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ADRESA REDAKCIE:
Slovenský výbor Svetovej organizácie pre predškolskú výchovu, Materská škola Jurkovičova 17, 080 01 Prešov
e-mail: institutio.infantium@gmail.com
webové sídlo: https://omep.sk/institutio-infantium/

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DETERMINING THE "SOCIAL CONTACTABILITY COEFFICIENT" OF PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN TO SOLVING CRISIS ISSUES CAUSED BY MODERN REALITIES

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Raisa SHULYHINA, Anastasiia KOVALOVA

Abstract: The article presents various scientific approaches of Ukrainian and foreign scientists in the field of pedagogy and psychology to the interpretation of the concepts of "interaction", "social contact", "social contactability". Based on the study of the content of the above psychological and pedagogical categories, definitions of such categories as "social contactability of a child" and "social contactability coefficient of a child" are proposed and formulated. The results of the conducted experimental study on the determination of the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children to solving crisis issues caused by modern realities are presented, according to four criteria (emotional, communicative, operational and activity-behavioral). It has been established that the state of social contactability of preschool children directly depends on the level of anxiety of the child, caused by the experienced traumatic events (forced moving, leaving one's home; loss of a parent or a close person; etc.) and the acquired traumatic experience. The higher the level of anxiety, the lower the indicators of the child's social contactability coefficient. It has been proven that the game is one of the most effective mechanisms for increasing the social contactability coefficient of preschool children to solving crisis issues caused by modern realities. The prospects for further scientific researches on the raised problem are outlined.

Keywords: preschool child, interaction, social competence, social contactability of a child, "social contactability coefficient", crisis society, playing activity

1 Introduction

The modern world is undergoing rapid changes that comprehensively affect all spheres of life, including the development of preschool children. Thus, the intensification of globalization and technological progress, the growth of social instability and other crisis phenomena create new challenges for children and their families (leaving their home; forced migration abroad; loss of loved ones, etc.). In these conditions, the social competence of a child, his ability to establish contacts, communicate and interact with other people, acquires special importance, because experiencing traumatic events destructively affects the comprehensive development of a small personality.

Preschool age is a sensitive period for the formation of social skills. It is at this time the child actively learns the greatness and richness of the world around him, learns to build relationships with peers and adults, and internalizes the norms and rules of behavior. Developed social contactability contributes to the child's successful adaptation in society, his emotional well-being and further personal development.

In this regard, the issue of developing and implementing tools for assessing the level of social contactability of preschool children, who are most vulnerable to the events taking place in Ukraine, emotionally, psychologically and physically, is becoming more relevant. Thus, determining the "social contactability coefficient" will allow not only to diagnose the current level of development of the child's personality, but also to predict its further socialization, as well as to timely identify and correct possible problems associated with life difficulties and adapt to them, to overcome the negative impact of various external and internal factors, and stabilize its psycho-emotional state.

2 Theoretical frameworks

In modern scientific literature, a large number of scientific developments by domestic and foreign scientists are devoted to the problems of organizing educational activities of preschool children, among which we can note: A. Arushanov, V. Butenko, A. Davydchuk, A. Makarenko, T. Makeeva, S. Yakobson, etc.

The study of the phenomenon of social contactability as an important component in the formation and development of a child's personality is devoted to the scientific developments of such researchers as: V. Zagvyazynsky, L. Levshin, H. Liymets, etc. (a set of didactic, educational and socio-pedagogical interactions); B. Bim-Bad (a process that occurs between a teacher and a pupil and is aimed at the development of child's personality); T. Akbasheva, I. Bekh, L. Pochebut, etc. (an interaction of subjects of the educational process, a phenomenon that develops someone and develops itself).

Various aspects of preschool children's experiences of stressful and crisis situations, as well as the features of using methods, techniques and technologies to reduce stress levels and form the foundations of children's stress resistance, were the subject of scientific researches by Ukrainian and foreign scientists in the field of pedagogy, psychology and psychotherapy (N. Banburak, M. Bilova, O. Vishnevsky, O. Gutsman, V. Korolchuk, O. Lychko, S. Maksymenko, L. Naugolnyk, O. Ovcharenko, L. Pryadko, Z. Romanets, L. Smolska, J. Brown, E. Fromm, S. Folkman, H. Wolff, etc.).

The features of organizing games as the leading activity of preschool children, which contributes to the comprehensive development of the child's personality, are considered in the scientific works of: I. Bekh, N. Volkova, S. Dovbnia, N. Klochko, K. Kolesnik, L. Lyubchak, A. Makarenko, T. Ponimanska, V. Sukhomlynsky, and others.

Moreover, the problem raised has also found its place in the regulatory documents of preschool education, in particular in the Law of Ukraine "On Preschool Education" (2024), the State Standard of Preschool Education (BCPO – 2021), Ukrainian educational programs for children aged 2-6 (7) years ("Dytyna" ("Child"), "Ya u Sviti" ("I am in the World"), "Vpevnenyi Start" ("The Sure Start"), etc.).

3 Literature review

A person is a social being who cannot exist outside of society.

