

Ways to Help the Child Cope with Anxiety?

Natalya N. Kalatskaya^a and Albina R. Drozdikova-Zaripova^a

^aKazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazan, RUSSIA.

ABSTRACT

The relevance of the chosen topic is determined by the fact that the number of children experiencing restlessness, uncertainty and emotional instability is increasing; such children are considered anxious. Therefore the relevance of issues covered in the paper is apparent. The paper provides experimental data to confirm the necessity to prevent and correct school anxiety in primary school children. The purpose of the research was to study anxiety in primary school children and render correctional and preventive help at an early stage of school training in due time. Results were collected before and after the developing program was realized. Batteries of tests were applied for diagnostics. According to the goal of the research the following methods were used: theoretical (analysis, comparison, generalization); empirical (pedagogical experiment, testing). By means of the developing program we could help children to overcome increased restlessness, uncertainty and emotional instability. Reliability of obtained results is statistically proved. Materials from the article are of practical value for psychologists in the sphere of education, high school teachers and teachers working with anxious children and their parents.

KEYWORDS

Anxiety, restlessness, correction, prevention, overcoming, primary school students

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 15 November 2015

Revised 10 February 2016

Accepted 17 February 2016

Introduction

Actualizing the Problem

Russian school psychologists specify that the number of children with increased restlessness, uncertainty and emotional instability is increasing in schools. Such children are referred to the category of anxious ones. A high level of anxiety poses a threat to personality mental health and promotes development of pre-neurotic states. Anxiety negatively influences results of activity. Correlation of anxiety with personality traits which educational

CORRESPONDENCE Natalya N. Kalatskaya ✉ kalazkay@mail.ru

© 2016 Kalatskaya and Drozdikova-Zaripova. Open Access terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>) apply. The license permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, on the condition that users give exact credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if they made any changes.

progress depends on is identified. Besides negative influence on health, behavior and efficiency of activity, a high level of anxiety adversely affects quality of personality social functioning. Anxiety causes absence of confidence in children's communication; it is connected with negative social status; it formulates conflict relations. That is why appropriate and effective work to prevent and overcome anxiety in primary school children is urgent.

Freud was the first to single out and characterize the state of anxiety, restlessness as an emotional state that includes the experience of expectation and uncertainty, feeling of helplessness (Freud, 2011). According to Z. Freud, anxiety is a kind of uncertain unconscious fear; it has deep, irrational, internal character. Besides, Freud distinguished a specific fear.

It should be noted that though at the level of subjective experience anxiety is a negative state, its impact on human's behavior and activity is rather ambiguous. It is anxiety that sometimes becomes a factor of capabilities mobilization. Two types of anxiety: mobilizing and weakening are singled out in psychology.

According to another point of view, fear is human's reaction to threat as a biological being when human's life (vital threat), physical integrity, etc. is exposed to danger. As for anxiety, it represents experience that arises when the person as a social subject is under threat, when values, self-representations and social status are threatened. In this case anxiety is considered as an emotional state connected with possible frustration of social demands (Severny & Tolstykh, 2004).

K.K. Platonov (1986) notes that fear is manifested in two main forms - asthenic (it is manifested in passive-defensive reactions (catalepsy, mental block) and in active-defensive reactions - in mobilization of abilities to prevent a dangerous outcome), and sthenic (appearance of fear is expressed in the state of fighting excitement. It is connected with active cognitive activity at the moment of danger and is positively coloured, i.e. the person feels pleasure and increase of mental activity).

Fear depresses psychological activity and intellectual work as well. The state of danger causes emotion of fear. Clear victory over fear can in itself give at best only a normal mental state and lack of painful experiences. Functionally fear serves as the warning of forthcoming danger; it concentrates attention on its source and induces to look for a way to avoid it. In case when it reaches the power of affect (panic fear, horror), it can impose behavior stereotypes. In human social development fear acts as one of educational tools and is used as a factor of behavior regulation. In the context of society, an increased tendency to fear loses adaptive value and is negatively estimated. Developed reactions of fear are rather resistant and preserved for a long time. Therefore, education of sustainability to fear is usually directed to develop skills of self-control in case of its availability and not to get rid of it. Reactions of fear are observed in various mental diseases.

