

FORMING OF RESPONSIBILITY IN CHILDREN OF OLDER PRE-SCHOOL AGE BY MEANS OF FICTION LITERATURE

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Abstract. *A civilized society sets requirements for the democratic coexistence of persons who possess moral values, benefit society and develop their own abilities. An important characteristic of a person is responsibility, which is formed as a result of the integration of thought processes, social norms, personal attitude in solving dilemmas in life. Responsibility as a child's conscious behavior in relation to people and nature begins to develop in the period of older preschool age. Independent thinking in judgments acquires logic and a personal attitude to reality. In the pursuit of social activity, children imitate the behavior of significant adults, heroes of their favorite films, cartoons, and works of art. Educators and parents are faced with the task of developing the philosophy of children's worldview through conducting moral and ethical discussions. Our survey of children's parents with special needs showed a low level of parents' and educators' attention to the education of responsibility (4%) compared to other personal qualities (discipline - 18%, ability to adapt to life - 20%, respect to parents - 14%, etc.). This indicates the need to conduct special educational activities that compensate for gaps in value orientations. Emphasis has also been shifted in the education of executive responsibility as opposed to initiative responsibility (75% : 25%), which gives reasons to look for new ways in organizing the interaction of participants in the educational process, to use moral and ethical conversations, to study educational children's literature, in particular, the works of V. Sukhomlynskyi (2018), which became the goal of our scientific exploration. Examples of artistic works and developed problematic questions and tasks for educational work with children of older preschool age in the conditions of a preschool education institution are given.*

Keywords: *education of older preschoolers, fiction, moral and ethical conversation, problematic questions responsibility.*

Introduction

In the modern society, creating conditions for a happy future of the younger generation is a priority. Education, fulfilling the demands of the society, tries to solve tasks of creating favorable conditions for personality development, viz. humane relationships, didactic environment and natural environment in the process of transferring knowledge accumulated by mankind and self-development of the child. In the world of information technology progress, the need for moral development of a person is no less important, where the values of human relationships, the education of noble character traits, the ability to establish harmonious relations between the nature and the man are outlined in pedagogical tasks. Responsibility occupies one of the leading places, because it characterizes a person as active, socially significant, caring and effective in creating relationships in the world of people and nature. Responsibility begins to form in the senior preschool age and requires pedagogical support, because the basis of a personality is psychological reality, that is, subjective experience, according to which the reality is explained: «The main power of personality functioning is the tendency to the self-actualization, namely the need of a person to realize his natural potential possibilities» (Rogers, 2022). The teachers fill the essence of people's relationships with content, verbally outline senses, appeal to the child's feelings in the process of developing their worldview.

The aim of preschool education, as the first stage of comprehensive secondary education, is to solve the problems of organizing the educational environment, diversifying educational programs to meet the development needs of a growing personality. Preschools provide conditions for a child's growth by transferring knowledge and instilling moral, national, and social values, taking into account the psychological, physiological, valeological, mental, and cultural characteristics of each child.

A fairly wide palette of educational syllabi allows the teachers and parents to coordinate their expectations from pedagogical influence that would correspond to the progress of the society and include new achievements of psychological and pedagogical sciences in establishing productive interaction of all participants in the educational process. In particular, we consider educational syllabi that emphasize the education of moral virtues to be important, because the formation of value orientations in the life of an individual is of crucial importance in European integration, where democracy, humanism and civic values prevail. The basic component of preschool education in Ukraine defines specific stages in "mastering the content of preschool education throughout the entire period of preschool childhood, recognizing the value of each age step in personal development when a child fully realizes their potential" (Kononko, 2021).

The contradiction of placing emphasis in education on the priorities of the educational orientation of modern education consists in avoiding an imbalance between the society's need for intellectually developed, independent citizens and morally sensitive individuals responsible for the fate of the country, who care about the fate of the planet and the humankind. The humanities, dealing with the problem of the child's adaptation to the social environment, pay attention to the need for a systemic approach to developing the worldview foundations through moral and ethical discussions on topics that determine the motives of people's actions. Literary fiction is a means of influencing a child's consciousness in developing a philosophy of being. Therefore, the process of balanced personality development with the inherent sense of responsibility of a senior pre-schooler should be oriented in the trajectory of educational influence: from reading special fiction, to discussing problematic questions, expressing opinions and providing real life examples, to making moral choice in real situations. Understanding the teachers' attention to the mental development of a child in preschool years, we want to single out the problem of instilling responsibility as one of the important ones in the modern process of creating a philosophy of being a personality. After all, children getting acquainted with the heroes of literary works, cartoons based on the works of famous writers, strive to imitate their behavior. When discussing the positive or negative actions of the works heroes, their funny or inappropriate reactions, pedagogues and parents can model the behavior of children, make them think about regulating their actions as a manifestation of responsibility.