The Ukrainian Pedagogical Dictionary edited by S. Honcharenko contains the following definition of the concept of *"interaction"*: it is an integration category that is studied by a number of humanities and fields of knowledge – philosophy, sociology, social psychology, pedagogy, etc., and is a process of direct or indirect influence of subjects on each other, which generates their mutual conditionality and connection (Honcharenko, 2017, p. 14).

Interaction as a result of social contacts is considered one of the main categories of pedagogy, while it can be characterized as neither a social nor a pedagogical phenomenon (Scheinkman, 2008).

It should be noted that the interaction of children in a certain social space, which may include a preschool educational institution, is social. Its main function is to include preschool children in the system of social relations and expand the scope of their social connections. At the same time, adults (parents and teachers) are called to fulfill the role of a "senior comrade", acting as partners in joint activities and communication.

In modern pedagogical science, the development of social contacts (interaction) of a preschool child with other children is a special type of connection, relationships that involve mutual actions, mutual influences and changes of subjects of pedagogical activity (Gavrysh, Reypolska, 2018). Among these interactions, a special place belongs to communication (a specific form of subject-subject interaction) and

joint activity. There are certain connections between them: communication is both an attribute of joint activity and an independent value.

It was rightly noted by the prominent psychologist J. Piaget, that communication is the main condition for a child's development, the most important factor in the formation of his personality (Piaget, Inhelder, 2000, p. 120). That is why preschool children with conditionally normotypical development have a pronounced need for communication with peers, educators and parents.

The importance of constant communication between children of different ages, the educational impact of communication between preschoolers on personality development is confirmed by the works of A. Makarenko, V. Sukhomlynsky, S. Shatsky, as well as many modern educators I. Kon, O. Korniyak, I. Tovkach, etc. The social contact development of children in preschool educational institutions forms the experience of various relationships, contributes to the development of the most important moral qualities, the mastery of cultural values, etc. (Bobak, 2017; Gavrysh, 2018; Lysenko-Gelembiuk, 2019).

Therefore, social contact is the simplest form of communication between people, the initial stage of social interaction, the use of which occurs when an individual wants to attract the attention of another individual. Social contacts are necessary for a child for the full development and formation of personality. We agree with the opinion of S. Koval and R. Shulyhina that in the process of social interaction "it is important to observe how children communicate among peers in order to reintegrate them not only into the educational, but also into the cultural space for their further socialization and general development" (Shulyhina, Koval, 2023, p. 229).

Today, in psychological literature, the concept of "contactability" refers to a quality of personality that is reflected in sociability, sociability, and the ability to establish connections (contacts) with people.

According to M. Willard, contactability is a special social skill of an individual, based on natural sociability; it is the product of a combination of a set of perceptual, intellectual and communicative abilities that occur on the basis of developed self-regulation, acting as one of the structural components of social intelligence (Willard, 2024).

Ukrainian academician I. Bekh points out that the formation of social contactability is carried out in the first stages of child's life and develops as a general communicative ability, which is initially directed by the individual's temperament and specific features of higher nervous activity (Bekh, 2018). Social contactability is manifested in the ability of an individual to mobilize all available means to achieve social contact with other people (mastery of their emotional states, body and facial expressions, disposition to contact), in the ability to change the degree of their openness depending on the situation, in mastery of the communicative situation.

As to W. Brown, S. Odom and S. McConnell, the concept of "social contactability" should be understood as the ability of an individual to enter into psychological contact, to form trusting relationships in the course of interaction, based on consent and mutual acceptance, which is ensured by the possession of communication and self-regulation skills and abilities, as well as personal qualities suitable for contact (Brown, Odom, McConnell, 2008, p. 101-102).

During the development of a child's "social contactability", it is important to determine its optimal indicator – the *"social contactability coefficient"* or *"social contactability index"*, which indicates the extent to which a preschool child has developed the ability to enter into psychological contact with other people, to form trusting relationships during interaction with adults, peers, and other children of different ages.

Having summarized the above scientific approaches to understanding the essence of an individual's social contactability, we proposed the following definition of the concept of *"social contactability of a child"*:

it is a social quality of a preschool child, which involves his or her ability to establish simple forms of connection (communication, relationships) with adults, peers, and children of younger and older ages, which is reflected at the verbal and non-verbal (gestures, intonation, facial expressions) levels.

At the same time, we propose to understand the category *"social contactability coefficient of a child"* as the level of quality's formation of a child aged 3-6 (7) years before establishing strong and friendly relationships with adults, peers, and younger/older children.

In modern preschool pedagogy, it is generally accepted that game is the leading activity of a preschool child. Accordingly, one of the most widespread and effective mechanisms for increasing the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children is playing activity, which contributes not only to the development of their mental processes (imagination, thinking, attention, etc.), but also provides enrichment of the emotional world of children and promotes the child's communication with both peers and adults.

In the Dictionary of Short Terms in Pedagogy, the concept of *"child's playing activity"* refers to a type of unproductive activity, the motive of which lies not in the results, but in the process itself (Yatsyk, Stepaniuk, 2022).

The Ukrainian pedagogical dictionary by S. Honcharenko contains the following interpretation of the definition of *"child's playing activity"* – it is a peculiar form of a child's manifestation of his/her activity, in which, at the level of his/her knowledge, abilities and skills, he/she reproduces the actions of adults and the relationships between them, learns about objects and their functions, and the social reality of his/her environment (Honcharenko, 2017, p. 79).

