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DEVELOPMENT OF MUSICAL PERCEPTION IN CHILDREN OF SENIOR PRE-SCHOOL AGE

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Abstract

The paper considers the possibilities of developing the perception of music in children of pre-school age through musical and game activity, reveals the developing potential of the music game, presents the results of diagnostics on the development of musical perception of pre-school children in the conditions of the game, highlights the development indicators of musical and game creativity of pre-school children. The study shows that musical and play activities of children of older pre-school age become purely creative in the accumulation of experience of musical perception while mastering variable forms of music games built taking into account the mechanism of development of children's musical creativity. Practical learning of music perception based on game interaction allows pre-school children creatively reflecting their impressions of a musical work. Musical and game creativity of children becomes associative and syncretic thus developing creative imagination, musical thinking, ability to consistently realize the set goals in different ways of approval, reflect the content of music in creative motor interpretations, drawings, writing fairy tales and stories, drama and pantomime, which increases the possibilities of self-expression, self-realization of personality by means of art.

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1. Introduction

Modern preschool education implements the basic ideas of the Federal State Educational Standard of Preschool Education 2013, which guides teachers to socialize and individualize the development of children. The priority is to raise a child who is emotionally responsive to the beautiful, who is able to emotionally value the world. Therefore, the content of education shall be focused on activities stimulating the development of imagination, fantasy, realization of creative endeavors of children (arts, music, etc.). The emotional response through the interaction of children is considered as one of the criteria for the efficiency of pre-school programs and developing technologies.

The study reveals the possibility of developing emotional responsiveness to music in children of two or three years of age, the ability to listen to music in a focused and active manner, to transmit the character of musical work in rhythmic movements, vocalizations, timbre similarities (Gruzdova, 1998).

Musical activity helps children to bring out their imagination, fantasy, will, emotional sphere, creative potential is activated, pre-school children become sensitive to harmony and beauty in music and art (Boyakova & Torshilova, 2017; Zatsepina, 2017). It is difficult to compensate the absence of full-fledged musical and artistic impressions in childhood in the older age (Tagiltseva et al., 2019).

2. Problem Statement

One of the dominant activities in music education is musical perception. In pre-school age the leading activity is the game, musical perception during this period becomes the game-like creative character.

A prerequisite for the development of music-play activities related to the perception of music is the ability of preschool children to symbolize (replace one with another) through a childish game (Vygotsky, 1991; Smirnova & Sobkin, 2017).

The peculiar feature of a musical game is the dominance of figurative beginning, it combines music, movements, words, in terms of the content it is related to performance and various types of creativity mediated by the perception of music (Tarasov, 1988).

The studies proved that musical and playing activities can serve a way for a child to know musical art (Bulunuz, 2013), a means of developing artistic-aesthetic and creative abilities (Radynova, 2013), a source of emotional joy and psychological comfort (Galyant, 2018).

The game of a pre-school child is procedural, subject-play actions are maximally related to the object or item that is being perceived. The musical perception reflects the submission of external emotional-motor activity to a perceived image. The content of a child's musical game is based on the mechanism similar to the sound of music, the game activity during the perception of music includes a variety of creative actions: tactile, motor, vocal, actions with musical toys or symbolic actions. It is also noted that various variants of game drama have a positive impact on the development of the training program at all periods of education, especially in pre-school age (Walan & Enochsson, 2019).

Musical and playing activity is considered by us as a form of creative activity of children of the pre-school age, in the process of which the need of a child for emotional experience and artistic

expression is realized, the language of music is learned in combination with emotional and imaginative content of other types of art.

3. Research Questions

The study highlights the indicators of the perception of music by children of older pre-school age through creative musical artistic games: emotional responsiveness to music expressed in game actions-modeling; ability to interpret musical content in a figurative manner; originality and expressiveness of creative improvisation; emotional-meaningful nature of musical perception.

The study involved 246 children of older pre-school age (5 to 6 years old) attending kindergarten for at least one year. The children were diagnosed through individual and subgroup classes based on tasks of the complex methodology used to study the level of musical perception through musical and gaming activities of pre-school children.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this work is to study the dynamics of musical perception in children of older pre-school age in the process of musical and playing activities in kindergarten.

5. Research Methods

For the purpose of the study, a comprehensive diagnostic technique was developed, including four types of tasks corresponding to the age characteristics of musical perception of children aged 5-6. The tasks included highly artistic works from among masterpieces of musical art or works with artistic content written by composers for children.

The first type of tasks is aimed at studying the level of emotional responsiveness to music. Pre-school children were asked to listen to 4 different musical pieces and in the process of musical perception to express the mood of music by children's instruments or use hand movements, mimics. Externally expressed actions – modeling of the nature of music – were assessed via monitoring.