The purpose of this article is to research the ways of pedagogical influence on the process of forming responsibility in senior pre-schoolers by means of literary fiction; substantiation of the cause-and-effect relationships of family education and the activities of teachers in order to form positive traits of the child's character, in particular, the sense of responsibility.

In order to achieve **the pedagogical goal**, we have used theoretical and empirical research methods: the theoretical ones to determine the basic theoretical provisions and clarify the content of the main concepts; highlighting and specifying the importance of fostering responsibility as the main character trait of a child of senior preschool age; the empirical ones include a questionnaire of parents of preschool children according to the methodology of L. Pisotska (2011) in determining the values that are given priority in family education; research by T. Fasolko (2013) in determining the formation of responsible behavior of senior pre-schoolers; mathematical methods are used for quantitative and qualitative analysis of the empirical data.

The theoretical foundations of the research

Responsibility as a character trait and a component of human morality has been the research subject of psychologists, educators, and philosophers. Thus, the problems of anthroposophy and the formation of world understanding from the position of responsibility in civic being are highlighted in works of I. Bech (2012), O. Vyshnevskyi (2022), I. Ziaziun (2012), E. Manuylov (2014), C. Rogers (2022), etc. Psychological research of the motives of responsibility as a personal choice are considered in scientific studies by S. Zabolotska (2013), O. Kononko (2021), M. Savchyn (2008), T. Fasolko (2013), etc. Pedagogical ways of modeling responsible behavior in personal education are presented in scientific studies by J. Dewey (2001), L. Lokhvytska (2016), L. Pisotska (2011), N. Stadnik (2001), etc. Responsibility is an indicator of morality, a regulator of behavior, social adaptation and a civically active position, a regulator of value orientations in relations with the outer world. Responsibility is a basic trait of a person in a conscious attitude to requirements and social morality, it performs an effective function in solving social tasks with an understanding of the purpose and consequences of one's actions, and it is manifested in readiness for initiative, independence to determine the purpose of one's activity and fulfill the social duties. The scholars reveal the methods of pedagogical influence on the process of forming responsibility as a moral quality in children, starting from preschool age, when the way of critical thinking enables them making independent conclusions, evaluative judgments, modelling their behavior with responsibility in social relationships, in attitudes to the nature, one's work, personal choice in favor of "good deeds". Social responsibility as a feature of conscious behavior originates in the senior preschool childhood period, when social requirements become conscious, judgments become evaluative, and thinking acquires some features of criticality. The author of the personally-oriented theory of human development, I. Bech, singles out "the goal, which consists in creating external and internal conditions for constructing an individual pathway of a meaningful self-determination of an individual, which acts as an indicative basis for their conscious behavior in the natural and sociocultural world" (Bech, 2012). The ways and means of forming preschool children's responsibility have a philosophical, moral and evaluative nature through contemplating the actions of important adults, reading educational fiction, watching videos and cartoons. Responsibility as a moral quality is formed as a result of subjective perception of the environment, willpower, emotional attitude, making judgments about the behavior of the fictional characters and close people in relation to duty, objective requirements of the society, the desire to do good deeds and be useful to the people.

The psychological development of a senior pre-schooler makes it possible to regulate their own behavior in accordance with the social requirements, rules,

and norms. Children already have a rich word stock and critical thinking. The integration of mental functions and subjective perception of the environment give rise to the desire of becoming significant in life. Teachers act as mentors in focusing attention on important moments of human relationships, examples of the behavior of the fictional characters who are emotionally close to the children, in resolving contradictions in situations of moral choice. "An important element of morality as a regulator of human behavior is communication. Being an invariable component of the person's structure, communication acts as a universal means of humanizing the person himself" (Manuylov, 2014). Illustrating the actions of favorite fictional characters facilitates expressing oneself, assuming the motives of their behavior, determining emotional attitudes, and projecting one's own behavior in similar situations. Teachers, in accordance with the schedule and topics of the week, introduce children to literature that raises the issue of moral choice, the motives of the character's actions, polarizes positive and negative models of behavior, where responsibility is of great importance in relationships.