Unlike anxiety, restlessness in modern psychology is considered as a mental property and defined as human's propensity to experience anxiety; it is characterized by a low threshold of anxiety reaction emergence (Miklyeva and Romyantseva, 2004). The personality with expressed anxiety is inclined to perceive world around as comprising danger and threat in much bigger degree than the personality with a low level of anxiety. Freud (Freud, 2011) was the

first to describe anxiety in this status; he uses the term meaning "readiness for anxiety" or "readiness in the form of anxiety" to describe "freely floating", spilt anxiety that is a neurosis symptom.

Anxiety has a well expressed age specificity found in its sources, contents, forms of manifestation and taboo. Separation from mother causes anxiety in early childhood. Adaptation to school affects 6-7-year-old children; communication with adults (parents and teachers) provokes anxiety in early adolescence age, attitude to future and gender relationships are reasons for anxiety in early youth (Miklyaeva and Rummyantsev, 2004). Described features of children's anxiety and its specificity at each stage of ontogenesis specify the nature of development and phenomenology of a specific type of anxiety — school anxiety.

School anxiety is the broadest concept with various aspects of steady school emotional trouble. It is expressed in nervousness, increased restlessness in educational situations, in a classroom, expectation of bad attitude towards oneself, teachers' and peers' negative evaluation. The child constantly feels own inadequacy, inferiority; children are not confident that their behavior and solutions are appropriate. In general, school anxiety is the result of personality's interaction with a situation. It is a specific type of anxiety characteristic for a certain type of situations - situations of child's interaction with various components of school educational environment.

Several factors the influence of which promotes formation and strengthening of school anxiety are singled out: educational overloads; student's inability to cope with school curriculum; inadequate expectations from parents; adverse relationships with teachers; regular assessment and examination situations; change of school collective or hostility of children's collective.

Methodological Framework

According to the goal of the research the following methods were used: theoretical (analysis, comparison, generalization); empirical (pedagogical experiment, testing).

Results were exposed to statistical processing by means of Student t-test and ϕ^* -Fischer's criterion.

Primary examination of anxiety in children was conducted in the following directions: features of conceptual thinking, sphere of school students' communication, sphere of child - parental relationships. The following diagnostic techniques were used for this purpose. "Strategies of Family Education" was employed to determine the style of family upbringing; its goal is to specify own strategy of family education. "Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale" (T.A. Nemchin's (1983) adaptation) was applied to identify the level of anxiety in school students. Zambatsyavichene's technique researched development and features of conceptual thinking. This technique reveals intellectual troubles and syndrome of "chronic unsuccessfulness". Venger's technique "Two houses" diagnosed a sphere of communication. "Incomplete sentences" (Miklyaeva and Rummyantsev, 2004) analyzed emotional attitudes of school students to components of educational environment.

60 primary school students of Kazan and their parents took part in the pilot study. 30 eight-nine-year-old school students made the control group (CG), the same number made the experimental group (EG).

Results

Results of the stating research

Testing results according to “Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale” (Nemchin’s adaptation) showed the following (Figure 1).

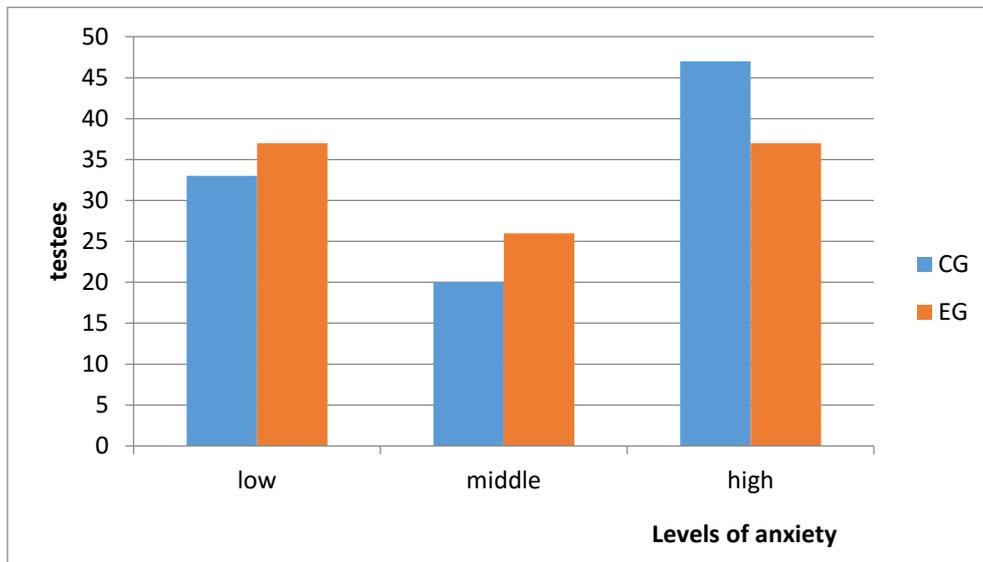


Figure 1. - Test results according to “Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale” (Nemchin’s adaptation)

