

PECULIARITIES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF CHILDREN OF SENIOR PRESCHOOL AGE

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Annotation. The article deals with the problem of emotional intelligence development in the senior preschool age. The authors analyse the results of the diagnostic research on revealing the peculiarities of emotional intelligence of senior preschool children. The paper presents criteria for assessing the level of development of emotional intelligence of senior preschool children; the description of these levels is given. The results of the study showed that most children have an average level of development of emotional intelligence, they have difficulties in perceiving and understanding emotional states. On the basis of the conducted research the tasks and directions of corrective-developmental work with children were formulated. Correctional classes including methods of fairy tale therapy, game therapy, art therapy, psychogymnastics were conducted with preschool children who were found to have a low and average level of emotional intelligence development. As a result of repeated diagnostics, positive dynamics in the development of emotional intelligence was revealed in children.

Key words: emotional intelligence, children of senior preschool age, diagnostics of emotional intelligence development levels.

Nowadays it is very important to develop the preschool child's understanding of his own emotions and the emotional state of people around him. The problem of emotional intelligence development is most relevant in preschool age, as it is a period of formation of mental functions and personal formations.

The term 'emotional intelligence' was first used by John Mayer and Peter Salovey. The authors understood it as the ability to perceive and express emotions, to understand and explain them, to assimilate emotions and thoughts, to regulate one's own emotions and the emotions of others.

Domestic and many foreign psychologists have studied emotional intelligence: I.N. Andreeva, R. Bar-On, D. Goleman, J. Meyer, D. Caruso, P. Salovey, D.V. Ushakov, D.V. Lyusin, K.B. Murotmusaev and others. Children's awareness of their own emotions and emotions of others was considered by G.M. Breslav, E.I. Izotova, Y.Z. Neverovich, M.A. Nguyen, O.M. Prusakova, A.M. Shchetinina and others.

M.A. Nguyen offers the following understanding of emotional intelligence in relation to the senior preschool age: 'the child's readiness to orientate to another person, to take into account his emotional state and on the basis of this knowledge to regulate relations with him and find ways to solve problems that arise' [4]. The author emphasises that at preschool age we can talk about emotional intelligence, 'when the child has orientation to another person, to his emotional experiences and tries to behave accordingly to these experiences. Only by relying on their own and

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other people's emotions, children learn to orientate to the other, getting useful information about what is really going on' [5].

As I.A. Pazukhina rightly notes, 'young children are often in the "captivity of emotions", because they cannot yet control their feelings, which leads to impulsive behaviour, complications in communication with peers and adults'. The author notes that 'children are egocentric, so it is important to teach the child to look at the situation from the position of his interlocutor. Teaching a child to 'look from the outside', we thereby help him to look at himself differently, to evaluate his own thoughts, feelings and behaviour in a different way' [3].

The analysis of the problem of emotional intelligence development in preschool age has shown:

- 1) the ability to understand emotions, being a component of an integral system, mental model' develops according to the logic of its general complication;
- 2) integrated understanding of emotions is connected with the development of the 'mental model' and is formed by the age of five;
- 3) by the senior preschool age due to the complication of the 'mental model' children freely convey in drawings both their own emotions and the emotional state of another person [6].

Thus, by the senior preschool age the level of children's understanding of emotional states increases; perception of expression becomes more differentiated, which affects the accuracy of evaluation of human experiences; active and passive vocabulary of denoting emotional states increases.

In this connection it is possible to draw a conclusion that in preschool age there are objective preconditions and possibilities of development of emotional intelligence. Children of the senior preschool age are able to understand their emotions and emotional states of other people; are able to adequately express and regulate their feelings; are able to understand their emotional behaviour and the behaviour of others.

The analysis of the problem also showed that the development of emotional intelligence in older preschool children should be aimed at enriching the practice of self-awareness (recognition of their own feelings); self-regulation (conscious regulation of emotions); development of empathy, self-acceptance, as well as the acquisition of communication skills, self-confidence, conflict resolution skills.

