

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL PECULIARITIES OF FORMATION THE HUMANISTIC OUTLOOK OF PRESCHOOLERS DURING THEIR INTERACTION WITH NATURE

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The article deals with the problem of humanization of education of preschool children. The recognition of the distinct link between humanism and child's attitude towards the nature is considered to be the starting explorative position. Humanism as a personal trait can be formed only in the process of properly organized child's interaction with the environment. The humanistic outlook is presented in the article as a system of knowledge and beliefs that determine the birth and the realization of individual deeds according to the principle of deep humanity which is based on the consciousness of the value of life as a phenomenon of our existence on the Earth.

The article presents the results of the theoretical and empirical research of types of preschoolers' attitude towards the nature in the context of forming their humanistic outlook. The predominant reasons in the structure of preschoolers' attitude towards the nature are clarified. The results of the observation of children's behavior in the nature are generalized. Children's creativity, besides that, the content and temper of preschoolers' activity in the nature are analyzed. As a result, such types of children's attitude towards the nature as "pragmatic", "research", "artistic" are singled out and determined, as well as several mixed types of assessment and behavioral responses of preschoolers towards the aesthetic expression of the environment.

The quantitative correlation of the types of children's attitudes to nature in the experimental group indicated its multi-vector nature with a large share of utilitarian-cognitive motives. It is concluded that preschool pedagogy should systematically care about the proper axiological culture of children's attitude to nature and not neglect such an influential factor in the humanization of children's consciousness as the formation of aesthetic attitude to the world. A sense of the aesthetic expressiveness of nature, the birth of the need to mercifully protect it can become a reliable regulator of children's behavioral programs, based on humanistic principles.

ПСИХОЛОГО-ПЕДАГОГІЧНОСОБЛИВОСТІ ФОРМУВАННЯ У ДОШКІЛЬНИКІВ ГУМАНІСТИЧНОГО СВІТОГЛЯДУ В ПРОЦЕСІ ВЗАЄМОДІЇ З ПРИРОДОЮ

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Ключові слова: дошкільна педагогіка, гуманістичний підхід до виховання дітей, природне оточення, домінуючі мотиви, типи ставлення дошкільників до природи.

Статтю присвячено проблемі гуманізації виховання дітей дошкільного віку. Вихідною дослідницькою позицією є визнання вираженого зв'язку між гуманізмом і ставленням дитини до природи. Гуманізм як особистісна риса може бути сформований лише у процесі адекватно організованої взаємодії дитини з довкіллям. Гуманістичний світогляд у статті представлено як систему знань і переконань, які зумовлюють народження та реалізацію індивідом вчинкових програм на засадах глибокої людяності, тобто на основі усвідомлення цінності життя як феномена земного буття.

У статті представлено результати теоретичного та емпіричного дослідження типів ставлення дошкільників до природи в контексті формування у них гуманістичного світогляду. З'ясовано домінуючі мотиви у структурі ставлення дошкільників до природи. Узагальнено результати спостережень за безпосередньою поведінкою дітей у природі. Аналізовано дитячу творчість, а також зміст і характер діяльності дошкільників у природі. Як результат, виокремлено і охарактеризовано такі типи ставлення дітей до природи, як прагматичний, дослідницький, художній, а також декілька змішаних типів оцінних і поведінкових реакцій дошкільників на естетичну виразність довкілля.

Кількісне співвідношення типів ставлення дітей до природи в експериментальній групі засвідчило його багатовекторність із великою часткою утилітарно-пізнавальних мотивів. Зроблено висновок про те, що дошкільна педагогіка повинна системно турбуватися про належну аксіологічну культуру ставлення дітей до природи і не нехувати таким впливовим чинником гуманізації свідомості дітей, як формування естетичного ставлення до світу. Відчуття естетичної виразності природи, народження потреби милосердно її оберігати можуть стати надійним регулятором дитячих поведінкових програм, сформованих на гуманістичних засадах.