In Ukraine, the importance of playing activities in all areas of a child's life, and in particular social, has been enshrined in the text of the State Standard of Preschool Education, namely in the educational direction "Child's Game", where a game is defined as a means for organizing a child's activities, their multifaceted development in the social-communicative, linguistic, cognitive, artistic-aesthetic and physical directions of children's development and education (Basic Component of Preschool Education, 2021).

The analysis of scientific developments by L. Artemova, N. Gavrysh, I. Karabaeva, O. Stayenna, T. Pirozhenko, and others gave grounds to determine the set of processes that occur during the playing activity of children aged 3-6 (7) years old:

- the formation of all aspects of child's personality, significant changes occur in his psyche, which prepare the transition to a new, higher stage of his development;
- the knowledge of the surrounding reality by children of 3-6 (7) years old – while playing a game, the child studies colors, shapes, properties of materials, plants, animals, etc.;
- the child's entry into the world of adults;
- the child's mastery of spiritual values;
- the child's assimilation of previous social experience;
- the child's acquisition of the first collective thinking lessons;
- the development of the child's social contactability and an increase in its coefficient.

British researchers E. Baines and P. Blatchford in their researches identified a game as one of the leading forms of organizing the life of a preschool child, indicating that it is in it that the formation of all aspects of the human soul, its mind, heart and will takes place, and that playing activity predicts the future character and future fate of a child, since it is in the game that the child's inclinations and the relative strength of his soul are expressed and a great influence is exerted on the formation of children's abilities, and accordingly on the future fate of a preschooler (Baines, Blatchford, 2012).

Moreover, in the course of their scientific researches, the authors found that:

- firstly, two types of relationships are embodied in the game: real (those that exist between people who are raised in the same group) and game (those that are regulated by the rules of the game);
- secondly, for a child to join a play group, it is necessary to establish social ties between its participants, subordinate their actions to certain roles, exercise control and fulfill certain established rules of the game, etc. (Baines, Blatchford, 2012).

Summarizing the above, we note that it is advisable to consider playing activity as one of the influence mechanisms on the formation of social contactability of preschool children, since:

- *firstly,* it allows a child to understand and not get lost in the explanations of certain actions and deeds of people (especially in the conditions of the daily struggle of Ukrainians for their existence);
- *secondly,* it contributes to the mood, the formation of the child's attitude towards establishing contact with other people (adults, peers), the mobilization of all means of communication (verbal/non-verbal), the stimulation of motivation, reflection and feedback;
- *thirdly,* it "heals" a child's soul by distracting from bad/sad thoughts through "immersion" in the game, "trying on" different roles, and helps the child to establish a mechanism for managing its behavior.

4 Methodology

Determining the state development of social contactability of preschool children who grow up and are raised in crisis conditions caused by modern Ukrainian realities was carried out on the basis of PEO (nursery-kindergarten) No. 65 of Kyiv, PEO (nursery-kindergarten) No. 573 of Kyiv and PEO (nursery-kindergarten) "Knyazhychanka" of Fastiv district in Kyiv region.

The study involved 78 children aged 4-6 (7), including 24 children with the status of "internally displaced person" (IDP) from Donetsk (10 children), Luhansk (6 children), Kherson (5 children), Zaporizhzhia (2 children), and Kharkiv (1 child) regions of Ukraine. All children have different levels of social contactability development.

The research was conducted during 2023–2024.

The research and experimental work was carried out in three stages:

- Stage I (ascertaining stage) – consisted in determining the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children in the conditions of a crisis society and its correlation with their emotional state;
- Stage II (formative stage) – involved carrying out experimental work to increase the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children to solve crisis issues caused by modern realities;
- Stage III (control stage) – aimed to determine the effectiveness of the experimental work carried out to increase the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children.

For the purpose of conducting an experimental study, respondents were divided into two subgroups of 39 people each – experimental (EG) and control (CG).

Within the framework of our study, criteria, indicators and levels of social contactability of preschool children were determined, and appropriate diagnostic tools were selected.

Thus, the degree of severity of certain manifestations of social contactability of preschool children was carried out in accordance with the following indicators of self-identification of a child aged 4-6 (7):

1. is interested in peers (older/younger children) and adults;
2. seeks to communicate with peers (older/younger children) and adults;
3. is open to contacts with peers (older/younger children) and adults;

4. is receptive to the emotional state of a partner in social interaction, reacts to it (frowns in response, smiles, shows a desire to share impressions, etc.);
5. is able to enter into social contact with peers (older/younger children) and adults, possesses elementary communication skills;
6. is active (initiative) in interaction with peers (older/younger children) and adults;
7. seeks to be independent in interaction (in a situation of joint activity with peers (older/younger children).

Table 1 presents the criteria we have identified for the state of social contactability development of preschool children.

