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**SPECIAL ASPECTS OF INTERACTION IN SOCIALLY  
COMMUNICATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL  
CHILDREN**

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***Abstract***

The article presents the results of theoretical and experimental research of social and communicative development of preschool children based on the use of various forms of joint activity. The theoretical basis of this study is the ecopsychological approach. The article describes the methods of studying various indicators of interaction of older preschoolers: the device-model of joint activity; a questionnaire for the study of ecopsychological types of interaction, and techniques for assessing the motivational axiological involvement of the preschool child in play interaction. The presented experimental data show that the essential psychological mechanisms that provide the process of socio-communicative development of preschool children are: the use of interdependent forms of joint activities of preschool children, the activation of the subject-generating and the subject- joint forms of interaction with peers; support of motivational axiological inclusion of preschool children in play interaction. The article deals with the problems of creating the necessary conditions for ensuring effective social and communicative development of preschool children. The authors of the article come to the conclusion that the development of the subjective position of older preschoolers through interaction with their peers is a condition of their social and communicative development. At the same time, socially approved behavioral stereotypes are transformed from the object of assimilation by children into their subjective property, and the social and communicative development of older preschoolers is more successful for those children who have experience of joint activities and communication in the group of peers.

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**Keywords:** Social communications, preschool children, ecopsychological type of interaction, joint activity, involvement in interaction.



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## 1. Introduction

The category of interaction is one of the leading methodological units for solving the problem of social and communicative development of children. Defining communication as an interaction, mediated by the language, J. Habermas focuses on the communicative nature of social action in which actors jointly develop target setting and value orientations, coordinate and integrate (Farman, 1999). In his research Kagan (1988) presents a special type of activity – communicative. The result of this activity in psychological terms is mutual understanding, mutual protection, and mutual influence of subjects, different in their status, age and level of education. A person in the socio-cultural environment creates a special communicative niche – social communication on the basis of instrumentally mediated interaction of individuals (Buzskaya, 2014). In the course of such indirect and expedient interaction of subjects three main objectives are achieved: transmission and assignment of knowledge (cognitive), stimulation of participants of social communication to act (incentive), reception and expression of emotions (expressive) (Orekhovskaya, 2014).

On the one hand, through such interaction the child is attached to the life of society, and has a possibility to absorb the activity experience accumulated by mankind, on the other hand – there comes his individualization and formation of his individuality. Through interaction with others, being subjected to their counteraction and their response actions, the child acquires a higher level of freedom in social communications. In the course of this process, he develops the ability to overcome the resistance of the external environment and build a relationship of "active interaction" with others. This allows him to avoid mistakes in socialization which enables the formation of understanding of the world.

## 2. Problem Statement

Considering the problem of social and communicative development of preschool children, the researchers draw attention to the fact that it is associated with the solution of problems important for this age period, such as:

- development of motivation, skills and constructive communication with peers;
- the adequate use of verbal and non-verbal communication;
- formation of the ability to cooperate and resolve conflicts in a positive way;
- formation of attitude to oneself, to other people, norms and rules of behavior, nature of activity and the world in general on the basis of enrichment of the ways he receives, processes and transmits information (Veraksa, 2014 ; Rybak, 2001).

It is important that preschool children acquire the ability to correlate their own goals and actions of another child with social and moral categories and social norms. Social and communicative development involves the formation of the child's ability to show sympathy, empathy to his partner in communication, and the ability to ask and offer help, to respond to the call for help, to put yourself in the place of another, as well as a trusting attitude towards peers and adults in the course of gaming and communication (Kogut, 2012).

In foreign studies, the problem of social and communicative development of older preschoolers is considered in the context of the formation of social skills of future first-graders (social skills for preschool children), social and emotional competencies, covering the ability to regulate emotions and behavior,

interpersonal skills for joint participation and interaction with peers and teachers. According to foreign researchers, social skills of preschool children depend on three abilities: self-control, empathy, verbal communication (Daily et al., 2010).

The researchers associate the formation of social skills of children with the creation of a favorable atmosphere in the group of children, a positive attitude in cooperation with teachers and peers, the assimilation of social and moral cultural rules, awareness of moral norms, a game form of learning taking into account gender differences, etc. (Johansson, et al., 2006)

### **3. Research Questions**

Our model of social and communicative development of children presents the most significant psychological mechanisms providing the dynamics of this process. Thus, it is important to use the interdependent form of joint activity in group work with preschool children (Chernyshev et al., 2007). It refers to the organization of children's activities, where they demonstrate the ability to carry out common activities in an integrated space, which is significant for each participant and aimed at achieving the socially approved goal. Children develop productive communication skills in a group of peers, organizing skills, analyze situations of interaction, control, empathy, and bring personal contribution to the overall performance, etc. Joint interdependent form of activity in older preschoolers can be used in the organization of cognitive, research, creative activity and free play.

