THE IMPACT OF SCREEN TIME ON CHILDREN'S SPEECH DEVELOPMENT

Saadi K.,
PhD student of Mozyr State Pedagogical University named after I.P. Shamyakin, Mozyr, Republic of Belarus
Research supervisor – Chekina A.V., PhD in Pedagogy, Associate Professor

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The concern surrounding the influence of gadgets on children's communication and speech development is significant. Gadgets have the potential to impact attention spans, academic performance, social skills, behavior, and overall communication abilities.

Typically, investigations into the impact of gadget usage on children's development center around two key factors: (a) the quantity of time children actively spend with gadgets, and (b) the nature of the content during their exposure to gadgets. In this regard, the study has a purpose toprovide insight on the relationship between screen media exposure and early language development. The research reveals a notable and adverse correlation between children's expressive vocabulary, utterance length, and their engagement with screens.

Material and methods. The material for the study is the works by a significant number of researchers on the impact of screen time and speech development in children. In our study, the methods of literature analyses and synthesis have been used.

Results and their discussion. The impact of screen time and speech development in children is influenced by various factors, including genetics, parent-child interaction, home communication, and gender. Research by H. Duch et al. indicates that children with a TV in their room tend to watch it more than their peers, and this usage has implications for language development. However, studies by H. Duch, P. Zengin-Akkus, and S. Perdana found no correlation between a child's gender, the presence of a TV in their bedroom, and delayed language development. Other factors such as a child's age, vocabulary, and contextual circumstances, including repetition of content, watching with an adult, and the quality of adult-child interactions, can also play a role in language development.

Different types of videos, whether on YouTube or various monitors, can impact language development. Research suggests that the quality of stimuli matters; for instance, fast-paced videos with few close-ups, flashing visuals, minimal words, and a high frame rate may contribute to delays in language development. The cognitive challenge posed by rapid videos can affect children's language skills. Programs without words use nonsensical nonsense, calm moments, or music. This programming has been popular on YouTube because it appeals to a global audience and does not employ a single language to increase views, does not improve children's vocabulary.

Numerous studies have established a connection between screen time and poor language development in children. The increased usage of smartphones, tablets, electronic games, and other handheld devices is correlated with a higher likelihood of expressive speech delays among youngsters. Additionally, research indicates that electronic devices impede verbal communication, acting as a medium for one-way communication between users, aligning with Laswell's communication model. Children's screen time patterns are influenced by financial considerations and perceptions of neighborhood safety. A study conducted in Soweto, South Africa, and the United States revealed that children watched more TV if they perceived their neighborhood as risky, leading them to feel safer indoors due to perceived outdoor risks.

Interestingly, children often prefer gadgets over interacting with friends and other traditional games. However, the one-way nature of device communication limits learning opportunities, hindering the child's ability to communicate, socialize, and express emotions like sympathy, sadness, or joy. The absence of a reciprocal emotional or verbal response from the child further impedes speech development and adaptation. Speech, as a form of communication utilizing the human voice, requires collaboration between the sender and recipient for successful communication. However, animated films that solely rely on visual elements without spoken language

hinder language acquisition in children. Additionally, muting videos prevents kids from learning new words, significantly impacting their overall language development [1, p. 202].

Research underscores that improper gadget use contributes to language and speech difficulties in children. Unregulated gadget use has detrimental effects, with screen time duration influenced by cultural, socio-economic factors, and family practices. Television and screen media are sometimes employed as 'babysitters' to distract children when parents are occupied or absent, potentially impairing concentration, emotional control, and overall health. These technologies can negatively impact speech, attention, and mental health in young children [2, p. 317].

Childhood is a critical period for learning and growth, shaping core skills. Device addictions in young children may hinder their development, as early experiences significantly influence growth [1, p. 203]. Studies by S. Perdana et al. suggest an increase in electronics usage as children grow older, highlighting a link between screen time and age. Cultural, socioeconomic, and parental factors play a role in children's device use, with multiple studies linking screen time to receptive and expressive language impairments.

The quality of programs may have a more profound impact on language development than duration, according to T. Hudon and M. Hoftyzer [3, p. 251]. Background television, offering potentially incomprehensible information, diminishes parent-child interaction critical for cognitive development. Child-directed TV viewing for more than two hours daily may increase vulnerability to lower communication scores, emphasizing the potential benefits of adult-directed viewing. Co-viewing with capable adults, such as parents, caregivers, or siblings, enhances language learning and comprehension.

Screen time has been shown to enhance children's reading, language, and cognition, with tech-using toddlers aged 2.5 to 3 exhibiting improved vocabulary and language skills [4]. Repeated exposure to programs aids problem-solving, imitation, and word learning, contributing to vocabulary and subject knowledge. However, infants under 22 months may learn similar phrases in their natural environment but not from child-directed television [5, p. 200]. Increased exposure to non-developmentally helpful stimuli may impact language acquisition and brain development, with "heavy" screen use potentially impairing attention and literacy, offsetting gains in literacy and cognition. Screen time can harm play, language development, and acquisition during a crucial period when a child's brain undergoes significant growth. Technologies like spell-checking systems and internet communication may also influence literacy and spelling skills, with speech-language pathologists playing a crucial role in identifying, evaluating, and treating individuals with speech and language impairments.

Conclusion. In examining the link between screen media and speech development in children, our comprehensive synthesis highlights the intricate balance of positive and negative impacts. Unrestricted gadgets use poses risks to children's attention, academic performance, and social skills. Stressing the significance of content quality and co-viewing practices, our research identifies cognitive benefits associated with regular screen exposure. Concerns about speech delays and hindered communication underscore the need for a nuanced approach. Recognizing the broader influence of genetics, parent-child dynamics, and socio-economic factors on screen time, this study advocates for well-informed guidelines to guide stakeholders in fostering optimal language development in children.

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