Problem statement. The urgency of the problems of humanistic education of young generations is increasing. Child cruelty, like in a mirror, is reflected in relations between kids and nature. As a rule, preschool teachers are encouraged with the great interest of their children to know more about nature objects. However, the increased interest of the child towards the nature is often predetermined with the "research" aspirations, which are based the cold harshness. Thus, small accelerates are ready to sacrifice a defenseless animal to check its perfect biological functions. Quite often adults are impressed

by children heartlessness and the way, they handle dogs, cats, birds; divide insects, reptiles and so on. There can not be ignored the fact that the shock value, which Ukrainian society is located in, actually influence the quality of education of young generations. Scenes of violence, rivers of blood, the absolute depreciation of life as a biological and social phenomenon unfortunately, all these facts became a familiar backdrop for the formation of value orientations of children. All those deeds powerfully burst into children's lives from TV screens, computers (and now in real life) and determine their worldview.

It becomes increasingly clear that it is meaningless to raise a child outside the nature. It is absolutely impossible to bring up the true Man, who has lack of communication with the nature. Humanistic directed person is born only due to the harmony with the environment. These axiomatic truth leads to the idea that the humanization of education is possible only if the competent, creative use of nature as a factor of influence on children's minds is conducted.

Recent research and publications. The problem of humanistic education of young generations has always attracted the attention of founders of pedagogical thought (J. Pestalozzi, S. Rusova, L. Tolstoy, J. Korchak, V. Sukhomlynsky, etc.). This problem is actively studied at the present stage as well (Sh. Amonashvili, I. Bekh, T. Kachan, V. Krasnovsky, O. Savchenko, O. Sukhomlynska). A great contribution to its understanding belongs to foreign humanistic psychology (A. Maslow, K. Rogers, V. Frankl, Sh. Buhler, R. May). Modern Ukrainian researchers (L. Bobko, I. Buzhyna, A. Virkovsky, K. Doroshenko, O. Parkhomenko, D. Pashchenko, G. Usachova, I. Shevchuk, etc.) are actively studying the ways of realization of humanistic education of children and youth of different age groups. If we analyze the problem in the field of preschool pedagogy, the greatest contribution to the development of humanistic education of preschoolers belongs to T. Ponimanska. Some researchers (A. Bielienka, N. Lysenko, Z. Plohiy, L. Prysiashniuk) devoted their works to the study of ecologically centered interaction of preschool children with nature. However, the problem of forming the humanistic worldview of preschoolers by means of nature is still poorly understood and requires increased attention of scientists.

The purpose of the research is to present the results of theoretical and empirical research on the types of attitudes of preschoolers to nature in the context of the formation of their humanistic worldview.

In the paper general-scientific **methods** are used for analysis, systematization and classification of the collected information.

Presentation of the main material. We admit that humanity as a personal trait can be formed only in the process of properly organized child's interaction with the environment. If humanistic approach to the education recognizes its main subject of the child's personality as a unique, integrated, invaluable system with wide possibilities of self-fulfillment in the natural world, so this self-fulfillment should take place only on the basis of the absolute harmonious unity with the nature, including the fully developed humanity, which involves not only love to the person but to the Universe that created it. All things considered, the humanistic upbringing, organized by means of the nature, first of all, should take care of the correction of child's outlook. The result of such impact

should become not only a belief in the infinite possibilities of a man, but the child's understanding of its own self-improvement opportunities, awareness of its own potential – larger than other natural beings have got. Such position is considered to be really humanistic, because it creates higher level of man's duty towards the nature. With the help of the correction of children's relationship to nature, they (children) have a chance to understand the undeniable truth: the value of human life depends on the attitude to the environment. Refreshing power of nature has always been and will be shrouded in an aura of holiness, has been and will be the subject of respectful worship people as well. Losing memory of ancestors, the modern generation breaks off the umbilical cord which connects them with a mother's womb. Transmission of culture between generations, like an important thread, is interrupting. To prevent this, teachers should in time teach their children to love their native land, and the whole nature as one large home. Without this fact a child will never become a Man [2, p.4].