Figure 1 shows that a high level of anxiety dominates in two groups. Such children are characterized by fast fatigue, tension during performance of any task, tensivity. The average level of anxiety in the control group was shown by 20% (6 people) of students, in the experimental group it made 26,8% (8 students). Such children usually have some difficulties in solving tasks, frequent complaints to bad dreams; excitement can emerge when expecting something. Reliable distinctions between values of the indicator "anxiety level" in CG and EG according to t-Student's criterion were not revealed ($t_{emp} = 0.8$).

Features of conceptual thinking were studied in compliance with Zambatsyavichene's technique; it was found out that anxious children do not actively use simple concepts; they are not able to establish cause-effect relationships between concepts; difficult operations of generalization and abstraction evoke difficulties. These children have a poor vocabulary, a low level of erudition and general outlook. Reliable distinctions between values of the indicator "conceptual thinking" in CG and EG according to t-Student's criterion were not revealed ($t_{emp} = 1,2$).

Venger’s technique "Two houses" was applied to study the sphere of primary school students’ communication. It was specified that anxious children (32% in CG, and 41% in EG) most often got into a group of silent, low-active children who play alone and do not seek for any contacts with their peers; most commonly such results are characteristic for children who often fall ill and those who get into a group recently.

Many testees (about 36% in CG, and 52% in EG) are children rejected by peers; quite often they are poorly attractive or have obviously expressed physical defects; they are nervous, excessively conflict and negatively take other children.

Other children were leaders in their groups. These children are active and mobile, rather sociable but sometimes conflict, they both easily enter the game and easily quarrel and refuse to play, they often get offended and offend others, but easily forget offenses.

"Incomplete sentences" helped to analyze school students' emotional relation to components of educational environment and to reveal the level of group identity. 46,7% (14 testees) in the experimental group and 43,3% (13 testees) in the control group demonstrated emotional wellbeing. Emotional trouble displayed 40% (12 testees) in EG and 46,7% (14 testees) in CG. 13,3% (4 testees) in EG and 10% (3 testees) in CG identified "Refusal".

Work with parents exposed to the test procedure "Strategies of family education" was the next step. According to results obtained, we could reveal a style of upbringing which parents keep to while educating their children: authoritarian, authoritative, liberal and indifferent. We found out that parents of anxious children most often adhere to authoritarian or indifferent styles.

Parents adhering to an authoritative style carefully control their child, set rigid restrictions and rules, give orders, specify and wait that they will be accurately executed. Such parents are usually closed for communication with children; they keep distance in relationships. They allow children to be independent from them only to a little degree.

Parents adhering to indifferent style of upbringing do not set any restrictions for children; they are often almost indifferent to own children and closed for communication. Life of such parents is over-occupied with their own problems and stresses; they have neither time nor desire to share and "interfere" with feelings and experiences of the child, they prefer comfortable dispassionateness. If indifference of parents is combined with hostility (as in rejecting parents), nothing keeps the child from unleashing most destructive impulses and showing tendency to asocial behavior.

Comparing all indicators of these groups (anxiety level, development level, emotional wellbeing, relationships in class, and styles of family education) we revealed that in the experimental group there are children who are in need of psychology-pedagogical help to overcome anxiety. Therefore we made an attempt to work out a program aimed to prevent and overcome children's anxiety.

Features of the development program

The forming stage of the experiment assumed implementation of the program "Let's Cope Together!"; works of A.V. Miklyaeva and P.V. Romyantseva (2004) were used to elaborate this program. The program was implemented within the period of 9 months (once a week, 1-1.5 hours).

The goal of this program is: to prevent and correct the level of anxiety in primary school children.