Defining the ecopsychological types of communicative interaction of the child in the "learning - educational environment" system V. I. Panov identifies the subject-object type of interaction, which is characterized by activity in relation to the educational environment effects, and its transformation. Subject-subject type is an active two-way interaction of the system "a student-educational environment", which has aspects of the subject-individual type (each subject implements an active position in relation to the other, without taking into account the interests of the other); subject-generating type (jointly-distributed nature of interaction, change of self subjectivity in the course of achieving the goal of game interaction); subject-joint (polysubjective) interaction as a joint activity to achieve a single socially significant goal. From our point of view, the key mechanism of social and communicative development of senior preschool children is activation of the subject-generating and the subject-joint type of interaction between the child and the peer (Panov, 2014, 2017; Panov & Plaksina, 2017). They assume the presence of a single goal of subjects and jointly distributed actions to achieve it through interiorization and exteriorization and, as a result, the emergence of a new, integrative properties of the child's personality.

To ensure the social and communicative development of the senior preschool child through interaction with his peers it is also important to form his motivation to play interaction with other children. It should be noted that at the older preschool age, there is an increasingly sharp clash of different motives resulting from the complexity of the relationship of children with others and arising the need to assess their own behavior. If the leading motive is the participation in the joint activities of the children's group, it results in restructuring the subordination of motives. Motivated participation in different activities develops the will of the child, regulates his behavior and helps to avoid conflicts in communication.

All the above mentioned psychological mechanisms are in interaction, inextricably linked and affect the achievement of a certain level of social and communicative development of preschool children.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to explore the features of the organization of interaction in the process of social and communicative development of preschool children. The study involved children of preschool age (6-7 years), who were in different educational environments. We assumed that the children of the experimental group would have a higher level of social and communicative development if they were in a developing educational environment (Center for creative development "Dialogue"), where the training program employs the forms of interaction that activate the subjective position of a child.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The following methods were used in the study:

1. Instrumental method device-model for collaborative activities "ARKA" (Chernyshev et al., 2007), enabling you to diagnose the basic parameters of the joint interdependent activities such as cooperation, controlling, discussion, the independence of the subgroups and the activity of the participants, the use of verbal means of interaction and intra-group motivation of the involvement in joint activities.

The device-model of joint activity for preschoolers "Arch" consists of "bricks" with geometric shapes pasted on them in a certain sequence in 6 color sectors. It symbolizes the "Magic train" which should be assembled and "set off on a journey". It is very important that the children observe the rules of the activity and behave in a friendly way; they are coordinated, fast and independent, working in a group without adults' help. In addition to recording the time spent by the group on assembling the "Arch", a protocol record of the process is made, defining the following parameters: quality indicators of interaction, characteristics of orientation in the implementation of joint activities; subjective assessment of the result of the work with the "Arch"; style of interaction of all the members of the children's group, etc.

2. The questionnaire meant to define the ecopsychological types of socio-communicative interaction of senior preschool children in the game activity under the conditions of developing educational environment (Antopolskaya & Zhuravleva et al., 2016). Experts determine the most prominent types of social and communicative interaction of children in the system "a pupil - educational environment" (Panov, 2014, 2017) as: object-subject, subject-object, subject-subject (subject-individual, subject-joint, subject-generating). Each child was rated on a five-point scale at the beginning and at the end of the school year in the course of his / her play activities in the group of peers: the average for each type of social and communicative development of senior preschoolers was determined through the method of total scores.

3. The method of determining motivational and axiological involvement of preschool children in the game interaction with their peers (Elizarov, 2008). The motivational and personal position of the child at the stage of his inclusion in the game interaction with peers in his group is determined through the individual survey of children. The interpretation of the results is carried out in accordance with the key and involves three levels of motivational and axiological involvement of the child in the game interaction with a peer (high, medium, low), which are transferred into a five-point scale.