The humanistic outlook is as a system of knowledge and beliefs that determine the birth and the realization of individual deeds according to the principle of deep humanity which is based on the consciousness of the value of life as a phenomenon of our existence on the Earth. Formation of the humanistic worldview of preschooler is possible only if he appreciates nature (according to his age group) from various sides of its entity. Nature should be filled with a personal meaning for a child, which includes the understanding of a high sense of our existence on the Earth. These deeply personalized elements of subjective reality in the consciousness of the child open in front of her eyes her own spiritual world surrounded by majestic nature.

We are deeply convinced, that it is impossible to form the humanistic outlook beyond the child's aesthetic constant of existence. Indeed, the humanistic position can not develop only together with the consumption – the needs should be replaced in the direction of creation. So this possibility is provided with the aesthetic attitude to nature. It offers the highest form of human behavior that is called creativity, which is a universal precondition for acquiring the spiritual integrity, and which is the means of opening the essential powers of the child. The system of humanistic outlook organically contains an ecological worldview, that is why it is considered to be a holistic view of the child about the world, about himself and his place in the world; it is a particular understanding of the universe, based on the generalized knowledge of the child about the world, the ideal valuable experiences (moral and aesthetic) of the aspects of interaction with nature; it is the installation of practical activity that leads to behavioral programs for the child's behavior in nature [1].

To study the peculiarities of preschoolers' attitude to nature, we have conducted a special research, which encircled 786 pupils of preparatory groups of preschool establishments in Vinnytsia, Ternopil and Cherkasy regions.

Clarification of the dominant motives in the structure of preschoolers' attitude to the nature demonstrated a significant pragmatism of child's thinking. For instance, assessing flowers, children are not always oriented on the aesthetic motives (what would be quite natural for children in this age group). The variants (34%) of utilitarian approach to flowers are quite strange and unusual: "I love the rose, as it can be turned into delicious jam"; "Daisy is the best flower, as it is useful and therapeutic" and others.

Making the aesthetic choice, most children (57%) prefer cultural flowers (roses, tulips, gladioli, asters, chrysanthemums, dahlias) to wild ones as they understand the beauty of nature as the most vivid and expressive things. The modest beauty clover, chicory or daisy does not impress the majority of children. Considerable part of pupils (31%), explaining their choices, could not distinguish the aesthetic features of flowers ("I love this flower, because it is charming"). Quite occasionally (16%) children created their own metaphors of perception of results (a rose – "prickly touchy"; a tulip – "sweet and fragrant lord"; an aster – "anxious star").

Among the favorite animals of children of the urban preschool establishments often indicate domestic pets like dogs, cats, parrots, hamsters and others, whereas the rural preschoolers prefer squirrels, hares, foxes, bears, deer. Children often stop their aesthetic choice on such exotic animals as camels, kangaroos, leopards. This occurs, because children, who grow up in the urban environments, are mostly deprived of the opportunity of daily contact with animals and that is why pets which live or can live nearby them are aesthetically attractive for such kids. For rural child domestic animals are often stopped being a subject of aesthetic evaluation (effect of pragmatic habituation).

Children of preschool age have mostly emotionally positive attitude to the animal world. Some pupils often provide inhabitants of nature with human qualities (a dog – "faithful, intelligent", a cat – "clever, gentle"). Only a small part of the polled children (28%) singled out the aesthetic qualities in the evaluation of various representatives of fauna, such as color and features of cover; they also indicated the character of movements and sounds that they produce (a cat – "fluffy, smart"; a squirrel – "small, nimble"; a fox – "it has a red soft coat"; a parrot – "it sings funny"; a deer – "graceful", a fish – "it shines in the sun" and others.

