

The Family Size and Children's Play Activity

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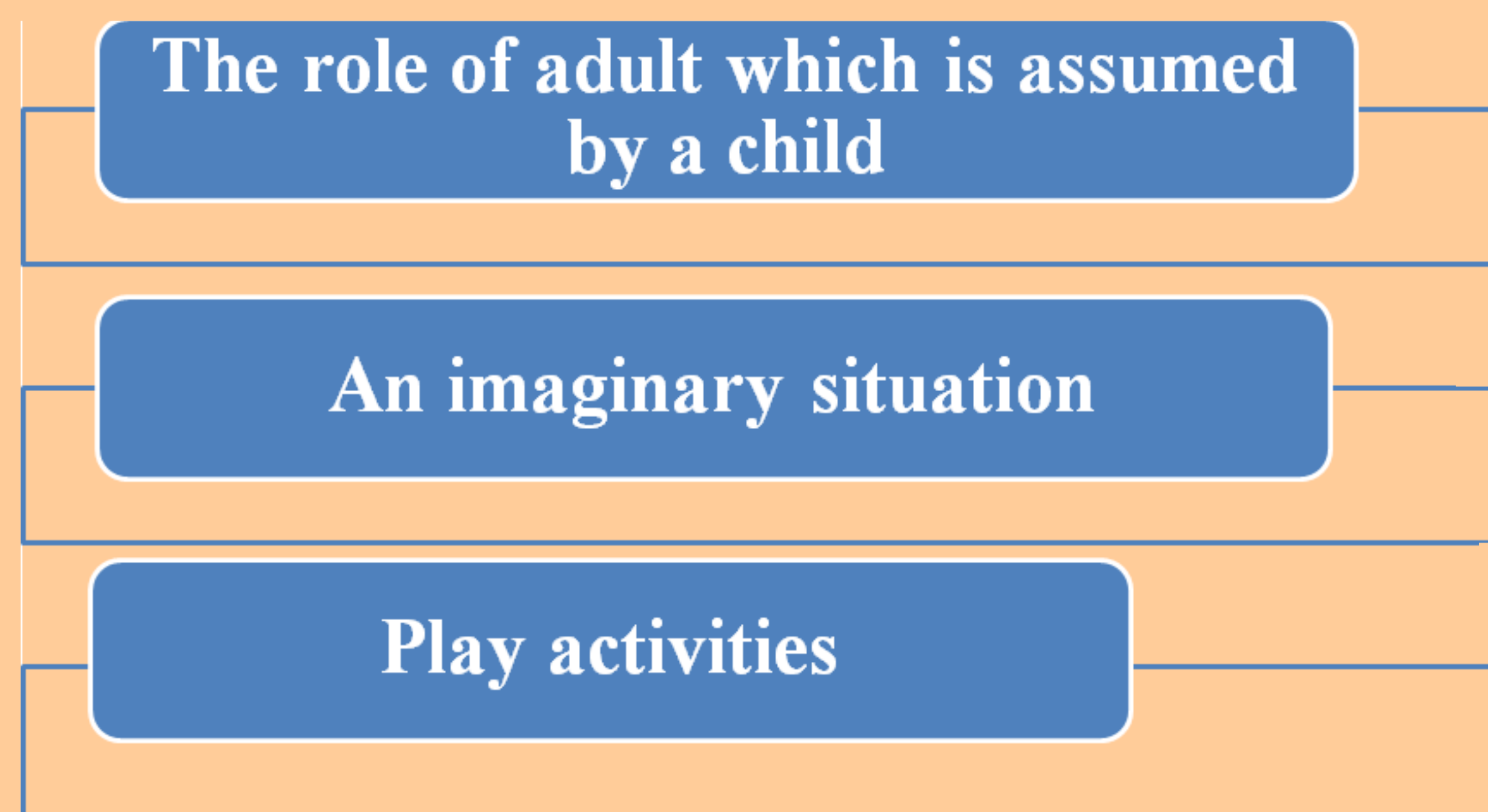
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Keywords:

play, game, children play activity, playing practices, socialization, pre-school children, teenagers, adolescents, virtual reality

