



INCLUSIVE APPROACHES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD: ADAPTATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
The article examines the theoretical and practical aspects of inclusive education in the preschool education and training system. Particular attention is paid to the adaptation of the educational environment in accordance with the needs of children with disabilities and other special educational needs. The principles, conditions and models of inclusive practice in early childhood are highlighted. Effective methods and technologies of support are revealed. The importance of interdisciplinary interaction and professional training of teachers for the successful implementation of the inclusive approach is emphasized.	Inclusion, early childhood, children with special educational needs, environmental adaptation, preschool education, pedagogical support, inclusive practice.

INTRODUCTION

The scientific novelty of the article lies in the comprehensive approach to the analysis of the adaptation of the educational environment for children with special educational needs (SEN). The work systematizes the conditions, methods and technologies of effective inclusion at an early age, which allows us to consider inclusion as a key stage in the socialization of a child.

Particular attention is paid to the development of technologies for psychological and pedagogical support taking into account age and individual characteristics, and the need to rethink the system of training teachers to work in early inclusion conditions is substantiated. The article also integrates international and domestic practices , which expands the possibilities of their application in the context of modern preschool education.

Modern education increasingly focuses on the principles of inclusiveness , especially in the context of early childhood , when the foundations of a child's cognitive, social and emotional development are laid. Inclusive education involves creating an educational environment that takes into account the diversity of children's needs and ensures equal access to quality education for all, including children with disabilities and special educational needs .

Scientific research emphasizes that early inclusive support promotes successful socialization of the child, increases the level of adaptation in the group and forms a sustainable motivation for learning. In this case, adaptation of the educational environment plays a special role , including physical space, pedagogical practices and interdisciplinary forms of support [1].

International experience confirms the effectiveness of adaptive strategies in early education, where flexible approaches are introduced that take into account the cultural, emotional and physical characteristics of children [2]. In Russian practice, adaptation of the environment in preschool educational institutions (PEI) is also considered a necessary condition for the full participation of children with SEN in the educational process. However, this process requires further scientific substantiation and methodological specification. Thus, the development of inclusive approaches in preschool education requires a comprehensive analysis based on the principles of humanism, equal opportunities and professional interaction of specialists.

Inclusive early childhood education is a pedagogical concept aimed at providing equal learning opportunities for all children, regardless of their physical, mental, social or cultural characteristics. It is based on the idea of including the child in a natural educational environment where he or she develops in conditions of diversity and tolerance [3].

One of the key provisions of inclusion is the recognition of differences between children not as obstacles, but as a basis for building flexible educational practices. According to L.S. Vygotsky, a child's development occurs in the zone of proximal development, and learning is effective when it is organized taking into account individual capabilities and social support. This approach is the foundation of modern inclusive education, especially in the preschool period, when basic cognitive and personal structures are formed.

Psychological and pedagogical research emphasizes the importance of creating an inclusive environment that promotes emotional safety and social involvement. Such conditions are ensured through the interaction of all participants in the educational process - teachers, support specialists, parents and peers [4]. Of particular importance in this context is the concept of universal learning design, which involves adapting the content, methods and forms of educational activities for the maximum involvement of all children [5].

An important role in the theoretical justification of inclusive practices is played by the biopsychosocial development model proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO). It considers the development of a child as a result of the interaction of biological characteristics, psychological characteristics and social conditions [6]. This model allows us to move away from an exclusively medical approach to children with special needs and to form an educational environment focused on the needs and capabilities of each.

The theoretical foundations of inclusive education in early childhood are based on interdisciplinary approaches, including cultural-historical psychology, the theory of developmental learning, principles of humanistic pedagogy and modern socio-cultural models. These approaches create the basis for the effective implementation of inclusive practice in the context of a preschool educational organization. An important factor in the successful implementation of inclusive education in early childhood is the creation of an adaptive educational environment that can take into account the wide range of needs of children with special educational needs (SEN). Such an environment should be flexible, safe, accessible and supportive in order to promote the full development, socialization and education of all pupils, regardless of their health limitations.

According to I.P. Tkachenko, an adapted educational environment includes not only physical space, but also pedagogical conditions, emotional climate, specifics of interpersonal interaction and the teaching methods used. The creation of such an environment requires taking into account the

individual psychophysiological characteristics of children, including sensory, cognitive, speech and motor limitations.

As E. A. Smirnova emphasizes, one of the most important components of environmental adaptation is ensuring architectural accessibility – organizing a barrier-free environment, including ramps, handrails, adapted furniture, and room markings. At the same time, information accessibility (including visual, auditory, and tactile means of communication) is no less important, as well as adapting educational and gaming materials to the individual characteristics of the child.

S. L. Rubinstein pointed out that a child learns about the world through active interaction with the environment. Consequently, if the educational space does not take into account the capabilities of a specific child, it becomes limiting for him or her, rather than developing. In this context, the educational environment should create conditions that promote activity, independence, and involvement of all children, including children with special educational needs.