To assess the level of development of emotional intelligence in older preschool children, we used the following criteria, based on the research of E.I. Izotova [1;2]:

- 1) situational features of emotional regulation (degree and nature of expression, as well as adequacy of emotional colouring of subject and communicative actions);
- 2) extra-situational features of emotional regulation (prevailing emotional background, character of emotional relations-feelings);
- 3) presence and features of functioning of emotional mechanisms (perception of expressive signs (mimic), understanding of emotional content, identification of emotions, verbalisation of emotions, reproduction of emotions).

Based on the identified criteria, we have developed general levels of development of emotional intelligence of older preschool children:

- high level - children adequately perceive and understand emotional states, freely express their emotions (mimicry, pantomimicry) and control them; they have a high volume of emotional experience and emotional representations, they are able to build and regulate their own and other people's emotional state;

- average level - children have difficulties in perceiving and understanding emotional states, they have partial localisation of mimic signs of emotional states, they do not have a high enough volume of emotional experience and emotional ideas, they can build and regulate their own and other people's emotional state with minor difficulties;

- low level - children hardly perceive and understand emotional states, they have difficulties in arbitrary mimicry of emotional states, they have a scarce volume of emotional experience and emotional ideas, they do not know how to build and regulate their own and other people's emotional state; high emotional tension is observed.

To identify the level of development of emotional intelligence of older preschool children, we used a number of techniques: diagnostic technique of emotional identification (E.I. Izotova); 'Evaluate behaviour' (T.D. Marcinkovskaya, M. Mitr); technique of differentiated assessment of emotional intelligence of the child in the process of observation.

As a result of using the diagnostic technique of emotional identification (E.I. Izotova) at the first stage, the level of perception of expression by older preschoolers was revealed. We analysed the obtained data taking into account psychological assistance and level differentiation and obtained the following results: 25% of children showed a high level of perception of expression, they adequately identified all 6 emotional contents; 55% showed an average level of perception of expression, children had some difficulties in identifying emotional states and made 4 adequate choices without using assistance, some needed duplication of instructions, leading and auxiliary questions; 20% of children showed a low level of perception of expression.

At the second stage it was necessary to identify the level of understanding of emotions. The analysis of the results showed that 20% of children had a high level of understanding of emotions, they easily marked all 6 correspondences of expressive signs according to emotional content, tried to correlate emotional states with the colour of gnomes, they did not need help; 50% of subjects had an average level of development of understanding of emotions, they were able to establish correspondence of expressive signs in 4 - 6 modalities, while the colour was not always taken into account and correlated with emotional states, they needed duplication of instructions, suggestive and recalling instructions.

Next, the goal was to identify the level of emotion identification. Interpreting the data taking into account differentiation by level, we obtained the following indicators: 70% of children showed a high level of emotion identification development, they easily answered questions and accurately identified emotional situations depicted in the pictures, some of them told in detail about the emotional feelings that the characters could have experienced; 30% of children showed an average level of emotion identification, they interpreted 6 emotional situations with partial schematisation of the expressive standard, some of them interpreted 6 emotional situations with partial schematisation of the expressive standard, some of them interpreted 6 emotional situations with partial schematisation of the expressive standard, some of them interpreted 6 emotional situations with partial schematisation of the expressive standard, some of them interpreted 6 emotional situations with partial schematisation of the expressive standard, some of them interpreted 6 emotional situations with partial schematisation of the expressive standard, some of them interpreted 6 emotional situations with partial schematisation of the expressive standard. No low level was identified.

At the next stage we revealed the level of the structure of emotional representations. The analysis of the results showed: 20% of children had a high level of the structure of emotional representations, they identified the correspondence of expressive signs in all 9 modalities without

experiencing difficulties; 65% of children had an average level of the structure of emotional representations, children experienced minor difficulties in performing the task, some of them needed duplication of instructions, leading and auxiliary questions, they identified the correspondence of expressive signs to the emotional content in 5 - 7 modalities; 15% of children showed the correspondence of expressive signs to the emotional content in 5 - 7 modalities; 15% of children showed the correspondence of expressive signs to the emotional content in 5 - 7 modalities.

The next stage implied revealing the level of formation of arbitrary expression of emotions. As a result of the analysis, the following data were obtained: 25% of children showed a high level of voluntary expression of emotions, they had adequate voluntary mimicry according to the pattern with pronounced complex localisation of mimic features of the entire facial musculature; 75% of children showed an average level of voluntary expression of emotions, they had adequate voluntary mimicry according to the pattern of 2-4 modalities with partial localisation of mimic features, activation of the lower or upper mimicry pattern.