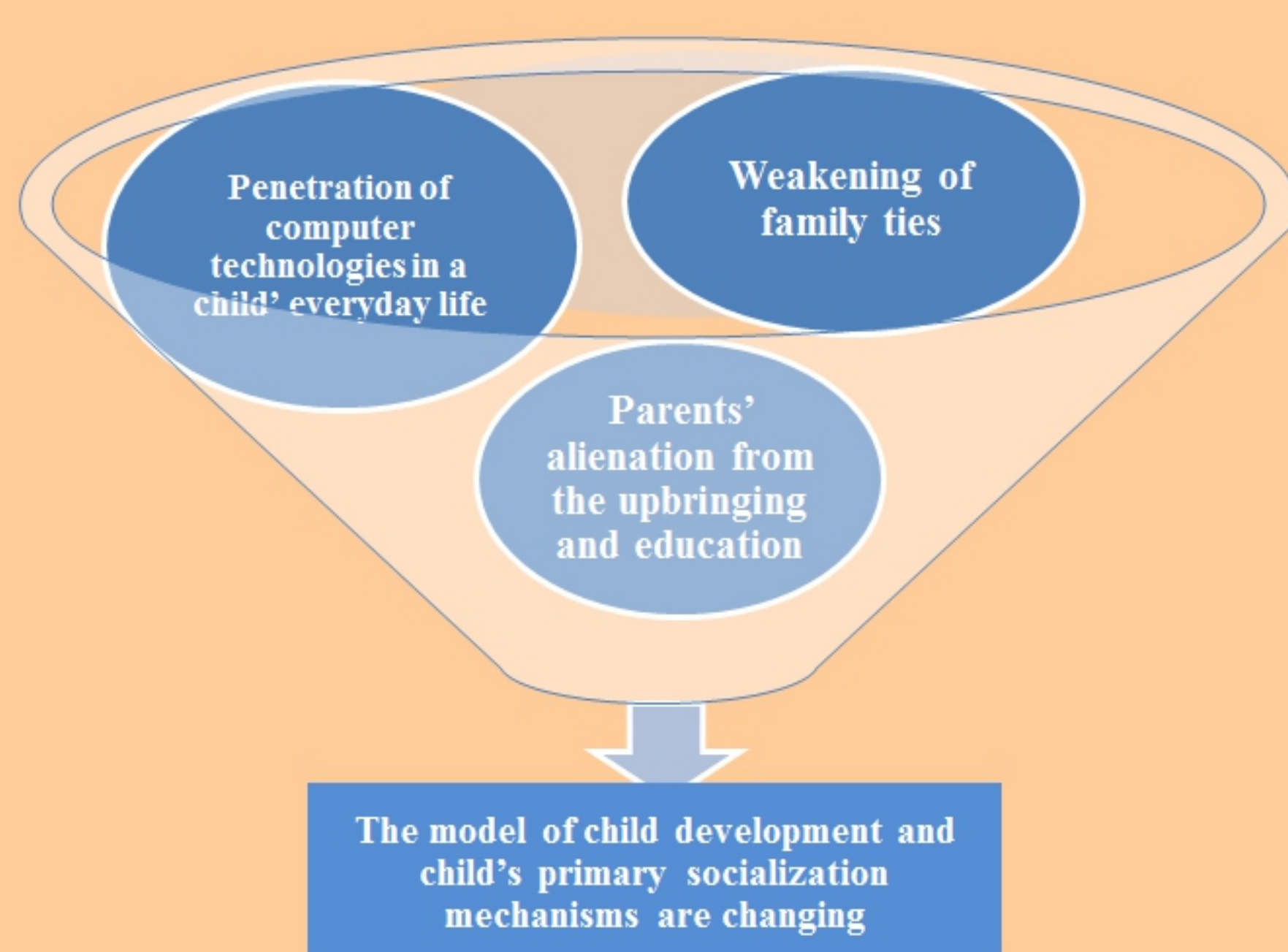
Components of a subject-role game (Elkonin)



Methods

- 15 in-depth interviews with mothers of pre-school children (children of 3-7 years old who attend kindergartens)
- formalized interviews with 216 adolescents of 10-17 years old living in Moscow and towns of Moscow region.

Problem



The differences in the play behavior between children and parents

- A new kind of games (computer games) changes the model of children play behavior.
- The present-day urban children play outdoor group games less in comparison with their parents.
- The space of organizing the game is changing.
- The present day children more frequently play special developmental games.
- The concept of beloved toy disappears.
- The gender differentiation of the play behavior is being washed out among the children today: boys and girls start to play the same games, toys.

