THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF PRESCHOOL TEACHER'S ACTIVITY IN OVERCOMING SOCIAL INSECURITY OF CHILDREN IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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The article deals with theoretical and methodological aspects of preschool teacher's activity in overcoming social insecurity of preschool children in inclusive education. The modern scientific and methodological researches on creation of an inclusive environment in a preschool education institution in which priority is active interaction, personal growth of children of preschool age, including children with disabilities, which would allow to successfully adapt to society, to solve difficult questions of vital activity, to analyze life , the achievement of individual and public goals.

The article contains the results and analysis of the responses of teachers of pre-school education institutions and elementary schools from different regions of Zhytomyr region (57 people), collected through an anonymous survey in July 2018 during the Summer School in the framework of the Italian-Ukrainian cooperation project "Preschools and Relations between family, society and educational institution for children with special needs from 0 to 6 years in Zhytomyr region – Ukraine" (2015-2017) and work of annual (from 2016 to present) Ukrainian-Ukrainian School (Founder: Professor of the University of Parma Dimitris Argyropoulos) in partnership with the University of Parma, Emilia Romagna, ISCOS Public Organization, Emilia Romagna Regional Office (Italy), Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University.

Based on the results of the study, an analysis of the needs of teachers and children of preschool age in communication, offers recommendations on how to work to overcome social insecurity in children, including children with disabilities.

***Key words:** socially insecure children, children with special educational needs, inclusive education, communication, interaction, causes of social insecurity, communication needs.*

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ТЕОРЕТИКО-МЕТОДИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ ВИХОВАТЕЛЯ ЗАКЛАДУ ДОШКІЛЬНОЇ ОСВІТИ В ПОДОЛАННІ СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ НЕВПЕВНЕНОСТІ ДІТЕЙ В УМОВАХ ІНКЛЮЗИВНОЇ ОСВІТИ

Н. П. Тарнавська, Д. Аргіропоулос

У статті розглядаються теоретико-методичні аспекти діяльності вихователя закладу дошкільної освіти в подоланні соціальної невпевненості дітей дошкільного віку в умовах інклюзивної освіти. Аналізуються сучасні науково-методичні пошуки щодо створення інклюзивного середовища в закладі дошкільної освіти в якому пріоритетними є активна взаємодія, особистісне зростання дітей дошкільного віку, в тому числі, дітей з інвалідністю, що давало б можливість успішно адаптуватися до соціуму, вирішувати складні питання життєдіяльності, життєтворчості, досягнення індивідуальних і суспільних цілей.

Стаття містить результати та аналіз відповідей педагогів закладів дошкільної освіти та початкової школи з різних регіонів Житомирської області (57 чоловік), що зібрані шляхом анонімного опитування в липні 2018 року під час роботи Літньої школи у рамках реалізації італійсько-українського проекту співробітництва "Дошкільні заклади та відносини між родиною, суспільством та навчальним закладом щодо дітей з особливими потребами від 0 до 6 років у Житомирському регіоні – Україна" (2015-2017 роки) та роботи щорічної (з 2016 року по теперішній час) італійсько-української школи (засновник: професор Університету Парми Дімітріс Аргіропоулос) за партнерської участі Університету Парми, Громадської організації ISCOS Емілія Романья, Регіонального управління Емілія Романья (Італія), Житомирського державного університету імені Івана Франка.

На основі результатів дослідження здійснено аналіз потреб педагогів і дітей дошкільного віку у спілкуванні, пропонуються рекомендації щодо роботи з подолання соціальної невпевненості в дітей, у тому числі дітей з інвалідністю.

__Ключові слова:__ соціально-невпевнені діти, діти з особливими освітніми потребами, інклюзивна освіта, спілкування, взаємодія, причини соціальної невпевненості, потреби у спілкуванні.