Using the technique 'Evaluate Behaviour' (T.D. Marcinkovskaya, M. Mitr) we also revealed the level of development of emotional intelligence of preschoolers. Having analysed the obtained data, we obtained the following levels: 60% of children had a high level of emotional intelligence, the answers of these children evaluate only the behaviour of the characters depicted in the pictures, although it is noted that their appearance does not correspond to the norm, but children try to find excuses for such appearance; 20% of children had an average level of emotional intelligence development, these children have no stable preferences in evaluating the behaviour of the characters in the pictures; 20% of children had a low level of emotional intelligence development, they about

Further we used the method of differentiated assessment of the child's emotional intelligence in the process of observation. Selective observation in the process of performing tasks or continuous observation in real free activity in various situations was carried out. The following indicators were taken into account: peculiarities of children's behaviour (modesty or brightness of emotional response, manifestations of emotional state in mimic, pantomimic, intonational means; correspondence of used communicative means to the emotional content of the situation); verbal statements.

The analysis of the obtained results showed: 50% of the subjects showed a high level of development of emotional intelligence, they have high emotional sensitivity in combination with vivid mimicry; 40% showed an average level of development of emotional intelligence, children react quite emotionally to what is happening, but their mimic and pantomimic expressions are restrained; 10% showed a low level of development of emotional intelligence, they have low emotional sensitivity, hidden mimicry response

Thus, having analysed the results of all methods, we can state that 35% of children of the senior preschool age have a high level of development of emotional intelligence, these children adequately perceive and understand emotional states, freely express their emotions (facial expressions, pantomimics) and control them, they have a high volume of emotional experience and emotional representations, they are able to build and regulate their own and other people's emotional state.

An average level of emotional intelligence development was revealed in 45% of children, children have difficulties in perceiving and understanding emotional states, they have partial localisation of mimic signs of emotional states, insufficiently high volume of emotional

experience and emotional representations, they build and regulate their own and other people's emotional state with insignificant difficulties.

A low level of emotional intelligence was revealed in 20 per cent of subjects; children have difficulty perceiving and understanding emotional states, they have difficulties with arbitrary mimicry of emotional states, they have scanty emotional experience and emotional representations, they do not know how to build and regulate their own and other people's emotional state; emotional tension is high.

The obtained results were used to develop a correctional-developmental programme aimed at the development of emotional intelligence and emotional-behavioural sphere of senior preschool children in general. The main objectives of the programme were aimed at forming children's ideas about emotional states, skills to distinguish and understand them; acquaintance with words denoting different emotional states; development of skills to recognise, name and describe their own and other people's emotional state; improvement of skills and abilities of practical possession of expressive body movements (facial expressions, pantomimicry); as well as acquaintance with the skills of relaxation and self-regulation, which creates conditions for the formation of the ability to manage one's emotions

The classes were conducted with older preschoolers with low and average levels of emotional intelligence development; the children were divided into subgroups according to their levels. Fairy tale therapy, play therapy, art therapy, psychogymnastics were included in the complex of correction and developmental classes.

Our observations and repeated diagnostics confirmed the effectiveness of the correctional work. The children of preschool age showed positive dynamics in the development of emotional intelligence: 70% of children showed a high level of development of emotional intelligence, 25% - an average level, 5% remained at a low level. With the help of Wilcoxon's t- criterion we analysed the significance of differences before and after the lessons. Based on the obtained statistical data, we can conclude that the programme developed by us, aimed at the development of emotional intelligence of older preschoolers, is quite effective. Children with a low level of emotional intelligence were recommended additional individual lessons, and their parents were offered recommendations that contribute to the development of the emotional sphere of preschoolers and increase the level of their emotional intelligence.

Thus, for the development of emotional intelligence of children of senior preschool age it is necessary to systematically conduct specially organised classes to develop the ability to express different emotional states, identify and understand the emotions of others, as well as the development of facial expressions, pantomimicry and expressive movements, the development of communication skills.

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