Table 1: Criteria for the social contactability development of preschool children

Criteria for the social contactability development	**Characteristics**	**Research methodology**
Emotional	Contributes to determining the preschooler's ability to determine the emotional state of the people around him in order to further establish social interaction with them.	"Study of understanding the emotional states of people" (Yu. Afonkina, G. Uruntaeva)
Communicative	Helps to determine the nature of a preschool child's behavior in solving problem situations with peers, older/younger children, and adults.	"Identifying communicative competence in communication with peers" (E. Kalyagina, E. Smyrnova)
Operating	Helps to determine the level of social contactability during playing activity with other children, the characteristics of the child's involvement into the game and the fulfillment of roles.	"Diagnostics of the formation of playing competence of a child" (author's development)
Activity-behavioral	1) Determining the reactions of a preschool-age child to his internal psycho-emotional state (experiences, fear, emotions, etc.), which is reflected in the external manifestations of behavior, communication and activity of the child. 2) The child's ability to establish social contacts with peers and adults.	Anxiety test for preschool children (V. Amen, M. Dorkey, R. Temmle)

The *levels* of social contactability development of preschool children are determined by each of the above criteria and are summed up under a general value, according to which the results obtained are analyzed:

High level: a child aged 4-6 (7) has a predominantly positive background, which indicates a normal emotional attitude towards peers and towards himself; he needs to communicate and/or play, provides mutual assistance to other children, tries to show care towards his friends (calm down, share a toy, listen, etc.); makes an independent and constructive solution to the problem; maintains friendly relations with children.

Average level: a child shows initiative, but is not persistent; does not always respond to peers' offers to play and communicate; experiences some difficulties in social contacts with peers and adults; shows shyness and sometimes withdrawal; the child has a predominantly neutral-business emotional background; he cannot always put himself in the place of another child, understand his feelings and emotional state; there are signs of anxiety and sometimes aggression; the child turns to the preschool teacher for help.

Low level: a child is extremely rarely active, mostly plays alone, is withdrawn and tearful; has an undeveloped need to communicate with peers or is unable to find an approach to them; shows shyness, aggressiveness and often "walks away" from the situation, makes aggressive decisions; often lacks an answer to the question asked.

In order to determine the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children in the EG and CG groups, we selected the following diagnostic methods:

1. Methodology No. 1 "Studying the understanding of people's emotional states" (Yu. Afonkina, G. Uruntaeva): creating conditions for studying the formation of understanding of emotional states and experiences of other people of preschool children;
2. Methodology No. 2 "Identifying communicative competence in communication with peers" (E. Kalyagina, E. Smyrnova): identifying the communicative competence of a preschool child and the features of his interaction and behavior in conflict situations;
3. Methodology No. 3 "Diagnostics of the formation of playing competence of a child" (author's development): determining the level of development of playing activity of a preschool child and how a child can immerse himself in the game when experiencing a stressful situation and anxiety;
4. Anxiety test for preschool children (V. Amen, M. Dorkey, R. Temmle): determining the level of anxiety of preschool children in crisis conditions; establishing the causes of psychological trauma and sources of anxious behavior in a preschool child.

In addition, during the study, we used mathematical methods of statistical processing of empirical data, correlation, factor and cluster analysis, which made it possible to identify the leading psychological characteristics of older preschool children with different levels of "social contactability".

5 Discussion

Based on the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative results of the diagnostic examination of the state of social contactability development in EG and CG children according to four criteria – emotional, communicative, operational and activity-behavioral at the ascertaining stage of the study (Table 2), we found that children in EG and CG have a predominance of the average level of social contactability development – 43.6% (17 people) and 48.7% (19 people), respectively, since children behave mainly without conflict and tend to establish and develop interaction with other children.

Table 2: State of social contactability development of preschool children in EG and CG (ascertaining stage)

Levels of social contactability formation of preschool children	**Experimental group**		**Control group**	
	Absolute value, person	Relative value, %	Absolute value, person	Relative value, %
High level	11	28,2%	10	25,6%
Average level	17	43,6%	19	48,7%
Low level	11	28,2%	9	25,6%

Instead, a detailed analysis of the results for each of the criteria separately made it possible to note the following features in the state of social contactability of preschool children in EG and CG:

– ***Emotional criterion*** (children's understanding of other people's emotional states, their experiences): in both groups of children, a high level of understanding of people's emotional states prevails: 61.5% of respondents (24 people) in the CG and 56.4% of respondents (22 people) in the EG, which indicates that children are able to identify different emotions of people; the average level was 38.5% of respondents

(15 people) in the CG and 43.6% of respondents (17 people) in the EG; a low level was not detected in the EG and CG.

The obtained indicators testify that preschool children can establish social contacts with each other, realize which children are friendly and want to establish contact and communicate, play, and which express a negative attitude towards the intentions to establish interaction. Moreover, the children in the EG and CG most clearly identified negative emotions (82.1% and 87.2%): *"Surprise", "Anger", "Fear", "Sadness"* and *"Irritation"*, while the children called positive emotions with various substitute words or phrases (for example, *"Kindness"* for *"Good attitude", "Sincerity"* for *"Cheerfulness"*, *"Joy"* for *"We are glad when the drone did not hit the house!"* etc.).

This indicates that preschool children's understanding of people's emotions is currently determined by the patterns they experience in everyday life, taking over from their social environment (parents, siblings, relatives, media, friends, etc.) and experiencing their own experiences.