Models of environmental adaptation may vary depending on specific needs and the profile of impairments. According to O. S. Nikolskaya, in practice, approaches such as zoning of space by types of activity, reduction of sensory load in rooms, availability of specialized equipment and materials, as well as use of assistive technologies (for example, PECS communication cards, alternative communication devices, etc.) are used.

The interaction of all participants in the educational process plays a special role in the formation of an inclusive environment: teachers, tutors, support specialists and parents. V. A. Yakunin notes that effective inclusion is impossible without coordination of actions and a coordinated approach to the choice of forms and methods of adaptation of the environment.

In modern conditions, the development and implementation of educational environment adaptation programs requires a systemic interdisciplinary approach, including teachers, psychologists, defectologists, speech therapists and other specialists. As L. A. Kiseleva emphasizes, only in this case can we talk about comprehensive support and full socialization of the child in a preschool institution. Thus, adaptation of the educational environment is not just a technical re-equipment or reconstruction of space. This is the most important pedagogical condition that ensures equal starting opportunities and forms in the child a sense of belonging, security and recognition in the educational community.

In the context of early childhood, the implementation of inclusive education requires the comprehensive use of pedagogical and psychological-pedagogical approaches that ensure successful socialization and development of children with special educational needs (SEN). The main goal is not only learning, but also ensuring emotional well-being, developing communication skills and adaptation in society.

One of the key approaches in inclusive practice is a person-oriented approach, which is based on the recognition of the uniqueness of each child, respect for their individual pace of development, needs and capabilities [7]. This approach allows for the formation of educational routes that correspond to the interests and characteristics of the child, as well as the creation of conditions for inclusion in the general educational process. An interdisciplinary approach plays an important role in the support system, which involves the interaction of teachers, speech therapists, defectologists, psychologists and medical workers. The effectiveness of inclusion is largely determined by the coordinated work of all specialists involved in supporting a child with special educational needs [8]. To ensure high-quality inclusive education in early childhood, the use of specially developed support technologies becomes

an important element. Table 1 presents the main inclusive support technologies, their description and practical significance in the educational environment:

Table 1 - Technologies of inclusive support for young children in preschool education

Name of technology	Description	Practical significance
Individual Educational Program (IEP)	A program developed taking into account the developmental characteristics, needs and capabilities of a particular child	Provides a personalized approach and takes into account special educational needs
Tutor support	Constant support of the child by a specialist (tutor), helping in learning and socialization	Increases the level of the child's involvement in the educational process
Co-Learning Technology	Simultaneous education of children with special educational needs and their peers in one space	Develops tolerance and respect for differences, promotes socialization
Development Portfolio Technology	Systematic accumulation of data on the child's achievements and progress	Provides development monitoring and helps adjust the educational trajectory
Sensory integration	A set of exercises and techniques aimed at developing sensory perception	Helps reduce anxiety, improve concentration and perception of information
Gaming technologies	Using play methods taking into account the individual characteristics of the child	Create motivation for learning and communication, promote emotional development

All the presented technologies should be implemented comprehensively and in cooperation with specialists of different profiles: teachers, psychologists, defectologists, speech therapists and parents. Only in the conditions of a systemic approach is it possible to achieve sustainable progress in the development of a child with special educational needs.

Effective implementation of inclusive education in the preschool education system is impossible without appropriate professional training of teaching staff. Modern challenges require educators, defectologists and other specialists not only general pedagogical knowledge, but also special competencies that allow them to provide high-quality support to children with special educational needs (SEN) .

One of the key conditions for successful inclusion is the formation of an inclusive culture among teachers , which includes a tolerant attitude towards diversity, an understanding of the principles of equal access to education, as well as a willingness to continuously grow professionally in this area [9].

Personnel training is carried out at several levels:

1. Basic professional education: programs of pedagogical universities and colleges include disciplines related to inclusive pedagogy, correctional psychology, and methods of environmental adaptation.

2. Continuing education and training: continuing education systems should be updated regularly to ensure that teachers are up to date with modern approaches, technologies and legislative requirements in the field of inclusion.

3. Intra-organizational training: holding seminars, master classes and supervisions within pre-school organizations allows for the creation of a space for the exchange of experience and professional dialogue between specialists.

Of particular importance is the practice of forming multidisciplinary teams, which include teachers, speech therapists, defectologists, psychologists, assistants and parents. Effective interaction between them requires appropriate communication and coordination skills acquired within the framework of systemic training [10].

Today, the issue of supporting young teachers in an inclusive group is also acute. Mentoring, tutoring and regular methodological support allow not only to adapt to a new professional environment, but also to form a sustainable motivation to work in an inclusive context.

Accordingly, the professional training of teachers for inclusive preschool education should be continuous, comprehensive and interdisciplinary. Without systematic work in this direction, it is impossible to ensure high-quality and humane implementation of the principles of inclusion.

Inclusive education in early childhood requires a systematic approach to adapting the educational environment, introducing innovative pedagogical technologies and ensuring the professional readiness of participants in the educational process. Only if all the above conditions are met is it possible to achieve full socialization and optimal development of children with special needs in the preschool educational environment.

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