The second type of task to study the ability to motor modeling of the music content involved listening to P.I. Tchaikovsky's play *The Snowdrop* and transmitting the character and dynamics of the musical image in movements, and then telling about the plot.

The third task was related to the study of children's ability to improvise creatively. The diagnostic task was carried out in the form of a game-sketch: children had to listen to fragments of familiar musical works and imagine that having heard the music the toys revived and began to dance. Children were asked to choose the favorite musical image of the toy and based on the content of the music to compose a story dance. The following served the evaluation criteria: plastic sketch composition; correspondence of movements to emotional-imaginative content of music; expressiveness of movements, singularity of design.

With the help of the method of conversation about music (fourth task) the level of emotional-meaningful perception, ability to establish connection of musical experience with life experience was

diagnosed. Children were asked to listen to E. Grieg's play *The March of the Dwarfs* and answer the following questions:

1. What feelings are expressed in the musical work?
2. What does the music tell you about?
3. How does the music tell this you?
4. What images occurred when listening to music, what can you compare it with?
5. What does music look like, what would you draw when listening to that music?

During the conversation, we clarified the ideas on how a child understands the mood and feelings expressed in music, distinguishes the visual moments and associates the character of the work with the means of expressiveness, whether the structure of the musical work, the change of mood, relates to life or fairy images of perceived music.

6. Findings

The results of the study showed that children with high level of emotional responsiveness to music (15 %) showed emotional-motor activity, reproduction of metric pulsation or rhythm of melody, and hand movements modeling the character of the melody. Mood changes in music were expressed by pre-school children through emotions and expressive mimics, sometimes using musical instruments, aligning playing the instrument with changes in musical sound.

Most children (50 %) showed average indicators in the development of emotional responsiveness to music, which were characterized by occasional external manifestations, absence of bright emotional reactions, short-term and low expression of motor movements. The emotional activity of an adult contributed to more diverse mime reactions and movements of pre-school children. Timbre modeling arose as the imitation of adult actions, game actions were not very expressive and uneven.

Low indicators (35 %) in the development of emotional responsiveness to music are related to emotional and motor passivity, children often did not listen to the music to the end, switched to other types of activity. Movements that convey the nature of music arose at the initiative of an adult who encouraged the activity, but children did not show expressiveness and did not use the timbre abilities of musical instruments when modeling the sound of music.

High level of the ability to interpret the musical work in a figurative manner was revealed in only 19.1 % of children. In the play behavior of children, there was an ease of establishing a link between the art-shaped content of music and the motor interpretation of the image, variability and variety of combinations of pantomimic movements in the creation of a rhythm-figurative sketch; desire for expression and completion of the motor image; alignment of movements with changing nature of music. The motor image created by a child was consistent with his verbal interpretation, the children's aesthetic judgments included epithets, comparisons, figurative statements.

The average figures (48 %) were characterized by the fact that when children heard a musical work they selected movements that convey only the general nature of music, often used the same type of movements. Children had difficulty establishing a link between motor and verbal interpretation of the musical image. Low level (32.9 %) was noted if a holistic motor image did not arise during the sound of music, musical-rhythmic movements were not expressive and were not consistent with the emotional

content of music. The motor image created by a child did not align with the intonation expressiveness of musical speech, talking about their movements pre-school children did not associate their character and the nature of music, they were able to tell about the sequence of movements. The study showed that the ability of interpreting the movements of emotional-figurative content of music is closely related to the experience of game and, above all, musical-rhythmic activity.

The diagnostic task *Musical Toys* revealed the level of development of children's ability to create a plot of the game based on the perception of music and motor improvisation.

The composition of the game of children with high level of musical and game creativity (12.2 %) was connected with the character of music, figurative movements were variable, expression in movements, emotional expression in mimics, originality in plot dynamics and content of the musical game were observed. Average indicators in the development of musical and game activity of children (43.2 %) were characterized by insufficient clear construction of the game composition, violation of the link between the content of music and the development of the game plot. The game design, plot and ways of its implementation were not characterized by originality and expressiveness.

Low level was observed in most pre-school children (50 %) and was characterized by lack of game composition, children showed 1–2 game actions, which were not consistent with the emotional-figurative content of music. The development of the game action was possible if the adult offered options and supported elementary creative actions of children based on imitation.