– ***Communicative criterion*:** it was found that preschool children: 1) are mainly inclined to resolve conflict situations by choosing independent productive and constructive decisions (53.8% (21 people) in the CG and 48.7% (19 people) in the EG); 2) verbal conflict resolution was suggested by 35.9% of respondents (14 people) in the CG and 30.8% of respondents (12 children) in the EG; 3) 15.4% of respondents (6 people) in the CG and 17.9% of respondents (7 people) in the EG resorted to an aggressive solution; 4) refusal to resolve the conflict situation, as well as the lack of answers, was demonstrated by 5.1% of children (2 people) in the CG and 7.7% of respondents (3 people) in the EG.

Besides, the following answer options were additionally ranked:

1. Refusal to resolve the conflict situation or complaint to an adult (*"I'll run away", "I'll cry", "I'll complain to my mother"*).
2. Aggressive decision *("I'll beat you up," "I'll call the police to arrest you," "I'll hit you on the head with a stick,"* etc.).
3. Verbal decision *("I'll explain what's so bad," "We need to tell the boy that he shouldn't do that," "I'll ask him to apologize, because being a bully is ugly"*).
4. Productive decision (*"I'll wait until the others finish playing game", "I'll fix a doll"*, etc.).

– ***Operational criterion:*** it was established that preschool children of EG and CG: 1) have an average level of the diversity of ideas regarding participation in playing activity is expressed, however, standard game ideas are mostly reproduced without the manifestation of children's creative imagination; 2) children, as a rule, set 2–3 game tasks in the game, which diversifies their games and enriches the content of the game; 3) game actions with toys do not differ in diversity; 4) in the role-playing actions of 4-5 years old children, creative manifestations and expressiveness in role-playing actions are noted; 5) game interaction is short-term in nature, attention is scattered.

– ***Activity-behavioral criterion:*** during the survey of respondents at the ascertaining stage of the study, we found that children with a low level of social contactability have an increased level of anxiety. These are mainly children who became internally displaced persons and left their homes due to Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine; these are children who have not seen their father or mother, who joined the ranks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and are defending the country; these are children who witnessed the bombing of their settlements, etc. Unfortunately, at the moment of the announcement of the "Air Raid Signal", these children immediately leave the game, begin to hide under chairs, lose control over themselves and their emotions (they may start screaming; squeaking; crying; shouting; sharply grabbing the hands of the preschool teacher or friends in the group and dragging them to shelter; etc.). We have found that

excessive anxiety produces problems with establishing social contacts with peers and causes pronounced shyness in communicating with adults.

Among children in EG and CG with an average level of social contactability, a normal state of the emotional and personal sphere was observed (children have a positive mood, a friendly attitude towards their peers and adults), but sometimes children can show anxiety (worry), can be sad, cry, their mood changes due to sad memories of abandoned pets, a deceased father/mother, a destroyed house, etc. At the same time, children have good interpersonal relationships with their parents, they feel that they are safe with their parents and educators.

A high level of social contactability indicates that preschool children have a low level of anxiety (these are mainly children living in Kyiv), they have a good emotional and personal sphere and a stably positive emotional state; manifestations of aggression or outbursts of anger are not observed in relation to either adults or peers. Sometimes manifestations of anxiety are observed, but they are insignificant and episodic for objective reasons (violation of the rules of conduct, conflict with peers in the group, etc.). Children almost do not react to the fact that terrible events are taking place in the country and they need to go down to the shelter of the ZDO every day, sometimes explosions are heard. According to children, *"I am not afraid!", "We will win anyway!"*, etc. In the group, children behave calmly, easily and without conflict establish social contacts; try to avoid conflict situations; behavior is calm and balanced; manifestations of impulsiveness are not noted; there are no manifestations of PTSD.

To determine the reliability of the results obtained and group a homogeneous sample of respondents with an increased level of anxiety, a correlation analysis was conducted between the indicators of communicative and activity-behavioral criteria of "social contactability" of children of older preschool age using two methods – the Methodology No. 2 "Identifying communicative competence in communication with peers" (E. Kalyagina, E. Smyrnova) and the Anxiety test for preschool children (V. Amen, M. Dorkey, R. Temmle). Taking into account the uneven distribution of data according to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z-normality criterion (for the first method $p=0.792 \geq 0.05$; for the second – $p=0.321 \geq 0.05$), the correlation analysis was carried out using the Spearman rank correlation coefficient.

According to the data in Table 2, 28.2% of respondents in our sample suffered from fears and apprehensions of varying degrees of entering into interpersonal relationships with peers and adults in various situations, in particular, starting a conversation, fear when meeting new people, anxiety about others watching or looking at them, inability to think clearly, belief that everyone is looking only at them in social interaction situations, desire to avoid specific social situations, rumination of negative thoughts about previous interaction experiences, fear of doing something wrong and experiencing a sense of shame, anxiety during play activities, when eating in the presence of others, etc.

Based on the results of clarifying the features of the relationship between personal characteristics (personal anxiety) and life characteristics of older preschoolers, a correlation and factor analysis of empirical data was performed, and the levels of their manifestation were recorded.