Introduction of the issue. In modern Ukrainian society, the active majority of Ukrainians seek to reject post-Soviet political and ideological values, as well as to get rid of stereotypes of exclusion and change attitudes toward people with disabilities (physically-challenge or handicapped) from pity-based sympathy and semi-assistance to a position of active inclusion in social processes. These aspirations, first of all, are connected with introduction of inclusive education, which actualizes a problem of inclusion of the wide public to the general European values of equality and fair attitude to people with disabilities, including prospect of their successful self-realization, rights for worthy life with relevant self-esteem, confidence in the future, free use of their own resources and compensatory opportunities in the learning process as well as in the professional life. Thus, above all, we are concerned about the evolutionary transition, when respect for the will of the majority is combined with the right of every single individual to take an active life position, defend his/her interests, as well as to freely express his/her will and intentions, to cooperate with other people to achieve common goals. Due to the active inclusive processes in education and social life, the manifestations of intolerance, hostility, antagonism in relations between people are gradually weakened, because such separation-associated exclusion-related processes are not justified by the changes that occur. People have new opportunities to negotiate with each other, to find

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compromises, as well as to be socially-active and influence the government with the intention to build social institutions for a better civil society, which development presupposes consolidation of social forces on the basis of new values and ideology. The introduction and implementation of inclusive education in Ukraine is not a one-time act, but a long-term process that affects various social spheres and social institutions. The driving forces of change, which is related to inclusion and the formation of new values, are the representatives of intellectual elite – reform-minded part of society, which includes teachers, public figures, activists, volunteers, parents who raise children with special educational needs. The implementation of inclusive education begins with the period of preschool childhood, when the future generation develops basic values, the role of the educator in this process is very large and is associated with the inclusion of a child with disabilities in the educational process.

Current state of the issue. Modern scientific and methodological research in the system of preschool education is focused on creating an inclusive environment in which personal growth of preschool children, including children with disabilities, is the priority, which would allow them to successfully adapt to society, solve complex life problems, develop creativity, as well as to achieve individual and social goals. Scientists and practitioners often put these tasks upon the wrong track, which is aimed mainly at the child's acquisition of educational competencies and preparation for school. Parents, in turn, try to speed things up, prioritizing early adulthood ahead of children's learning. S Ladyvir and I. Karabieva compare a life of an individual with a house: floors are years of life, each floor is the basis for another ... You should not try to run upstairs. Everything has its time. You should use the opportunities of this floor [5]. Preschool age is maximally favorable for the development of mental processes, the formation of personal qualities and universal values. Thus, the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the educational process will form a stable perception that people with disabilities have important resources for the community and are endowed with equal rights with other members of society. Nevertheless, pedagogical mistakes, prejudices, stereotypes about inclusive education cause certain difficulties in establishing communication between children within the inclusive group, as well as between the teacher and the children. Increase in communicative activity in the conditions of inclusion, stimulation of the natural need to think together about game tasks, to make decisions, to analyze and persuade, as well as to discuss the obtained results, are of extreme importance, which is closely related to children's ability to be socially confident.

Aim of research is to review theoretical and methodological aspects of preschool teacher's activity in overcoming social insecurity of children in inclusive education and to scientifically substantiate ways and means of inclusion of socially-insecure children in the educational process with maximum effectiveness.

Results and discussion. Amid such pedagogical actions as harsh assessment, inflated expectations, the division of children into successful and those who have "bad" results, pupils develop internal complexes and fears of not meeting the expectations of the adults, which cause them to doubt their own skills and abilities, as well as losing faith in one's own capabilities. Social insecurity of preschool children is a fairly common phenomenon, which can be identified by specific anxious behavior, fear, embarrassment, inability to perform certain actions independently, communication issues. This process is accompanied by

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confusion, a strong desire to "hide" from problems, as well as "to be invisible", moreover, the child loses inner peace, balance and determination. A preschool child learns social roles in the immediate environment under the influence of which he/she is, and imitates the manner and way of communication of adults (role models) – parents, teachers, etc., receives approval and/or rejections while performing particular actions, or experiences lack of support. The result of the child's socialization is determined by the assimilation of social norms and values in the process of interaction with other people, however, such an interaction cannot take place without an affiliation motive. In 1938, Murray described the motive for the need for affiliation: "To establish friendly relations, to feel emotional intimacy, to enjoy other people, to live with them, to cooperate and communicate. To love. To join groups..." [6]. Affiliation (contact, joining, communication) means a certain range of social interactions that have a daily basis and, at the same time, the fundamental meaning, which is to communicate with other people (strangers, acquaintance), the longevity of contacts that bring pleasure, admiration, mutual enrichment.

