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**PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT FOR
PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH AUTISM**

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Abstract

Psychological and pedagogical support for autistic children of primary school age is an urgent task at the present stage of general and special education development. The problem of overcoming speech disorders in children is one of the most important in the process of school education. Specifically, reading and writing skills formed in the process of primary school education become the means of further education and socialization of children with disabilities. Autism is a complex disorder in the development of a child, which manifests itself in an unordinary expression of emotions, in peculiar speech abilities, and affects all spheres of child's mental activity. The clinical studies of scientists provide the information about the originality of speech development adherent to autistic children and their features of communication. In psychological studies, speech disorders in autism are considered in the context of communication difficulties. When communicating, such children do not direct their speech to the interlocutor, there are no gestures; speech melodiousness is disturbed. Sounds can be pronounced either correctly or not. We note obvious deviations in the tonality of the voice, in speech rate and rhythm. The speech of children with autism is characterized by echolalia. They are unable to engage in dialogue on their own. Both oral and written speech develops with a delay. With the proper organization of psychological and pedagogical support for autistic children, fruitful results can be obtained in both speech and mental development.

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1. Introduction

In the framework of implementing psychological and pedagogical support for children of primary school age with autism spectrum disorder, it is planned to create conditions for their education in general educational organizations, providing the necessary corrective support and assistance, and counselling teachers and parents.

Among the many developmental disorders of school-age children, autism spectrum disorder is one of the most complex disorders, and providing psychological and pedagogical support for such children is one of the urgent problems of education. It should be noted that when the study of this syndrome started, it aimed to eliminate the non-contact of such a child with the immediate environment, society based on their individual and preserved abilities (Baenskaya, 2011; Nikolskaya & Baenskaya, 2015).

The emotional reaction of such children to close people is weakened up to an “affective blockade”; the reaction to auditory and visual stimuli is insufficient. When communicating, children do not direct their speech to the interlocutor, there are no gestures; sound pronunciation, syllabic structure and phonemic processes are disturbed, melody and speed of speech suffer, inconsistency of words is characteristic when compiling phrases and sentences. The indicated features of the speech development of younger students with autism require a planned individual correctional work. In this regard, there is a need to conduct theoretical and empirical study of the features of implementing psychological and pedagogical support for primary schoolchildren with autism to overcome violations of oral speech and writing development in general. Bondarko, Zhukova, Lalaeva, Levina, Luria, Mnukhina, Sadovnikova, Khvattsev and others claimed the need for special correctional work with children having speech development disorders.

The problem of overcoming speech disorders in younger schoolchildren with autism in the process of psychological and pedagogical support remains one of the most relevant in modern pedagogy (Baenskaya et al., 2014; Kokina & Kern, 2010; Koegel et al., 2014).

2. Problem Statement

Recently, statistics in educational organizations show that every year there is an increase in the number of children of primary school age with speech disorders. Among all schoolchildren with speech development disorders, there are also children with autism. The difficulties such schoolchildren face with are so serious that become completely insurmountable. This leads to their alienation from the life of society; there is a need to overcome psychological discomfort, and to eliminate learning difficulties, problems with communication, providing assistance in employment and creating a family in the future. Therefore, the issues of psychological and pedagogical support for children with autism spectrum disorder, overcoming violations in their speech development are relevant for teachers (Borodina, 2017; Gnatyshina et al., 2019; Salavatulina, 2020).

The research problem is to develop a program of corrective work to overcome speech development disorders in younger students with autism spectrum disorder in the context of providing comprehensive psychological and pedagogical support in a general education organization.

This problem is due to the contradiction between the existing difficulties in the development of the general education system and the psychological and pedagogical support of children with autism spectrum disorder, on the one hand, and the lack of scientific research and methodological developments to accompany them in a general educational organization, on the other hand.

Thus, the stated research problem is relevant for the education system in the context of providing psychological and pedagogical support for younger students with autism (Karpenkova, 2010).

3. Research Questions

The subject of our scientific research is the features of organizing psychological and pedagogical support for younger students with autism spectrum disorders in the process of overcoming violations of written speech using a specially developed program of correctional work.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of our work is to study literary sources devoted to the research problem and experimental work on the implementation of psychological and pedagogical support for younger students with autism spectrum disorder in the process of overcoming speech disorders. Achieving the set goal necessitated the development of a program of correctional work to overcome speech disorders by extracurricular activities.

5. Research Methods

To achieve this goal, our own theoretical and practical research was organized. The method of theoretical analysis of scientific literature and legal support of the education system for children with autism spectrum disorders, the study of the state of the problem was chosen as the main method of organizing the theoretical stage of the study.

The following practical research methods were selected: analysis of literary references on the research topic, study of the history of autistic children development, their personal files and medical records, as well as observation, conversation, ascertaining, teaching control experiments, analysis and generalization of the results obtained, analysis of the information received.

To study the features of the speech development of younger schoolchildren with autism, we chose Sadovnikova's recommendations to examining children and adapted them to the objectives of the study. The diagnostic technique includes a series of tasks designed with regards to the developmental characteristics of younger students with autism spectrum disorder. Pupils were asked to write down syllables, words, text by ear and copy the text from a printed sample (Sadovnikova, 2011, Soldatenkova, 2013).

6. Findings

An inclusive school the Municipal Autonomous General Educational Institution “Secondary School No. 73 of Chelyabinsk” was chosen as the practical basis for our study. This is the space of the South Ural State Humanitarian Pedagogical University for student teaching practice.