In particular, a correlation was recorded between the variables: "personal anxiety" and "social contact", "experience of social stress", "frustration of achieving success" (in gaming or artistic and creative activities), "fear of self-expression", "fear of a knowledge testing situation", "low physiological resistance to stress", "problems and fears in relationships with adults".

A high negative correlation (inversely proportional) was found between the indicators: "personal anxiety" and "general anxiety in the peer group" (-0.76), "personal anxiety" and "fear of self-expression" (-0.62), "personal anxiety" and "fear of the knowledge testing situation" (-0.60). Personal anxiety is a factor

that affects social contact in the peer group, fear of self-expression and fear of the knowledge testing situation by the teacher. The lower the personal anxiety, the less fear of self-expression, fear of the knowledge testing situation and vice versa. The social situation serves as a factor that "reinforces" the personal properties of a child of older preschool age, which cause stress of being in the peer group in the PEO group.

A negative correlation (inversely proportional) was found, which is described as average between the indicators "personal anxiety" and "social stress experience" (- 0.54), "personal anxiety" and "frustration of achieving success" (- 0.59). A low indicator of personal anxiety reveals a connection with low levels of social stress experience and frustration of achieving success and vice versa. Personal anxiety is a factor that contributes to negative manifestations and consequences of frustration and expectations of failure in the play, communicative and other types of activities of a child of senior preschool age.

A low negative correlation (inversely proportional) was recorded between the indicators "personal anxiety" and "low physiological resistance to stress", "problems and fears in relationships with adults". This leads to the conclusion that there is a certain tendency towards the possibility of a connection in some cases between a high level of personal anxiety in older preschool children and a high level of low physiological resistance to stress, between a high level of personal anxiety and problems and fears associated with relationships with peers and adults (parents and educators).

Based on the results of the study, we organized and conducted a formative experiment lasting 10 months, which was aimed at organizing game activities in the preschool educational institution in order to increase the indicators of "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children who study in the EG.

We organized various types of playing activity: didactic game, theatrical games, story-role-playing games, creative games, outdoor games, free play games, etc. All of them were aimed, on the one hand, at ensuring free interaction between children in the process of playing activity, improving communication skills of preschoolers, establishing interpersonal communication, involving "outsider children" (lonely children) in joint games, and on the other hand, distracting children from the realities of life in which they find themselves in Ukraine (especially on days when the "Air Raid Signal" can last for several hours in a row, and children are forced to stay in shelters).

For instance, among the most favorite collective games in nature, which were held with children of the EG in autumn, was the *reflective game "If I became a bird (butterfly, flower…)"*, which was held during phenological observations of natural phenomena, trying to solve the questions: *"Why do leaves turn yellow/purple in autumn?"*; *"Why do leaves fall?"*; *"Why is autumn a magical time of year?"*; etc. Thus, during this game, children had the opportunity to express their emotions about the day in the kindergarten, trying on the role of a living creature they had chosen themselves. For example: *"If I became a butterfly, I would try to make a beautiful skirt out of this leaf and dance"*; *"If I became a snail, I would look for a tasty apple or leaf"*; etc.

The children's favorite game in nature was the outdoor *game "The Leafy Pile"*, which consisted of children's collecting a huge pile of yellowed dry leaves themselves, and then taking turns jumping over it. The one who did not scatter the pile or who scattered the least leaves is the winner. Children liked the ending of the game the most – *"The Leafy Wallowing"* in dry leaves, when everyone who wanted to quickly piled into a pile of leaves, and *"The Leafy Rain"* (each person scooped up as many leaves as possible in his hands and threw them over himself so that rain came out of dry leaves).

To develop children's spatial orientation skills in nature, we organized an interesting *game* called *"Obstacle Maze"*, which required prior preparation, including the use of a long sling/rope, one end of which

was tied to a small tree at the beginning of the walk (the starting point), and the other end to a tree in a forest park near the lake or paddle. Each child was blindfolded and carefully given a rope in his/her hands. The task of each child was to reach the end point with the eyes closed, guided solely by own feelings (feeling the path ahead with foot, listening to the sounds of the child's walking ahead or the quacking of ducks on the lake, birds' singing etc.).

In addition, during the warm season, children had the opportunity to build huts out of branches with their friends and "have a snack" there or have a picnic; construct a "restaurant" for squirrels on the ground out of twigs and fallen leaves, jump in puddles ("splash in the lake"), lie on the green grass, etc.

During the organization of theatrical games, we turned to the musical directors of the PEO (preschool educational organization, or nursery/kindergarten), who helped to select music that corresponded to a certain movement and mood. Listening to music, the children in EG were able to independently fantasize and "see" various images thanks to their creative imagination. For example, to the waltz of flowers from the ballet "The Nutcracker", children imagined the dances of various fairy-tale creatures (fairies, elves, sorceresses) and depicted them in a dance improvisation.