However, we marked that quite a large proportion of respondents (37%) demonstrated a utilitarian attitude to the animal world. Village children usually

aesthetically estimate only forest animals and birds. Farm animals are rated from the standpoint of their benefits for man and his life ("cow is a useful animal because it gives much milk, which produces butter," "horse is a strong animal, reliable helper"). In many cases answers of the urban children contain the similar reasons as in the previous variant (a dog – "protects the house", a cat – "catches mice", a swallow – "eats insects"). Children often stop their choice on those representatives of fauna, which are eatable ("fish – delicious") or which are characterized with a business interest ("squirrel can be used for making a hat and selling it").

The poll results confirm the presence of several motives in the structure of preschoolers' attitude to nature, such as utilitarian, emotionally positive and aesthetic. The leading motive is considered to be an emotionally positive one (42%). Less frequently children appreciate the nature (32%) from the aesthetic position. At the same time, during the assessment of nature the pupils often show the aesthetic indifference, because in the children's experience the nominative information about the nature is clearly dominated above the emotional and imaginative one. However, a significant proportion of utilitarian motives really disturbs us, as children's evaluation of nature for this age group is closely and frequently associated only with benefits of certain facilities for human life.

Observations of the direct behavior of children in nature show that the vast majority of preschool children react to the environment lively, emotionally, with interest. Children have bright motor-mimic reactions, high mobility and activity of behavior in nature. Children's touch perception is characterized with fusion of nature and inaccuracy. Preschoolers rather poorly distinguish colors and shades, shapes, sounds, smells of nature, preferring bright colors, their contrast combination, intricate drawings of natural forms, vowel sounds, the concentrated smells. As a rule, images that occur during the sensual perception of nature are partial and sketchy. The majority of children accept the beauty of the environment mainly on a subject-visual level. Thus, verbally describing the landscape, 83-85% of pupils simply enumerate the objects of nature, because it is hard for them to give the aesthetic assessment and prove it. It is difficult for children of this age group to express their most vivid impressions, evaluative judgments about the beauty of nature, that is why their thoughts are generally unexpanded. They often estimate beauty of nature according to some individual features. First of all, they focus their attention on the color. Quite often children indicate some specific natural sounds and smells. Less frequently they notice the uniqueness of forms and proportions. Children practically can not recognize symmetry and rhythm in nature [Tarasenko, 1995].

We are naturally interested in children's works about nature, which is a clear display of formation and development of the aesthetic positions of preschoolers. We observed that the creative equivalent of aesthetic feelings experienced by children is often much poorer from the expected one. Let us remember the reaction of the child to the first snow – that is irrepensible joy, undisguised excitement, pure delight. Children's eyes usually see so much beauty around us, for instance, shiny icicles, delicate snowflakes, mysterious mounds. Moreover, fabulous winter attracts, excites, confuses the imagination of the child. But the child has a lack of words and actually, experience of the aesthetic evaluation of nature. The pupil is typically concentrated on that fact that "snow covered the ground"; that "the sun shines, but it does not warm." There is no doubt about that. But this prudent statement of facts much more looks like a scientific report than a sincere assessment of nature identity, made by preschoolers. An iron logic dominates there and as a result of it, there is not any place for their own emotions.

Not so often (in 35% of cases) we met some attempts to estimate the nature objects emotionally. In assessment such words as "good", "beautiful" were used, but children's opinions were compendious and unexpanded. Only a small proportion (14%) of preschoolers managed to express their personal relationship to nature. Aesthetic evaluation of such judgments was based on the sensory experience; it contained some elements of reflexive understanding of their own feelings towards nature (for example: *"I love the smell of autumn forest. Autumn smells like mushrooms and smoke of fire. But this smell is a bit sad"*).

We also analyzed the content and nature of the activity of pupils in preparatory group in nature. Thus, the most common type of their activities are looking after animals; growing indoor plants; feeding birds in winter and so on. As we noticed after observations, most of the preschool children of this age do not show any initiative to work in nature. Children's activity in nature is usually performed due to the direction of teacher (or parents). However, children have not realized the aesthetically significant moments of such activity yet.

On the basis of the obtained results, we have identified the types of preschoolers' attitude to nature.