The program's objectives are: to reduce the level of school students' anxiety, to increase self-esteem; to work out new strategy of behavior in anxious situations; to develop communicative skills or skills of sure behavior; to train group participant in ways to understand and reflect emotions;

The following can be referred to expected results: decrease of anxiety connected with various aspects of school life to the level corresponding to age standards, increase of students' self-assessment, development of communication culture.

The program is built according to the following algorithm: lessons are aimed to create a working atmosphere, to formulate group rules, to clear participants' expectations, to reduce school anxiety, to facilitate communication skills development and increase school students' self-esteem; results are summed up on the final lesson.

Each lesson begins with a greeting ritual to tune children to work, to unite groups and to create the atmosphere of trust. The greeting ritual is proposed by the presenter on the first lesson. The second lesson is the time when there is an opportunity to change the greeting ritual; it can be updated further according to participants' decision.

The following stage is participants' state reflection fixed according to a certain methodical technique. It enables to take the situation seriously, to pay attention to the state "now" to evaluate the way it changes in the end of the lesson.

Then a "warming up" psycho-gymnastic exercise takes place; it is thematically connected with the goal of the lesson and accomplishes the function of "emotional stimulation" necessary for subsequent appeal to emotionally significant themes.

Work on the theme of the lesson consists of one or several exercises that create conditions to achieve objectives of each specific lesson.

And finally, the last stage of the lesson is state reflection as a part of the ritual to complete the lesson. Assimilation of experience obtained by each participant at the lesson takes place due to it.

The specificity of work assumes some requirements to the room where lessons take place. Rather a spacious room is required to realize programs, it is desirable to have a soft covering on the floor, enough chairs for group participants to sit in a circle (the circle is the main form of space organization at the lesson) and to move freely. Besides, "individual workplaces" are necessary for group participants: tables for individual work located along walls. The room has to be soundproofed and isolated from strangers. At the beginning of each indoor lesson there have to be all materials necessary for group work. Besides described materials, a tape recorder and instrumental music which sounds during participants' individual work or work in small groups; a hand bell to mark time intervals of work is desirable. A sheet of what man paper with the list of basic group work rules should be on the wall throughout all lessons. Table 1 presents thematic planning of lessons according to our program.

Two methods play a specific role to remove anxiety in primary school students:

1. Method of sequential desensibilization. Its essence is in the following: the child is placed in situations connected with the area that causes anxiety and fear which at first can only slightly worry the child and in the end cause strong anxiety, even fright. The child is offered to suck a candy to remove tension.

Table 1. Program of lessons on prevention and overcoming children's anxiety

№	Theme of the lesson	Objective of the lesson
1	Let's begin to work!	Acquaintance with the planned work, setting goals
2	That's just who I am!	Development of children's ability to present themselves
3	Human's inner world	Acquaintance with a human's inner world
4	Our emotions	Introduction to emotions.
5	Travel to the country of emotions and feelings	Analysis of emotions in a proportional ratio
6	Difficulties and rules at school	Drawing up "Rules of behaviour at school", search of ways to overcome difficulties when performing rules
7	the genius in yourself	Development of thinking, memory, speech, imagination
8	Your new friends	Development of communicative abilities, overcoming of fear to get acquainted with new friends
9	My mood	Introduction to the concept "mood"
10	How to change mood?	Search of ways to change mood in oneself and people around.
11	Game "My Day"	Development of communicative abilities, overcoming of complex of unsuccessfulness
12	What is self-assessment?	Introduction to the concept "self-assessment"
13	What influences self-assessment?	Search of ways to increase own self-assessment
14	And I am able ...	Development of communicative abilities, abilities to present themselves, increases of self-assessment
15	Gymnastics for mind	Development of school students' mental processes.
16	Our thoughts	Development of school students' mental processes
17	Secrets of my soul	Development of school students' mental processes
18	How I grow up "Valeological introspection"	To pass a valeological test, to make introspection, to learn to draw conclusions about oneself
19	Who is a leader?	Acquaintance with the concept "leader"
20	Game "Two Ships"	Identification of school students' leadership skills; Unity of children's collective
21	Fairy tale therapy "We are the most friendly"	Formation of positive climate in class
22	Competition of knowing and resourceful	Development of communicative abilities, abilities to present oneself, increase of self-assessment
23	We learn to think creatively	Development of school students' creative thinking
24	Training "Let's communicate!"	Development of communicative abilities, abilities to find "common language" in different situations

Table 1. Continued.