During the *theatrical game "We are firefighters"*, we paid a lot of attention to the development of children's intonation, facial expressions and movements while playing and improvising the roles of a "rescuer", "firefighter", "animal stuck in the forest with a fire", etc. The children showed themselves vividly, exchanged ideas about the roles, helped each other while playing the "forest fire", depicted various emotions on themselves using facial expressions and gestures (fear, fright, trembling, etc.). But at the same time, *the key "fire extinguishing object"* for the children, unfortunately, became the houses destroyed by combat drones. The children "went" to the scene, organized themselves, formed a chain and helped each other to dismantle the rubble and put out the fire (all those thing they used to see in daily life).

While organizing plot-role-playing games or play-performances, we usually used plots that were close to the realities of life in which children find themselves. For example: *the games "At the Beauty Salon"*, *"At the Supermarket"*, *"At the Doctor"*, etc. At the same time, we always involved children of EG in the design of these games, uniting them into creative groups. For example, during *the theatrical game-performance "The Cat and the Rooster"*, a group of *"artists-decorators"* was created who drew invitations, posters and created elements of the scenery; the *"directors' group"* selected candidates for roles, made comments on the quality of the role performed; the *"actors' group"* rehearsed the roles for the production; the *"costume designers' group"* prepared costume elements with the involvement of parents; the *"make-up artists' group"* prepared the actors for the performance. It should be noted that in the case of creating creative groups, it was extremely important to ensure the organization and coordination of their activities, so children often moved from one group to another, tried their hand at everything, and communicated a lot with each other.

At the control stage, a diagnosis of the level of social contactability development of preschool children was carried out after conducting experimental work on organizing playing activity in preschool educational organization (nursery/kindergarten) in order to increase the indicators of the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children to solve crisis issues caused by modern realities.

A comparative analysis of the indicators of state of social contactability development of preschool children studying in the EG and CG, after conducting a formative experiment, is given in Table 3.

Table 3: State of social contactability development of preschool children in EG and CG (control stage)

Levels of social contactability formation of preschool children	Experimental group				Control group			
	Ascertaining stage		Control stage		Ascertaining stage		Control stage	
	Absolute value, person	Relative value, %	Absolute value, person	Relative value, %	Absolute value, person	Relative value, %	Absolute value, person	Relative value, %
High level	11	28,2%	19	48,7%	10	25,6%	12	30,8%
Average level	17	43,6%	18	46,2%	19	48,7%	20	51,3%
Low level	11	28,2%	2	5,1%	9	25,6%	7	17,9%

Analyzing the data presented in Table 3, we can conclude that among the children of EG, where experimental work was carried out to increase the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children to solve crisis issues caused by modern realities, a significant increase in the indicators of state of social contactability development was noted. Thus, the high level increased from 28.2% to 48.7% (+20.5%), the average level increased from 43.6% to 46.2% (+2.6%); the low level decreased from 28.2% to 5.1% (–23.1%). Note that the obtained indicators are determined by several factors:

- *firstly*, the habituation of preschool children to the crisis conditions in which they live for a long time (the child's psyche "gets used" to constant explosions, bad news, air raid sirens, etc., turning into an daily occurrence);
- *secondly*, the transition of children with an initial average level of the "social contactability coefficient" to a high level.

Among the CG nurse children, the situation with the level of development of social contacts also has a positive dynamics by levels, but it is not as significant as in the EG compared to the indicators of the ascertaining stage of the study. Thus, the high level increased from 25.6% to 30.8% (+5.2%), the low level decreased slightly from 25.6% to 17.9% (–7.7%), the average level increased by 2.6% (from 48.7% to 51.3%).

The strongest correlation was found between the factors:

1. Factor "Personal anxiety" and "Frustration of the need to achieve success" (.088). That is, the higher the personal anxiety of a child of older preschoolers, the higher the frustration of children regarding success in the team, communication with peers and adults, demonstration of their success in certain types of activities.
2. Factor "Social contact" and "Experience of social stress" (.369) however, the correlation is not quite significant.
3. Factor "Experience of social stress" shows a correlation with the factor "Fear of self-expression" (.463).
4. Factor "Frustration of the need to achieve success" shows a correlation with the factor "Fear of self-expression" (.577), which is more significant than with the factor "Experience of social stress".
5. The factor "Fear of self-expression" shows a correlation with the factor "Social contact" (.328) although not very significant.
6. The factor "Fear of a knowledge test situation" shows a correlation with the factor "Fear of self-expression" (.187), which is not significant, but the most pronounced of all presented.
7. The factor "Fear of not meeting the expectations of others" shows a correlation with the factor "Experiencing social stress" (.296).

In addition, a negative correlation (inversely proportional) was found between the factors:

1. The factor “Personal anxiety” shows a negative correlation with the factors: “Fear of the knowledge test situation” (-.111), as well as the factor “Social stress experience” (-.095) and “Fear of self-expression” (-.040).
2. The factor “Social contact” shows a negative correlation with the factors: “Fear of self-expression” (-.195) and “Personal anxiety” (-.022).
3. The factor “Social stress experience” shows a negative correlation with the factors: “Social contact” (-.242), “Frustration of the need to achieve success” (-.034), as well as with the factor “Fear of self-expression” (-.023).
4. The factor “Frustration of the need to achieve success” shows a negative correlation with the factors: “Experience of social stress” (-.246), the factor “Fear of a knowledge test situation” (-.122), “Personal anxiety” (-.100).
5. The factor “Fear of self-expression” shows a negative correlation with the factors: “Frustration of the need to achieve success” (-.656), “Experience of social stress” (-.246), as well as “Fear of not meeting the expectations of others” (-.130) and “Fear of a knowledge test situation” (-.082).
6. The factor “Fear of a knowledge testing situation” shows a negative correlation with the factors: “Fear of not meeting the expectations of others” (-.433), “Social contact” (-.168), as well as a very insignificant correlation with the factor “Experience of social stress” (-.003).
7. The factor “Fear of not meeting the expectations of others” shows a negative correlation with the factors: “Fear of a knowledge testing situation” (-.436) and the factor “Fear of self-expression” (-.035).