– **"Pragmatists"** (29%), who are characterized by: predominance of utilitarian motives in the structure of the relationship to nature; schematic description, aesthetic insensibility; lack of success in the process of grouping and expressing the most vivid impression from the meeting with nature; deficient and elusive speech, predominance of doing some tasks in passive form in the creative activity; the absence of desire to work in nature, without their own initiative, often

forced by adults. It frequently occurs a display of cruelty in children's behavior; peremptoriness in relations with living beings; lack of empathy and reflexive reactions in the connection with nature.

– **"Researchers"** (36%) have got the following characteristics: thrilling attitude towards nature, based on the dominance of cognitive motives (*Why is it so and not otherwise? Where did it come from? And what will happen if I cease, cut or break down it?* and so on); emotionally positive attitude to nature with elements of aesthetic interest, which is marked by instability, episodic expression in various activities; partial ability to assess some perceived facts because of the lack of completeness and vividness of speech; evaluation of the aesthetic judgments with neutral character; partial understanding and reproduction of the artistic image of nature against the backdrop of underdeveloped skills of emotional and aesthetic evaluation; limited range of associative and imaginative thinking. Furthermore, the most obvious peculiarities of researches are the next: predominance of some elements of imitation in the process of creative activity; frequent use of generally accepted expressions; occasional detection of features of individual style; relativistic development of fantasy and imagination; episodic detection of activity and independence in the labor in the open air with the absence of aesthetic components. The example of such children's attitude towards nature denotes brightly expressed intellectual reaction to nature on the background of the inhibition of reflexive responses and lethargy of empathy.

– **"Artists"** (35%), who have got all the components of aesthetic attitude to nature well developed and clearly manifested (in possible range for preschool age): the pupils of this group are distinguished by a sufficiently developed sensory perception of nature according to the clearly identified emotional reaction to her beauty; in the process of evaluation kids make attempts to write a poem about some perceived things or to create their own metaphor of artistic language; aesthetic judgments are quite detailed, figurative, besides that, they reflect personal experiences; children are able to convey their own vision of the beauty of nature in various forms of creative activity; the activities of such pupils in nature is characterized by initiative and independence; to cognitive, moral and ecological motives, that form the background, is attached the aesthetic one. Children with this type of attitude to nature possess the brightly expressed reflexive reactions and sufficiently developed empathy about nature and its inhabitants.

It is significant that not all the children were uniquely assigned to conventionally these types. There was a confusion of evaluative and behavioral reactions of pupils towards the aesthetic expressive-

ness of the environment, which obliged us to admit so called mixed types of children's attitude to nature.

Thus, "pragmatists with features of researchers" were inclined to deep intellectual exploration of the surrounding world, however, they followed strictly pragmatic needs ("*To discover something and become well-known throughout the world*"). The result of knowledge about nature is important for such children, but they do not worry about the means of achieving these results, so it eventually threatens the black-hearted attitude to nature and its inhabitants.

"Researchers with features of artists", relying mainly on the left-hemispheric (rational) thinking, increasingly occupied the moral and aesthetic position towards nature in assessments and behavioral reactions, because intellectual activity was motivated mostly by motives of the creative activity ("*To create a flower field, which blossoms all year round*"; "*To invent an evergreen oak*"; "*To construct a protective net for fish against poachers*").

"Pragmatists with features of artists", of course, were not identified, as an aesthetic response to nature, based on the utilitarian evaluation of its objects and phenomena, is considered to be nonsense.

Conclusions. In conclusion we are eager to note that children's perception of the world is a true "space" and its expressiveness always interests and will interest researchers. As our research shows, children get acquainted with nature courageously and impartially, moving from ignorance to knowledge (but they choose different paths that determines the type of their relationship to nature). Worrying about the appropriate axiological culture of children's relation to nature, education must not disregard such an influential factor in the humanization of children's minds as the formation of their aesthetic attitude to the world. Feeling of the aesthetic expression of nature, the birth of needs to protect it sympathetically can become a reliable regulator of children's behavioral programs, developed on humanistic principles.

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