Analysis of the data obtained at the ascertaining stage of the experiment has indicated that none of the five children participating in the study showed high results; the dependence of the number of errors on the type of written work was noted. The majority of errors were made in writing words and hearing tests than in copying, which resulted in the conclusion that corrective work was required.

When considering the content of the training stage of the experiment, we focused on the recommendations of I.N. Sadovnikova, L.N. Efimenkova and developed an intervention program of speech therapy classes based on individual comprehensive cards of psychological and pedagogical support.

In the Federal State Educational Standard for Primary General Education of Students with Disabilities, one of the psychological and pedagogical conditions for the successful implementation of the program is the application of forms and methods of working with children that correspond to their psychological age and individual characteristics.

The traditional form of remedial education at school includes speech therapy classes aimed at timely identification and overcoming writing disorders, preventing them from moving to subsequent stages of education. In addition to traditional methods, speech therapists use new non-traditional forms of work with children as part of extracurricular activities, because it is educational standards that have fixed extracurricular activities in educational organizations as a resource that benefits a new quality of education.

A remedial course is an extracurricular form uniting students by a subject based on voluntary attendance and including various forms of collective activity aimed at achieving a certain educational result (Borodin, 2018).

The need to develop the content of a correctional speech therapy course for conducting classes with autistic students is due to the results of the ascertaining stage of the experiment. Individual work on the correction of speech development disorders was combined with frontal work and took into account all the individual characteristics of the students.

The correctional course for speech therapy classes solves the problems of overcoming sound pronunciation disorders, improving the lexical and grammatical aspects of speech (work on a word, phrase, sentence and coherent speech), preventing and overcoming reading and writing disorders (Bespalova, 2018).

The course program implies the repetition of the material in different forms and volumes regarding the special educational needs of autistic students. The lexical material is gradually becoming more complex and expanding, which contributes to its more solid absorption by students. Preparatory work aimed to assimilate the program material in the subject “Russian language” is done. The program also presents the planned results of students for each academic year.

To carry out corrective work with students of grades 1–4, 31 academic weeks are given, which is 93 correctional classes (1 individual class per week and 2 frontal classes). Two weeks a year are devoted to diagnostic work. Diagnostics of the psychophysical development of children with autism spectrum disorders was carried out by specialists of complex psychological and pedagogical support: a teacher-psychologist, a defectologist teacher, a speech therapist, a physical education teacher, a primary school teacher, a social pedagogue. A comprehensive study of these children provided more information about each child. According to such experts as Levina, Tumanova, Filicheva, Chirkin, it is an integrated approach to the education and upbringing of children with speech impairment that is necessary for children in this category (Baenskaya, 2011).

In this regard, we based correctional work for younger autistic students on the principles of comprehensive support, individual approach, the structure of the defect, age-related neoplasms in mental activity, and also on the fact that all of the above listed specialists should have been involved in this work.

We have developed an individual psychological and pedagogical support card to give each specialist an opportunity to record the results of the examination and plan corrective work (Plavnick & Ferreri, 2011)

The card of individual support for junior schoolchildren with autism spectrum disorders includes the following areas of work: educational (assimilation of the educational program), social development, psychological correction, speech therapy correction, physical development, aesthetic development. All these specialists fill out individual cards of psychological and pedagogical support taking into account the characteristics of the individual development of all students with autism and their professional competence.

The effectiveness of work aimed to overcome speech development disorders in children of primary school age with autism spectrum disorder depended on the involvement of parents in the educational process, their active participation in accompaniment, the implementation of routine moments and following the recommendations of specialists in preventive drug treatment. We used parent-teacher meetings, individual conversations, individual consultations, communication in social networks and using instant messengers.

The implementation of the correctional program in speech therapy classes enabled to achieve certain positive results in the students' development.

Summing up the results of our study, we can conclude that as a result of correctional and speech therapy work aimed to overcome violations in speech development, students activated higher mental functions, including speech memory, attention to linguistic phenomena, verbal and logical thinking; improved writing skills by ear and independent writing; in written works, we noted a decrease in the number of spelling and specific errors; there was an increase in self-control capabilities; the psychological status of students in the classroom has stabilized (children are no longer afraid to answer the teacher's questions, express their opinions, and are active in the classroom).

Parents of autistic students have increased their competence in overcoming violations of oral and written speech, joined the pedagogical process as equal partners, stated and planned the development prospects of their children. The teachers improved their professional skills, worked out the recommended

speech therapy exercises, which contributed to improving the quality of education in general for the students who participated in the study.

Thus, the individual maps of the psychological and pedagogical support of students with autism spectrum disorders that we compiled and the developed program for the remedial course of speech therapy classes to overcome speech development disorders, as well as the implementation of a comprehensive, differentiated and individual approach to teaching and educating children with autism spectrum disorder in a general education school, turned out to be effective and can be used by teachers in working with children of this nosological group in the implementation of psychological and pedagogical support.

7. Conclusion

The development of writing in autistic children is one of the main tasks of their corrective education and upbringing, it is also necessary to overcome violations of oral and written speech, as well as their success in school education.

In the course of our study on overcoming speech development disorders of younger schoolchildren with autism in the process of psychological and pedagogical support, we carried out experimental work. The results obtained by conducting a corrective course in extracurricular activities indicate an increase in the level of speech development in children, improvement of cognitive abilities and communication functions. The results obtained during the control experiment confirm the literacy of the planned comprehensive psychological and pedagogical support, the correctional work aimed to overcome speech disorders in children of primary school age with autism spectrum disorder in extracurricular activities.

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