According to the results of the control stage of the study in the EG, unlike the CG, according to the φ*criterion – Fisher's angular transformation, statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) were found in the levels of emotional, communicative and activity-behavioral components of the “coefficient of social contactability” of children of older preschool age. Moreover, in the EG, a statistically significant relationship was found between the factors: “Personal anxiety” and “Social contact” (.708), “Experience of social stress” (-.913), “Frustration of the need to achieve success” (.591), “Fear of self-expression” (.713), “Fear of a knowledge test situation” (.552), “Fear of not meeting the expectations of adults” (.654), “Low physiological resistance to stress” (.668).

Accordingly, it has been established that the organization of pedagogical interaction with pupils, aimed at increasing the “coefficient of social contactability”, should be carried out in a controlled manner, focusing on personal anxiety and the above-mentioned factors that are interconnected, taking into account the conditions and psycho-emotional state of children aged 5-6 years old, especially those who have experienced traumatic events due to the horrors of war.

Thus, the obtained results of the experimental study indicate an improvement in the “social contactability coefficient” of preschool children of the EG: children have become more proactive and actively demonstrate their interest in communicating with both peers and adults; they are not afraid to make contact, they closely and fruitfully interact with each other during various types of activities, in particular playing activity; the children’s psycho-emotional state has stabilized, and the level of anxiety has decreased. All this gives us grounds to assert the effectiveness of the experimental work we conducted to increase the “social contactability coefficient” of preschool children for solving crisis issues caused by modern realities.

6 Conclusion

Today, in the context of aggravation of the military crisis in Ukraine, caused by a real threat to the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the state, there is a special need to determine and increase the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children, especially during their stay in preschool educational institutions.

Based on the study of the approaches of domestic and foreign scientists to understanding the essence of the psychological and pedagogical categories of "interaction", "contactability", and "social contactability", it has been:

- proposed and formulated a definition of the concept of "social contactability of a child" as a social quality of a preschool child, which implies his ability to establish simple forms of communication (communication, relationships) with adults, peers, younger and older children, which is reflected at the verbal and non-verbal (gestures, intonation, facial expressions) level;
- proposed to introduce into scientific circulation the category of "social contactability coefficient of a child" as the level of formation of the quality of a child aged 3-6 (7) years to establish strong and friendly relationships with adults, peers and children of younger/older age;
- defined the game as a powerful mechanism for increasing the social contactability coefficient of preschool children, which should be used to form the ability to communicate and establish social contacts of children, to help them establish contact with the world around them, as well as with peers, younger and older children;
- conducted research and experimental work to determine the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children to solve crisis issues caused by modern realities, and revealed the direct impact of a child's psycho-emotional state on his ability to establish social contacts with peers and adults.

We see it as promising to carry out further scientific researches on the issue of increasing the "social contactability coefficient" of preschool children as an important determinant that contributes to a child's personal well-being, his development and successful socialization.

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Raisa SHULYHINA
Dragomanov Ukrainian State University
Department of Preschool Education
Pyrohova Str. 9, 010 54 Kyiv, Ukraine
shulyhina@gmail.com

Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor, Professor at the Department of Preschool Education, Dragomanov Ukrainian State University, Kyiv, Ukraine. Her research interests are: problems of professional training and formation of ethical and professional worldview of the future specialist in the field of preschool education, problems of teaching and raising preschool children. The author has over 130 works of scientific and educational-methodical nature, including: educational-methodical manuals, methodological recommendations, articles in scientific professional and international publications included in the scientometric databases Scopus, Web of Science and socio-humanities Index Copernicus. She is a co-author of domestic and foreign monographs on current problems of preschool education in Ukraine and professional training of future teachers-educators.

Anastasiia KOVALOVA
State Non-Commercial Company «State University «Kyiv Aviation Institute»
Department of Aviation Psychology
Huzar Lubomyr Avenue, 1, 03058 Kyiv, Ukraine
anastasia.kovalova90@gmail.com

Lecturer at the Department of Aviation Psychology, Faculty of Linguistics and Social Communications, State Non-Commercial Company «State University «Kyiv Aviation Institute», Kyiv, Ukraine. Her research interests are history of pedagogy; correctional pedagogy and psychology; neuropedagogy and neuropsychology; resource-oriented technologies; technologies for forming stress resistance and assertiveness of the personality; constructive-ecocentric and synergistic approaches in the formation of the personality; ABA therapy; legal psychology; comparative law; international criminology; history of international law. The author has about 20 publications.