Analyzing the dynamics of the success of the joint interdependent activities of older preschoolers, we compared the average time of assembling the device-model "Arch" by groups of older preschoolers at the beginning and that at the end of the school year. We noted that the average time of building the device-

model "ARKA" was reduced in the experimental group from 18 to 6 minutes, the children under test performed joint interdependent activities faster and were more result-oriented at the end of school year.

KG1-control Group1 (group of children at school)

KG 2-control group 2 (group of children in kindergarten)

EG-experimental group (group of children in the center for creative development "Dialogue»).

In the course of the experimental studies, we organized an expert evaluation of senior preschool children from CG1, CG2 and EG in various classes, as well as during their gaming and communication activities in the group of peers. The members of the expert group (administration, educational psychologists, educators) assessed the typology of ecopsychological interactions of older preschoolers with peers, which were correlated with the levels of social and communicative development of children. The results are presented in the table 1-4.

**Table 01.** Dynamics of indicators of joint activity of senior preschool children working with the device-model "Arch"

Indicators	CG1		CG2		EG				
	Beginning of academic year	End of academic year	Beginning of academic year	End of academic year	Beginning of academic year	End of academic year			
Cooperation	3	3,7	2,3	3	2,3	4,3			
Control	1	1	1	2,3	1	1,7			
Team discussion	3	3	2,3	2,3	3	4,3			
Subgroup independence	1	2,3	3,7	4,3	3	3,7			
Proactive attitude	3	3,7	3,7	3	3	5			
Nonverbal means of communication	3,7	3	3	4,3	3	5			
The level of development, developing effect, %	2,45	2,78	6,6	2,67	3,2	10,6	2,55	4	29

Note: CG 1 – control group 1 (a group of children at school); CG 2 – control group 2 (a group of children in the kindergarten); EG – experimental group (a group of children in the centre of creative development "Doalogue")

**Table 02.** Dynamics of ecopsychological types of interaction in the social and communicative development of preschool children

Social and communicative development level	The type of interaction with peers in joint game activity деятельность	CG 1				CG2				EG			
		Beginning of academic year		End of academic year		Beginning of academic year		End of academic year		Beginning of academic year		End of academic year	
		Number of children	%	Number of children	%	Number of children	%	Number of children	%	Number of children	%	Number of children	%
Low	Object-subject	9	11,54	3	3,84	9	11,54	0	0	6	7,70	0	0
Below average	Subject-object	15	19,23	3	3,84	18	23,08	6	7,70	12	15,39	3	3,84
Average	Subject-generating	33	42,31	24	30,77	36	46,15	15	19,23	21	26,92	6	7,70
Above average		21	26,92	42	53,85	15	19,23	48	61,53	36	46,15	45	57,69
High	Subject-joint	0	0	6	7,70	0	0	9	11,54	3	3,84	24	30,77

The results of the final study of social and communicative development level are statistically significantly confirmed by expert data of ecopsychological types of interaction of senior preschool children assessment (the values of correlation coefficients for most of the compared indicators are  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 03.** Comparative analysis of the results of the final study of social and communicative development of older preschoolers and expert assessments of ecopsychological types of their interaction

Level of social and communicative development	Type of interaction with a peer in joint game activity	KG 1				CG2				EX			
		The result of the final study		Expert evaluation		The result of the final study		Expert evaluation		The result of the final study		Expert evaluation	
		Number of children	%	Number of children	%	Number of children	%	Number of children	%	Number of children	%	Number of children	%
Low	Object-subject	2 *	2,57	3	3,84	4**	5,13	0	0	0	0	0	0
Below average	Subject-object	10**	12,82	3	3,84	9 <sub>M</sub>	11,54	6	7,70	8**	10,26	3	3,84
Average	Subject-generating	21**	26,92	24	30,77	21**	26,92	15	19,23	10**	12,82	6	7,70
Above average		36**	46,15	42	53,85	38**	48,71	48	61,53	37**	47,43	45	57,69
High	Subject-joint	9**	11,54	6	7,70	6**	7,70	9	11,54	23*	29,49	24	30,77

Note: \* Statically inaccurate differences ( $p < 0.05$ ); \*\* Statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.01$ )

**Table 04.** The table of values of Pearson coefficient ( $\rho$ )

CG 1	CG 2	EG
0,998	0,996	
0,784	0,799	0,839
0,571	0,562	0,775
0,454	0,374	0,371
0,815	0,937	0,779

Analysis of the results of expert assessments testified that 30.77% of older preschoolers in the EG at the end of the forming stage of the experiment showed the subject-joint type of interaction with peers, i.e. had a high level of social and communicative development (in CG1-11.54 %, in CG2-7.7 %).