Affiliation should end with the establishment of friendly relations, including the sympathy of partners in communication. When maintaining contacts, the interlocutors remain positive if they have hope for understanding, good attitude to themselves, satisfaction with the results of emotional exchange; negative attitude to interaction is associated with fear of being rejected or misunderstood. These motivational expectations are formed on the basis of generalization of previous experience of communication with other people. Feeling attachment to another person who has certain features (physiological, psychological or mental) is possible, if

an individual perceives these characteristics as positive, which can be of particular interest. This can happen during the independent communication between children and also be directed by the teacher in a certain direction – producing positive feelings and emotions while participating in the process of communication and joint activities. For a preschool child, the first steps of entering society take place in the family, thus, V. Druzhynin notes: "Socialization of children at all times and in all nations was the only specific function of the family, all others were additional and changed over the centuries" [2: 30]. Motivation of affiliation is associated, first of all, with emotional and psychological closeness (psychological intimacy), which, as a component of the relationship, is characterized by a wide range of experiences in an integrated form. Psychological intimacy is negatively correlated with interaction based on dominance, submission, strict regulation, disrespect for personal needs: the more such manifestations are present in family communication, the less psychological intimacy between family members is possible, thus, the greater the social insecurity and unwillingness to social interaction in children will form and grow. Emotional closeness or remoteness in the model "father-mother-child" determines not only the importance of certain family relationships, but also the ability of a preschool child to successfully move to an expanded range of social contacts. An average (typical) preschooler perceives his/her handicapped peers without prejudice, and seeks verbal and nonverbal interactions, even if a friend has certain communication deficiencies. In this situation, the attitude of the teacher and parents to the child with special educational needs, the ability to strengthen and maintain communication in an

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inclusive children's community, plays particular importance.

In the process of implementation of the Italian-Ukrainian project of cooperation "Preschool Institutions and Relations Between Family, Society and Educational Institution for Children with Special Needs from 0 to 6 Years in the Zhytomyr Region – Ukraine" (2015-2017) and annual work (from 2016 to present) Italian-Ukrainian school (founder: professor of the University of Parma, Dimitris Argiropoulos) with the participation of the University of Parma, Public Organization ISCOS – Emilia Romagna, Zhytomyr State University; in July 2018, a questionnaire was designed and 57 teachers (average age – 42 years) from different regions of Zhytomyr region working in classical groups (classes), including preschool and primary education, and have less than two years of experience working with children with special educational needs who are included in children's groups, have written anonymous survey. They were asked two open-ended questions, which provided a detailed answer (up to 5 sentences each): 1) what is your attitude to inclusive education? (justify the answer); 2) what difficulties in pedagogical activity did you have with the appearance of a child (children) with special educational needs in the group? (indicate three reasons that cause difficulties, justify the answer).

Emphasizing the answers to the second question, empirical material was obtained and analyzed. Substantiating the answers, respondents note that presence of handicapped individuals allows children in the group to gain new experience of accepting peers who have other physical characteristics, as well as they were able to develop such qualities as kindness, sensitivity, tolerance (47 %), but the interaction rate with such groupmates remained low. Participants of the survey also point out the difficulties in work associated with the active inclusion of a child with special educational needs in cooperative forms of work during classes / lessons (34 %). They also mentioned the difficulties of children's communication in various types of independent activities and during the active-play activities (19 %).

Analyzing the results of the survey, it can be stated that teachers of preschool and primary school identified difficulties in interaction, communication, organization of joint activities between children in the initial stages of inclusive education, so the issue of socialization, prevention of social insecurity in children is relevant and needs to be addressed.

The child's socialization scenario is determined by the culture inherent within the family, as well as by innate vital resources of the individual – inclinations, temperament, anatomical and physiological features, social resources, – in which systems of social relations the child's interaction with adults and peers becomes crucial in shaping his/her social role and communicative potential. Moreover, life-based resources are an important structural element of a person's life, which determine the strategic and current opportunities for his/her development [3: 107]. In psychological and pedagogical sciences there were discussions concerning the external (upbringing, social impact, etc.) and internal (hereditary) influences as the determining factor of the behavior of the individual. The scientific position of researchers, who emphasized the interaction of the above-mentioned processes, proved to be much more productive, thus, in the process of professional activity, educators of preschool educational institutions associate the social insecurity of a preschool child, as a rule, with hereditary factors. This does not take into account the fact that each hereditary factor will act differently depending on the conditions created, including the available environment.