No	Theme of the lesson	Objective of the lesson
25	We make without glue and scissors	Development of school students' creative abilities
26	Interrelation of our health and feelings	To find links between mental and physical health of the person
27	My family	To understand relationship in a family
28	Street of snow-white smiles	To find out the meaning of a person's smile. Increase of self-assessment
29	What is anxiety	To get acquainted with the concept "anxiety"
30	Is school frightful?	Reduction of school anxiety
31	Rules of communication	To make rules of communication
32	Conflicts. Conflict free communication.	To get acquainted with the concept "conflict", to find ways of frictionless communication
33	It is time to say goodbye!	Summing up

2. Method of "acting out" fear, anxiety, tension. It is realized by means of a game - dramatization "a very terrible school"; children using dolls perform scenes that depict frightening situations from school life; all frightening moments have to be brought to the extreme degree. Besides, it is possible to apply such techniques as "drawing of fears", "stories about fears"; school themes have to be focused on. At the same time attempts to depict the situation in a humorous and caricature way are encouraged.

Criteria of this or that assessment, praise and remarks are widely developed and, at the same time, the sphere of evaluative judgement is extremely narrowed and specified (not all activity at once, but separate elements that are especially successful is estimated) in work with anxious children. Attention in class is paid to support the atmosphere of acceptance and safety to make the child feel that they are appreciated regardless their progress. Formation of such relation both to an assessment and any other result is important when it is perceived by the child as a guideline on the way to master knowledge and skills. It frees children from focus on the result, makes them take their successes and failures calmly. Funny competitions in which the victory or defeat is relative, does not demand considerable efforts and easily passes from one child to another are used for this purpose.

There is a special exercise that helps a child to get rid of fear of examination. It is effective for children aged between 8 - 10 years. The child has:

1. To inhale and exhale deeply.
2. To tell about oneself: "I will try to do my best".
3. If the child feels worried during sitting the test paper, they should deeply inhale and exhale tension once more.

It is necessary to convince the child that the teacher cannot guarantee the highest mark but the child will have an opportunity to show what they are capable of.

It is desirable to use games where there is a physical contact in work with anxious children. Exercises aimed to relax, technology of deep breath, yoga exercises, massage and just rub of a body are very useful.

Work with anxious children assumes increase of self-assessment and child's training to operate themselves in specific and exiting situations, and to remove muscular tension.

It is impossible to raise child's self-assessment within a short period of time. It is necessary to carry out purposeful work daily. Address the child by name, praise the child even for insignificant progress, speak of them in the presence of other children. The child should surely know what they are praised for. In any situation it is possible to find a reason to praise the child.

Anxious children should participate in such games in a circle as "Compliments", "I give you..." more often; they will help them to learn a lot of pleasant things about themselves from people around, to look at themselves with "eyes of other children". Each child, thus, will have an opportunity to be in the center of attention of surrounding people.

As a rule, anxious children do not report on their problems openly, and sometimes even hide them. Therefore, if the child tells the adult that he or she is afraid of nothing, it does not mean that their words are true. Most likely, it is the manifestation of anxiety and the child cannot or does not want to admit it.

In this case it is desirable to involve the child in joint discussion of a problem. It is possible to talk to children, sitting in a circle, about their feelings and experiences in situations worrying them. On examples of literature children can be shown that a courageous person is not the one who is afraid of nothing (there are no such people), but the one who is able to overcome fear.

It is a good idea that each child tells aloud what he/she is afraid of. It is possible to suggest that children would draw fears, and then in a circle, having shown their drawings, to tell about it. Such conversations will help anxious children to realize that many peers have similar problems which are characteristic only for them.

All adults know that it is impossible to compare children with each other. It is extremely inadmissible when anxious children are spoken about. Besides, it is desirable to avoid competitions and such kinds of activity which force to compare achievements of one child to achievements of others. Sometimes simple actions such as sports competition can hurt their feelings.

It is better to compare achievements of the child with results shown, for example, a week ago. Even if the child did not cope with a task at all, parents should not be informed that: "Your daughter made application worst of all" or "Your son was the last to finish drawing".

If the child displays anxiety while performing educational tasks, it is not recommended to carry out any types of works where there are time limits. Such children should be asked in the middle of the lesson but not at the beginning and at the end. It is impossible to hurry them up.