As part of the experiment, we organized the study of the indicators of the involvement of older preschoolers in different types of joint interdependent activities in the developing educational environment of the center "Dialogue", the results of expert assessments are presented in the table 5.

**Table 05.** Expert assessment of the involvement of senior preschoolers in different types of joint activities (EG)

Indicators	Types of joint activities								
	Joint cognitive			Joint game			Joint creative		
	6 (I)	6 (II)	6(III)	6 (I)	6 (II)	6(III)	6 (I)	6 (II)	6(III)
Showing initiative in the group's affairs	5	6,75	7,3	6,3	7,75	8,6	5	6,25	7,6
Willingness to participate in joint gaming activities	5	7,75	9,3	7	8	9,6	6	6,75	7,3
Conflict approach in relationship with other children	6,3	5	2,3	5,6	4,75	3,3	5,6	5,75	5
The level of appreciation by peers	5,3	6,25	8	6,6	6,75	9	6	6,75	8
Personal contribution to the result of game activity	6	7,75	8	6	7,5	9	7,3	7,75	9,3

## 6. Findings

Our research has shown that:

1. The development of the subjective position of senior preschool children in interaction with their peers is a prerequisite for their social and communicative development.

2. The developmental effect of social and communicative development of senior preschool children in the EG was assessed within 7.6 %-29 %, and the most prominent indicators were those of cooperation, independence of subgroups, tam discussion, proactive attitude of participants and nonverbal means of interaction organization.

3 Average, above average and high levels of social and communicative development are provided by the subject-generating and the subject-joint type of interaction of older preschoolers with peers in gaming and communication.

4. The motivational and axiological involvement of the children from the experimental group in the joint gaming activity was the most prominent.

5. The analysis of experimental data showed an increase in the measurable indicators from the older preschoolers just starting their education to the children of preschool age who are not in their first year of education. That is, the social and communicative development of older preschoolers is more successful for those children who have already had the experience of joint activities and communication in a group of peers.

## 7. Conclusion

When considering the results of the experimental work it is important to mention that play interaction of children, if well-organized, has the pattern of cooperation, trust, mutual assistance, emotional support and empathy; it helps to reduce conflicts of preschoolers in peer groups and has a positive impact on the development of the child's personality.

The results of the game interaction can be objective, personal and socio-psychological, which, according to Ya.L. Kolominsky (1989), "provide the optimal functioning of the individual in new contact groups." In the conditions of children's community a child can show his independence to the full extend,

identify his own position, compare himself with others, doubt the propriety of opinions or actions of others rather than anywhere else.

The development and formation of socially important skills in older preschoolers is possible only through specially organized group game activities and communication of children for them to acquire experience of interaction, knowledge of the features of social life under a supervision of a psychologist. Communication of senior preschool children in the framework of game interaction in the developing educational environment is productive if it is aimed at achieving the significant goal of joint activity and is mediated by the game situation.

Activation of the subject-generating and subject-joint types of interaction of the child with the peer is provided through the inclusion of children in a variety of developmental forms of game interaction: plot-role-playing games, active games, simulation games, dramatizations, staging, improvisation, concert etudes, project activities, etc. They involve changing the rules and vertical grows, role changing, games following the conception of the child himself, organization of group research activities of children, etc.

These types of children's interaction suggest a focused impact on each other, collectively distributed nature of their activities subordinated to a single goal, and the amendment of the subjectivity of children. With the development of this type of interaction of older preschoolers, personal communication of children is carried out from the position of equals, there is an understanding of the relationship between the subjects, the division of responsibility; children demonstrate an interlocutory discussion of difficulties, independence, empathic communication; it provides opportunities for the child's personal self-development and moral attitude to other children of the group. These characteristics form the basis of the subjective position of the child in interaction with their peers.

Successful social and communicative development of senior preschool children presupposes such skill of interaction of children that makes socially approved stereotypes of behavior turn from object of assimilation by children into their subjective property. In this case, the preschooler as a subject acquires:

- the desire and ability to make contact, maintain social communication, develop communication with other children;
- ability to organize other peers in playing;
- the desire to prevent and resolve conflict situations, to feel like a member of the children's group;
- lack of fear of new communicative situations; self-confidence.

Thus, the development of the subjective position of older preschoolers in interaction with their peers is a prerequisite for their social and communicative development.

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