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Allegations about the heredity of behavior and/or activity from behalf of the educators are incorrect, for the makings (undeveloped talents), which are understood as anatomical and morphological features of the brain and nervous system, do not directly affect behavior – they are related to abilities and serve as the basis of their development. Moreover, abilities themselves are the result of development. In this case, the educator must notice certain manifestations of the child's behavior, indicating problems with social insecurity.

Let's draw attention to some manifestations of social insecurity of preschool children on the basis of the general classification designed by I. Bekh [1: 711]:

- at the verbal level: very quiet, slurred speech with long pauses, repetition of single words or, conversely, loud, highly-toned, fast and confused speech; the individual speaks very little or says nothing at all;

- at the nonverbal level: reduced motor activity with insignificant gestures or without them at all; the child tries not to attract attention, behaving him/herself in a tearful and apathetic way; bad and/or grim mood dominates, as well as processes of arousal or inhibition are prevailing; facial expressions are too sluggish, which indicates conflicting emotions and increased shyness; the child finds it difficult to make contact with the eyes of interlocutor(s), lowers his/her sight to the bottom; monotonous movements of the body, limbs, somewhat automated, together with the presence of uncoordinated movements – twitching hands, feet, body, moving objects, biting nails;

- at the level of social contacts: the child stays away from the group(s) of other children who participate in RPGs (role-playing games) or other types of game-like activities; he/she tends to avoid contact with both acquaintances and strangers (for children with a range of autism disorders, these manifestations are not associated with social insecurity), does not know how to assert him/herself, defend his/her point of view, make certain demands on others, can not reject offers/demands if necessary; the child is unable to make critical remarks to peers or adults – as a rule, such children give up their position, search for compromise, even if it is not beneficial to them, he/she tends to be influenced by the others;

- at the activity level: the child is passive, indifferent, uninitiated in the game; such children are not included in the joint discussion of the game plan of RPG, as well as he/she does participate in the distribution of game roles, thus getting what is "left"; game actions are usually focused on the interests of other participants – game result is unimportant for such individuals; moreover, lack of hobbies, unclear personal needs and difficulties in navigation throughout the new environment are common in such cases.

The behavioral manifestations of the described above child, if noticed by the teacher, should be indicators of what the educators must pay attention to in order to support the child, assist him/her in problem solving while choosing appropriate pedagogical strategies and approaches. Teachers' prejudices and stereotypes about social insecurity may have a negative impact: "He is born that way, shyness does not allow him to fully communicate with others; such a child cannot be changed; a socially insecure child cannot be a leader or get high results", etc. Without understanding the deep essence of problem mechanisms, the teacher transfers this vision to handicapped children, believing that it is impossible to change certain personal qualities that affect the social activity of the individual.

To prevent social insecurity, it is important to apply a comprehensive approach to the preschool child, including those with special

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educational needs, taking into account the individual psychological characteristics of his/her development. In the individual approach we can distinguish (M. Y. Boryshevskyi) two aspects: psychological and pedagogical. Psychological aspect lies in the recognition and establishment of the unique personality of each pupil, his attitude to others and himself, the subjective perception of external influences and response to them [4]. The pedagogical aspect is well traced through the mechanism of social inheritance and is manifested in the active process of finding or constructing the child's meaning of messages, images, schemes, symbols, signs, models and other forms of translation and assimilation of information interpreted by the child through actions of other people. There is a transition from the objective, operational, symbolic perception to the "inner language" of the child, for example, I. G Pestalozzi noted that the family teaches through "living, vital and necessary non-artificial work, teaches by deeds, not words".

In the process of social inheritance, the child, above all, masters the language, moral qualities, peculiarities of character, intellectual activity. The concept of social inheritance was introduced into scientific circulation by the Russian scientist M. P. Dubinin. Thus, social inheritance is considered a driving force that concentrates in the public and social consciousness the results of the development of productive forces and the whole culture of mankind. Social traits of a person are not determined by his/her genes, but by social practice [6: 28].