Addressing an anxious child it is desirable to establish eye contact with them or bend down, or raise the child to the level of your eyes.

Creating fairy tales and stories with adults will teach children to express their anxiety and fear in words. And even if the child does not attributes them to himself but to an imagined hero, it will help to remove emotional loading of internal experience and calm the child down to some extent.

Training the child to operate themselves in specific and most worrying situations is necessary in daily work.

Role games are very useful in work with anxious children. All familiar situations and those that cause special anxiety can be performed with children (e.g. a situation "I am afraid of the teacher" will give the child the chance to play with a doll symbolizing the teacher; a situation "I am afraid of war" will allow acting on behalf of the enemy, bombs, something terrible what the child is afraid of).

Games in which the doll having the image of the adult plays a role of the child and the child's doll plays a role of the adult, will help the child to express emotions, and for adults to make many interesting and important discoveries. Anxious children are afraid to move, but in a mobile emotional game (war, "Cowboys and Indians") the child can experience both strong fear and nervousness, and it will help to remove stress in real life.

Parents of school students from the experimental group were provided with psychology-pedagogical knowledge concerning prevention and overcoming of school anxiety. Meetings, trainings and business games with parents were arranged.

Results of the control research

The same diagnostic techniques were applied during the control stage as during the stating stage. After processing results obtained according to "Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale" we found out that there were changes in the EG of children on this indicator (Figure 2).

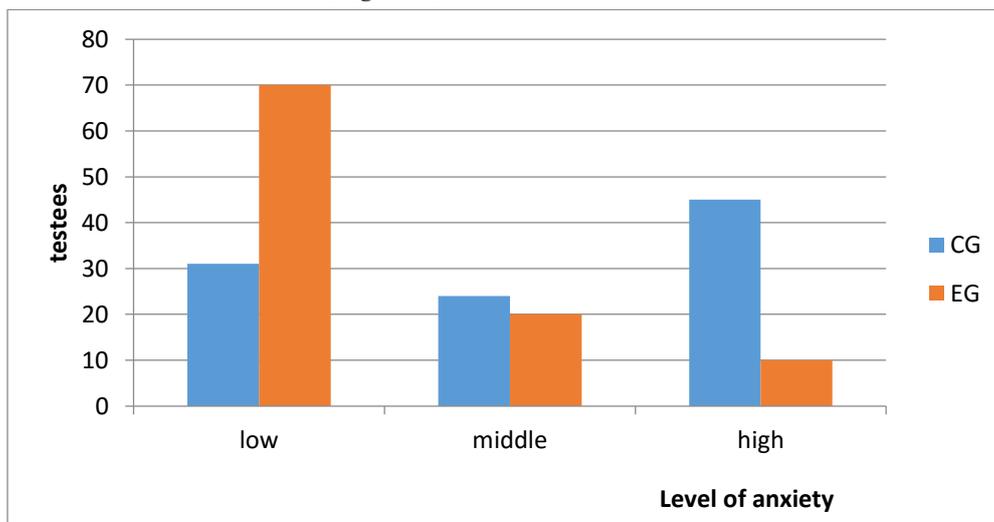


Figure 2. Test results according to "Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale" (Nemchin's adaptation)

The reliability of distinctions between values of the indicator "anxiety level" in CG and EG according to t - Student's criterion after the forming research phase makes $t_{emp} = 3,1$ ($p < 0.01$).

Research of conceptual thinking peculiarities according to Zambatsyavichene's technique showed that in the control group there were no considerable changes on this indicator. The number of learners with a high level of conceptual thinking increased by 16,7% in the experimental group, the number of children with a low level of conceptual thinking development decreased by 13,3%.

The reliability of distinctions between values of the indicator "features of conceptual thinking" in CG and EG according to t - Student's criterion after the forming research phase makes $t = 2.4$ ($p \leq 0.05$).

The technique "Two houses" did not reveal "rejected" children ($\varphi^*_{emp} = 2.266$, $p = 0.05$) in EG.

The technique "Incomplete sentences" was applied to analyze school students' emotional attitude to components of educational environment and to reveal the level of group identity. The number of school students with developed skills for cooperation and a high level of emotional wellbeing increased by 20% in the experimental group; the number of emotionally unsuccessful school students decreased by 23,3% ($\varphi^*_{emp} = 2,891$, $p = 0,05$). Reliable distinctions were not revealed in CG.

