and adapting content, teachers experience difficulties associated with the lack of appropriate teaching aids. At the same time, their competence and experience allow them to carry out this process at a professional level. When selecting content, experts mainly focus on the developments in the study of the English language by children of preschool age. The regular schools implement, within the framework of inclusive approaches, adapted programs that are aimed at simplifying and reducing the volume of the traditional English language programs. However, the content of such programs does not fully correspond to the educational abilities and needs of children, as teachers of regular schools may not be competent enough from the point of view of defectology.

The development of lexical foreign language competence receives insufficient attention though it is an important element of the social and everyday orientation of children. Components of the English language are studied either unsystematically or based on personal views of a teacher.

Thus, the review of psychological and pedagogical literature and sources, as well as the analysis of the teaching experience on the problem revealed a contradiction between the existing need to develop adapted content for the study of the components of the English language by students with intellectual disabilities and the lack of corresponding methodological developments and educational equipment of good quality.

Among students there is an interest in learning English. Students explain this by the fact that all students from other schools study English, while they do not have this subject, and in this regard, they feel discriminated. For such children, learning the components of the English language is an integral educational process. Students with disabilities, like many other normal school students, demonstrate a certain awareness in English. For example, the students of the ninth grade know the correct names of some companies and brands in English, can enter a website address in the address bar. However, the available knowledge is presented at a fragmented, uneven and insufficient level. The knowledge and skills acquired by students need clarification, expansion and specification: students may make mistakes in the pronunciation of both English letters and words, they do not know how to use a dictionary for translation, etc. All this makes it necessary to conduct educational work with high school students having intellectual disabilities, that must be based on adapted, vital, and practical approach.

7. Conclusion

A study of the problem of the development of foreign language competence among students with intellectual impairment confirmed its relevance and practical significance. At the same time, a number of problems that impede the successful and full implementation of this work were revealed. The problem requires further search for solutions in both theoretical and practical contexts.

The debatable issues include the questions of defining the content of the learning process, the amount of lexical items that can be learned by students with intellectual disabilities; the issue of developing effective methodological approaches to teaching aspects of the English language, the issue of the study modes appropriate for teaching this subject.

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