During the musical conversation it was revealed that children with high level of emotional-meaningful perception (10.9 %) correctly distinguish both the general mood of the musical work and shades in changing the character of the musical image. In their judgment on music, senior pre-school children establish a logical connection between the means of musical expression and the nature of music, call the musical genre of the work, note genre signs in certain parts of the musical work. Their statements about music were proactive, pre-school children shared impressions of music and associated the experience of music with life events, often with game and creativity. It was difficult to determine the dynamics of the musical image in children with the average level of emotional-meaningful perception of music (36.2 %), they could not always highlight the change of mood, note the mood shades in music. These children could determine the development of a musical image with the help of a teacher. In statements about the nature and content of music, pre-school children identified separate means of expressiveness and did not associate them with the musical-figurative content of the work. Low level of understanding and associativity of the content of emotional music was observed in most pre-school children (52.9 %). The perception of music was fragmented, they could not express the mood of a musical work in a single word (for example, they said "music is good" or "fun"), but they found it difficult to determine shades or change of mood. The children could not name the means of musical expression, incorrectly defined the genre of musical work.

The prevailing indicators characterizing the average and low level of development of highly artistic works of musical art by children of senior pre-school age we associate with insufficient experience of musical and playing activities of children in kindergarten. The difficulties that children demonstrated in the process of performing game tasks in relation to the perception of music indicate that creative musical activities are disproportionately and insufficiently present in the pedagogical process of musical education

of pre-school children.

The most effective process of development of musical perception of children of pre-school age is carried out if musical and playing activity of children is aimed at emotional-expressive perception of music, encourages emotional responsiveness and understanding of perception of the content of musical work, creation of creative design of motor improvisation, expression of figurative content of musical work in playing movements.

The proposed set of pedagogical conditions affecting the development of musical-game creativity of children of pre-school age was implemented in pre-school organizations of *The Lada Planet of Childhood* of Tolyatti through variable in content and ways of musical games for children of older pre-school age. The development of musical perception in children of older pre-school age included the following types of creative musical games:

- story-figurative; *Musical Image* game;
- story-role, the appearance of chicks;
- director's game;
- games-travels.

In story-figurative games the children were asked to compose a story based on the development of the musical image. Building on changes in music, pre-school children built the drama of the game and passed on its content through motor-like, figurative statements, replicas, dialogues. The basis of story-role games was a musical character – the hero of the story of the musical work. The center of the game's plot was the interaction of characters, the dominance of everyone according to the nature of the music. The transmission of musical image through movements contributed to the development of emotional and meaningful perception of music by children.

The director's game was built on the basis of combining several musical works or fragments, different in character, into a single plot. Pre-school children direct the sequence of sound of musical works and conditions of interaction of participants of the game. Different versions of the musical game were used, in which the characters of musical works interact, they are a playful girl, a shrew, a stubborn brother, a talebearer, a weeper and other images from children's musical albums.

Games-travel are based on the penetration of a child into the artistic image of a musical work by creating an imaginary situation. In games-travel we encouraged a child to listen to his feelings, to his body and to relate his own experienced sensations and emotions to the sensual content of the musical work. This kind of games differed from others in that we focused not on the external story of the plot, but on the reflection of sensual contact with musical space (intonation, mood, its change, expression of rhythm, timbre colors).

While going on a sea trip and diving into a "water element" the children listened to program works that tell about sea landscapes. The night trip was accompanied by charming mysterious music full of premonitions and unexpected meetings (for example, with the Night Rider).

These games contributed to the understanding of children's own feelings. Playing with the elements of musical art (melody, sound) gives rise to a free journey through various spaces.

7. Conclusion

The success of the identified pedagogical conditions is confirmed by the results of the diagnosis. Indicators of emotional responsiveness to music in children are reliably improved, in case of re-examination there is a decrease in the number of children with low level of development from 35 to 5.7 %, there is an increase in the number of children with high indicators in the development of emotional responsiveness to music from 15 to 50 %.

There is an increase of high indicators regarding the ability for figurative interpretation of musical work from 19.1 to 48 %, there is an increase of activity in the process of musical and game activity due to creative initiative imagination, variable game actions and personal color interpretation of music content by means of movements, pantomime, writing of musical stories and fairy tales, story dramatization. High level of motor improvisation capacity was diagnosed in 52 % of the children, the ability to aesthetic judgment at a high level of development was observed in 39.8 % of pre-school children.

Thus, the developed musical games allowed increasing the level of musical perception in children of older pre-school age, forming interest and desire to listen to music of highly creative content, expanding and enriching musical and intonation experience.

Practical learning of music perception based on game interaction allows pre-school children creatively reflecting their impressions of a musical work. Musical and game creativity of children becomes associative and syncretic thus developing creative imagination, musical thinking, ability to consistently realize the set goals in different ways of approval, reflect the content of music in creative motor interpretations, drawings, writing fairy tales and stories, drama and pantomime, which increases the possibilities of self-expression, self-realization of personality by means of art.

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