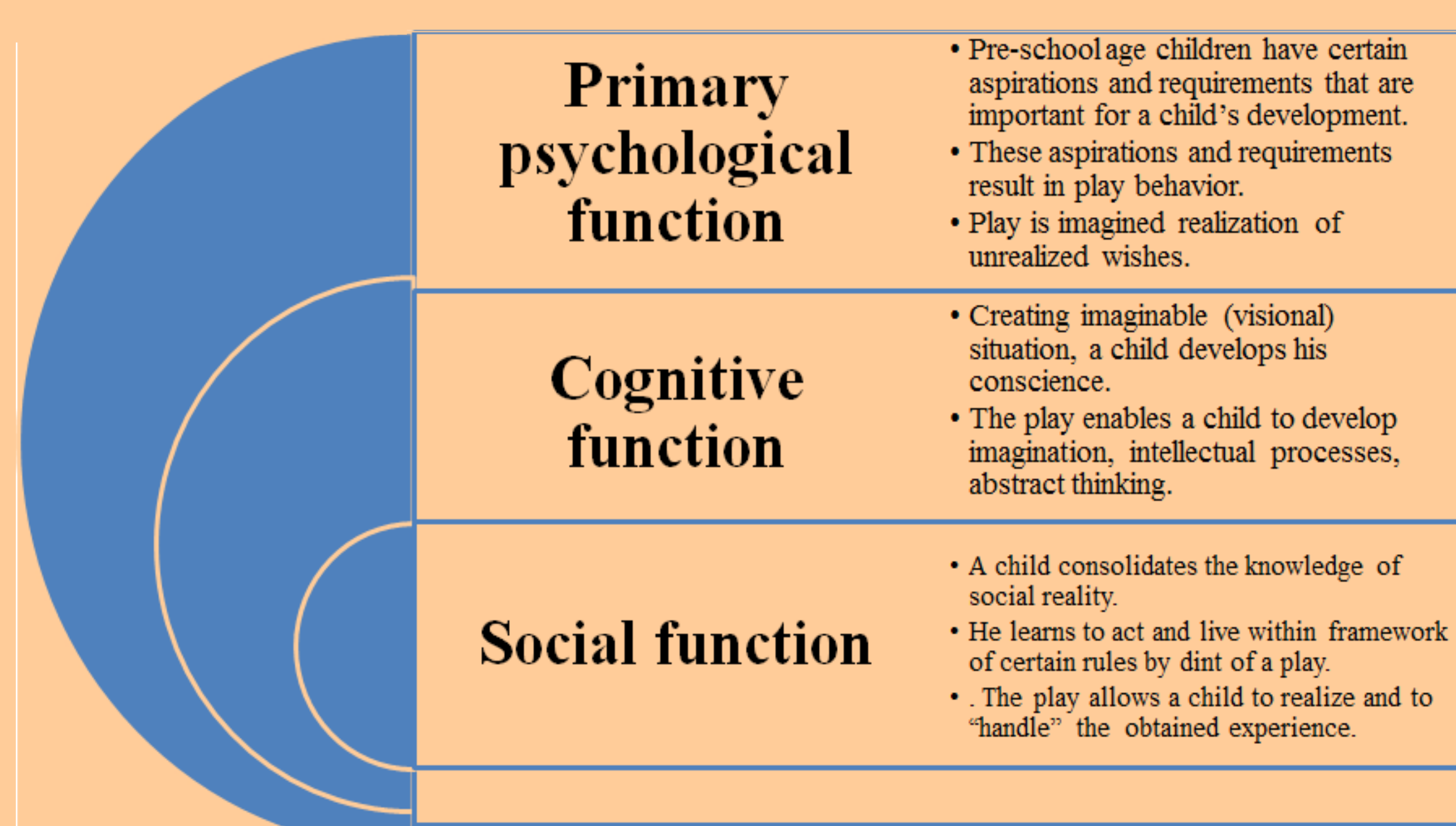
Theoretical backgrounds

- **E. Erikson "Childhood and Society"**: if for an adult a game is a way to relax, to get a rest, to retreat, then for a child it is, vice versa, a chance to adapt to reality, to submerge in it.
- **E.A. Pokrovskiy and M.Mead**: the play is a way to understand and comprehend the world of adults through its cultural normativity.
- **G.H.Mead** categorizes play into role-playing game of pre-school children and competitive (group) game of older children.
- **L.S. Vygotsky**: the play or a game emerges from a child's requirement to realize unrealized wishes.
- **D.B. Elkonin**: symbol modeling and subject-role game.

The features of older children's play behavior

- The play for adolescents isn't always a play as such.
- Teenager play is a version of joint pastime, a mechanism of forming situational solidarities, a team unity which is keenly essential for youngsters.
- The most popular among the teenage games are football, volleyball, hockey, pioneerball, dodge ball, cops-and-robbers, truth and action, mafia, monopoly, table games.
- Adolescents prefer to play active sport and outdoor games with friends and table games with family members.
- Situational play solidarities erase gender boundaries.
- The older is a child, the more often he answers that he doesn't play either with friends or with his family.

Three functions of child's play



Conclusions

- The results illustrate the ambiguity of changes in children's play behavior.
- There is a transformation which changes play practices of today children and adolescents.
- The continuity in the structure and types of play behavior remains. Thus, the play performs its emotional, cognitive and socializing functions.
- The family size influences children's play activity. Family composition forms children's worldview and affects their relationships with relatives as well as their peers and siblings, influences different types of their