Discussions

Some aspects of the stated problem were studied by many scientists: V.I. Garbuzov, A.I. Zakharova & D.N. Isaev (1977), G. Sh. Gabdreeva (2000) investigated natural and genetic factors as reasons of anxiety in child's mental development; social factors in anxiety formation were researched by A.A. Bodaleva (1988), K.E. Izarda (1999), N.V. Imedadze (1996), L.F. Obukhova (1995), A.M. Prikhozhan (1997), E. Savina & N. Shanina (1996). Psychology-pedagogical conditionality of effective methods selection aimed to correct and prevent anxiety in primary school students is specified in works by R.V. Ovcharova (1996), M.K. Tutushkina, V.A. Artemyeva, & E.I. Afanasyeva (2000), D.B. Elkonin (1989).

The following works were major factors that cause anxiety in children are revealed are of certain interest: a low level of family income, belonging to racial minorities, increased restlessness of parents (Mian et al., 2016); application of preventive programs (Stallard et al., 2010).

The focus of this was study was to present information about the development and initial pilot results of a program designed to prevent child anxiety in preschool-aged children (Fisak, 2014). The program was focused on the reduction of child shyness, along with parent stress and anxiety – both of which are well-established risk factors in the development of child anxiety (Ashford et al., 2008; Rapee, 2002; Mian et al., 2016).

Authors reports the results of a study evaluating a book-supported primary prevention program "Dominique's Handy Tricks" for anxiety disorders in children aged 9–12 years. This cognitive behavioural program is delivered using a combination of storybooks and workshop sessions (Bouchard, et al., 2013).

Children and the youth from unsuccessful social-economic layers are subject to risk to develop behavior problems. In researches of (Velásquez et al., 2015) the efficiency of a yoga program to prevent depression and aggression in schools with children of a low social and economic status was studied. It was proved that yoga can be used for prevention of depression, anxiety and aggression; it can also promote the development of social and emotional competences in school-aged children.

Conclusion

Prevention and correction of school anxiety should have a complex character and cover various spheres of child's school life. Besides, as school anxiety is caused by various reasons the work has to take into account the age of school

students it is addressed to. It is necessary to reveal children of "risk group" in due time, and to select individual or group forms of work with such children.

Interaction with parents of "risk group" school children takes the major place in the structure of psychology prevention of school anxiety as prerequisites of its formation are quite often rooted in a family; an already created stereotype of anxious reflection is supported there too. It is important that parents should pay attention to their own children's behavior, and consult experts in due time.

The following techniques have to be implemented to realize correctional-developing programs.

1. Situational and role, business and developmental games, exercises with game elements corresponding to themes of lessons.

2. Psychotherapeutic techniques (verbalization, "ventilation of feelings", visualization, feedback, art-therapeutic, psychodrama and fairy-tale techniques).

3. Group discussion as a special form of group work:

-directed discussions by group participants to form conclusions necessary for subsequent work;

-non-directed discussion to verbalize experience and "ventilation of feelings" by group participants; collection of information on the course of group work by presenters.

4. Psycho-gymnastic exercises to decrease psycho-emotional pressure and relax group participants at the beginning of the lesson. Descriptions of lessons include only those psycho-gymnastic exercises which are necessary for the efficiency of subsequent work. If necessary (e.g., after an emotionally rich exercise) it is possible to add psycho-gymnastic exercises into group work.

Acknowledgements

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes on contributors

Natalya N. Kalatskaya is PhD, Associate Professor of General and Social Pedagogy Department, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia.

Albina R. Drozdikova-Zaripova is PhD, Associate Professor of General and Social Pedagogy Department, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia.

References

- Ashford, J., Smit, F., Van Lier, P.C., Cuijpers, P, Koot, H.M. (2008). Early risk indicators of internalizing problems in late childhood. *Journal of Child Psychology & Psychiatry*, 49, 774–780.
- Biktagirova, G., Kasimova R. (2015). Development of university students' creative abilities. *Review of European Studies*. 7 (5s), 101-107.
- Bodaleva, A. A. (1988) Psychology of personality. Moscow: Publ. house of MSU. 188p.
- Bouchard, S., Gervais, J., Gagnier, N., Loranger, C. (2013). Evaluation of a Primary Prevention Program for Anxiety. *Disorders Using Story Books with Children Aged 9–12 Years Primary Prevent.* New York. 446p.
- Elkonin, D. B. (1989). *Selected psychological works*. Moscow: Pedagogics. 560p.