Implementing inclusive education, the teacher must rely on the uniqueness of each child, his/her strong sides, compensatory capabilities, moreover, this approach is useful for the whole group of children [3]. The uniqueness and peculiarity of each individual are manifested in his/her psychophysiological features (strength, mobility, balance of nervous processes, speed of response, etc.), which can be seen and identified in spheres of sensations and perception, attention, thinking, memory, volitional and emotional reactions, mental capacity, as well as they include self-awareness (self-esteem, level of demands, self-control), cognitive and personal interests, accentuations, orientation of the motivational sphere. The issue of taking into account the mental states of the individual is quite important, because the process of interaction is based, in fact, on the transmission of mental states from the educator to children and vice versa. The pedagogical aspect is reproduced in the selection of such forms and methods of influencing the child, which would take into account his/her status in the peer group, the peculiarities of relationships, mental state and experience gained in order to achieve the best effect.

Considering the experience of educators who work with socially insecure children, it can be noted that it is easier for them to apply a differentiated approach instead of personal one, which is to create conditions for self-determination and self-development of a child, for without the child's own will any outer influence will have no effect. We should highlight the fact that personal approach does not involve the distribution of children according to their level of development or any other parameters, which ultimately leads to artificial differentiation, consideration of personality only on diagnosed indicators, which may be temporary or intermediate. Working with socially insecure children in an inclusive education involves the search for such pedagogical tools that would unite children, promote their cooperation, self-expression from the standpoint of strong personal qualities, competencies and potential. An important component of pedagogical influence is the gradual

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movement towards greater personal freedom of the child, a higher degree of regulation of behavior, as well as less dependence on external standards and requirements. The conclusions of modern psychological and pedagogical research confirm that the implementation of human interaction is successful, if it is based on immanent, internal, essential patterns of the relationship and with sufficient completeness takes into account its psychological nature. If a child suffers from social insecurity, he/she consistently has a number of other problems, especially when repeated attempts to change the situation fail – it causes the feeling of frustration, which can be transmitted to other spheres of life. For this reason, cooperation between teachers, parents and the child is important and based on interaction; adults should motivate and encourage the child in order to help him or her overcome difficulties. On the other hand, there is a widespread opinion among teachers and parents that it is necessary to raise a child, protecting him/her from negative experiences, and, at the same time, if the child is depressed and anxious because of the inability to interact with peers, to establish the necessary contacts, for such experiences can have a positive impact on the individual. They become the situation-changing and obstacles-overcoming driving force. Nevertheless, the situation when the child does not show emotions due to being emotionally insensitive and does not want to overcome difficulties, as well as to look for ways to change the situation, is much worse. It is important for the teacher to cooperate with the parents in order to understand whether the child is able to experience his/her failures, losses and negative experience as he/she does: whether the individual is introverted, seeks help, uses his/her own resources to overcome problems. Preschool children with a developed ability to overcome their own failures, troubles, sufferings, show vivid feelings

of empathy and compassion for others. Overcoming social insecurity, children have a certain act of self-knowledge, thus particular questions arise: "What am I?"; "What should I do with my images?"; "Can I forgive, put up with, apologize"; "Will I insist on my opinion?"; What will I do to maintain a friendship with people I will never agree with?". Moreover, the sequence of actions of a teacher, if he or she notices signs of social insecurity in a child, remains unclear. First of all, this fact cannot be eliminated, it is necessary to pay attention to children's experiences, to what kind of relationship is important for the child. However, it is impossible to do this from the standpoint of an adult who "teaches" and gives substantial advice. Teachers have a common misconception that they have the right to dominate, to influence a small, inexperienced person; an adult often enters into communication only in order to impact the child instead of building a personal interaction with him/her on the basis of a partnership.

It is the construction of personal interaction based on complicity, empathy, justice, mutual exchange and mutual enrichment has a positive impact on the development of social activity of the child, as noted by J. Korchak, Paulo Freiro, Don Lorenzo Milani, O. Luriia, G. Kostiuk S. Frene, Sh. Amonashvili. Thus, an essential feature of successful interaction is the construction of dialogical education, which provides for the equality of the psychological position of the educator and the pupil, in which the teacher determines the right of the active role of the child in the relationship. On the other hand, the equality of the educator and the child in dialogic communication is the equality of mutual influences and mutual enrichment. J. Korchak argued that the educator, controlling learning, forming children, is already a complete and fully-formed personality him/herself, nevertheless, is influenced by the

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environment and students. Willingness to recognize the bilateral, mutual nature of the effect of interaction is a necessary condition for building a process of interaction based on the vital resources of the teacher and the child. The educator of the preschool institution in interaction with the child should take into account that the components of life resources and potential develop according to their own principles and play a significant role in the formation of social contacts. Their implementation requires significant efforts from socially-insecure children. The very concept of social insecurity is often mistakenly associated with disability, which is incorrect, for it can occur in both, children with special educational needs and in children with normative development, thus oftenly associated with isolation, rejection, labeling, due to certain deficits, poverty, atypical behavior, introversion etc. Rationally organized by adults, the process of development of vital resources provides an opportunity to expand the vital potential of the individual and its continuos growth. According to Ortega and Gasset, "life is essentially a drama, because we need to struggle crazily with things, circumstances and even our own temperament in order to become who and what we are in "perspective". Every child, who immerses him/herself in the system of social relations and intercommunication, becomes an active participant in the process of interaction and the master of his/her own destiny. A preschooler tends to be "in a relationship" very early, thus, the process of communication arises, without which mental development is impossible. If a child feels deprived in relationships with adults and peers, his/her system of relationships becomes destructive for both, the child and the others. This leads to deformation of personality, introversion-closure, social passivity, obsession, delving into his/her own experiences. For a preschool child, especially for a child

with a disability, who is in limited social contact for various reasons, this situation leads to the development of social insecurity: the child grows introverted or tries to act aggressively, chooses destructive types of interpersonal relationships. Children with limited social practices, such as communicating with peers with the same or similar type of disability, after reaching adulthood, are more likely to show resentment, accusations, frustrations, moreover, they are unable to enter into relationships with new acuitances and build interdependent connections. Socially insecure adults, who have failed to overcome social insecurity in childhood, experience fear of communication, but may not notice the real danger associated with a certain apathy, inhibition or excessive arousal and anxiety.

The first emotional relationships that develop in a preschool child with the immediate environment are enriched in the process of their development, undergo significant changes and become the basis for the emergence of increasingly complex social feelings. There is, in a way, the transmission of previously arisen feelings: from the past to the future, from the narrow to the broad sphere, social relations, which are acquired in the process of personal development, bear a deep emotional content. While at preschool stage, handicapped children together with average children build relationships, thus the teacher should use diversity as an important resource for the development of their social activity, tolerance, empathy and sensitivity. Moreover, personal reference group is formed at this stage as well, which will further influence a person's choice: who he/she chooses as friends, the range of relationships, whom to listen to, who to be friends with, who to rely on, whom to trust, and so on. Preschool children are interested in what is happening to them, what are the causes of events, phenomena, their own experiences,

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feelings – how it can be changed, altered or improved. In communication with adults and peers, the child seeks understanding in the behavior of another person through intonation, strength of voice, facial expressions, attitude, as well as they try to find and feel the recognition of their uniqueness; the desire to be an individual is always associated with the search for communication, perception of oneself through the eyes of others – it is the teacher who can show the child his/her potential, help strengthen confidence.

Conclusions and research perspectives. Summing up, we should note that the effective interaction of educators with socially insecure children depends largely on the ability to understand the basic needs, motivation of the child in communication, defining specific goals of pedagogical influence: to eliminate circumstances that cause strong fear of communicating with others; create a joint program of action that would help the child from the educator, parents, peers; to avoid situations of failure in communication due to previous playback (modeling) of similar actions; to form in socially insecure children a positive "I concept", self-confidence, increase self-esteem, the level of demands; help to overcome the fear of communication through self-knowledge, release of emotions, feelings, states, movements, game actions; to teach the child to be aware of the causal links between their behavior and the reactions of the communication partner, to develop the ability to reflect.

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