- Fisak, B. (2014). The prevention of anxiety in preschool-aged children: Development of a new program and preliminary findings. *Mental Health & Prevention, 2(2s)*, 18–25.
- Gabdreeva, G. Sh. (2000). Major aspects of anxiety problems in psychology. *Tonus, 5*, 118-123.
- Garbuzov, V. I., Zakharov, A. I. & Isaev, D. N. (1977). *Neuroses in children and their treatment*. Leningrad: Publ. house Meditsina. .272 p.
- Freud, Z. (2011). *Psychoanalysis of children's fears*. Moscow: Makhaon. 288 p.
- Izarda, K. E. (1999). *Emotions of the person*. St. Petersburg: Peter. 484p.
- Imedadze, N. V. (1996). *Anxiety as a factor of learning in preschool age*. Tbilisi: Publ. house: Metsnisreba. 368 p.
- Kalatskaya, N. N. (2015) The Content of Childhood Fears of Primary School Children. *Living in Urban and Rural Areas Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 191, 2291 – 2295.
- Kostyunina, N. J., Drozdikova-Zaripova, A. R., Kalatskaya N. N. (2015). Prevention of Student Youth's Victim Behavior. *Review of European Studies*, 7(4). 88-92.
- Markovskaya, I. M. (2005). *Training of parents' interaction with children*. St. Petersburg: Speech. 149p.
- Mian, N. D., Godoy, L., Eisenhower, A. S., Heberle, A. E. & Carter, A. S. (2016) Prevention Services for Externalizing and Anxiety Symptoms in Low-Income Children: the Role of Parent Preferences in Early Childhood. *Prevention Science*, 17(1), 83-92.
- Mian, N. D., Wainwright, L., Briggs-Gowan, M. J. & Carter, A. (2011) An ecological risk model for early child hood anxiety. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*. 39. 501–512.
- Miklyayeva, A. V., Rumyantseva, P. V. (2004). *School anxiety: diagnostics, prevention, correction*. St. Petersburg: Speech. 248p.
- Nemchin, T. A. (1983). *Status of mental stress*. Leningrad: Izd. state. University Press, 167p.
- Obukhova, L. F. (1995). *Children's psychology: theory, facts, problems*. Moscow: Trivola. 360p.
- Ovcharova, R. V. (1996). *Practical psychology at elementary school*. Moscow: TC "Sfera". 351p.
- Rapee, R. M. (2002) The development and modification of temperamental risk for anxiety disorders: Prevention of a lifetime of anxiety? *Biological Psychiatry*. 52. 947–957.
- Platonov, K. K. (1986). *Structure and development of the personality*. Moscow: Science. 256p.
- Prikhozhan, A. M. (1997). *Anxiety and fear in primary school students*. Moscow: Publ. centre "Akademiya". 42-47p.
- Roberts, C. M., Kane, R., Bishop, B., Cross, D., Fenton, J., Hart B. (2010). The prevention of anxiety and depression in children from disadvantaged schools. *Behavior Research and Therapy*, 48. 68–73.
- Savina, E. & Shanina, N. (1996). Anxious children. *Preschool education*, 4, 11-14.
- Severnyi, A. A. & Tolstykh, N.N. (2004). *Anxiety. Reference book on psychology and psychiatry of children and teenage age*. St. Petersburg: Med-Press. 896p.
- Stallard, P., Taylor, G., Anderson, R. Daniels, H. Simpson, N., Phillips R., Skryabina E. (2014). The prevention of anxiety in children through school-based interventions. *Trials*. 15(1), 77-84.
- Tutushkina, M. K., Artemyeva, V. A, Afanasyeva E. I. (2001). *Practical psychology for teachers and parents*. St. Petersburg: Didactics Plus. 368p.
- Velásquez, A.M., López, M.A., Quiñonez, N., Paba, D.P. (2015). Yoga for the prevention of depression, anxiety, and aggression and the promotion of socio-emotional competencies in school-aged children. *An International Journal on Theory and Practice*, (5-6), 407-421.