The forms of responsibility in social coexistence are influenced by the national values, historical educational traditions of the society in which the child is raised; teachers convey the essence of moral actions of characters, explain the motives of their good deeds. Children acquire their own independent experience of social relations for active life, develop it in the subsequent periods of growing up. O. Vyshnevskyi wrote: "The purity and harmony of the value system is achieved by observing the law of natural hierarchy, when the interdependence of different groups of values is clearly taken into account. Yes, the personal values should be constantly coordinated with the family, social, national and universal ones" (Vyshnevskyi, 2022). In the philosophical content, the importance of pedagogical influence in the process of awareness and acceptance of moral values in childhood was emphasized by I. Ziaziun, warning against the formation of a one-dimensional person who possesses the knowledge of humanity as models of behavior and does not have the opportunity to self-realize their meaning. "In a broad sense, it is a kind of muster of the cultures in a multinational environment, the correlation of the experience of communicators based on the analogy of aesthetic traditions. The effectiveness of dialogue depends on compatible value-oriented attitudes, the definition of problems that are accessible and personally significant for the subjects of communication, on the level of realization of aesthetic self-cognition" (Ziaziun, 2012). Therefore, in the system of the educational strategy of pedagogy, where the main value is a free, humane, independent and responsible individual, education should be founded on the culture-creating process, in which knowledge about the historical past of the people, its best representatives, will have an educational impact on the development of the child's existential philosophy.

J. Dewey in his book "Moral Principles in Education" notes that the teacher should not prepare the child for life, but here and now "lay the moral foundations of social behavior... present them in concepts accessible to children, convey them through examples of moral actions and through feelings" (Dewey, 2001). The modern educator L. Lokhvytska characterizes the senior preschool age as the possibility of "accumulation of moral concepts and ideas about moral norms, which they produce in their own behavior and attitude towards others" (Lokhvytska, 2016). The children experiment by their actions, expecting an approving reaction from adults, they think critically about their own actions. Development of norms (models) of behavior of senior pre-schoolers enhances the initiative in life, responsibility, caring attitude towards nature and the desire to help those they love.

The ways of shaping the senior pre-schoolers' sense of responsibility are individual and group ethical discussions, as well as game activities filled with the value oriented content. In his writings, the famous practicing educator V. Sukhomlynskyi (Sukhomlynskyi, 2018) draws attention to instilling responsibility as a "culture of feelings", "culture of desires", "culture of behavior", where during the discussion of the content of a literary piece or watching a film (cartoon), children understand the emotional experiences of the characters, who perform noble deeds. The teacher appeals to the child's innate tendency to do good, compares the developed emotional culture and feelings with "absolute musical hearing" in moral education. While M. Montessori noted the inability of preschool children to understand the meaning and behavioral motives of main characters in fiction: "They absorb examples of social behavior like a sponge, without differentiating them as good or bad, they want to imitate them" (Dychkivska, 2006). In moral and ethical conversations, the teacher makes the behavior of the characters the subject of discussion and debate. Children make judgments about the impact of the characters' actions on others, on the nature, and on relationships between people.

In the process of communication and joint activities with close people, peers, or teachers in preschool, children acquire emotional experiences that find understanding with others and the possibility of enriching their feelings appears. Moral and ethical norms become an important way of regulating relationships, the pre-schoolers' attitude to the rules of social coexistence develops. The process of responsibility formation in preschool children was studied by T. Fasolko, who claims that at the senior preschool age children already have "certain levels of formed responsible behavior: proactive, executive, conforming" (Fasolko, 2013). Executive responsibility prevails at this age, and an emotionally positive attitude is a prerequisite for its demonstration, "it encourages the child to properly fulfill tasks, demands, assignments, display appropriate feelings (kindness, mercy, compassion, etc.)" (Stadnik, 2001).

Children at senior preschool age learn to plan their own actions, predict possible outcomes, and coordinate them with the requirements of adults.

It is important to support the child's first manifestations of responsible behavior, their compliance with agreements, rules of coexistence in the group and their initiative. Senior pre-schoolers need support and approval from important adults (teachers, parents), because the spectrum of their values is just forming. A model of behavior with signs of responsibility must be supported using the technology of "education with joy" (Frenet, 1992), when adults support the child in manifestations of willpower and morality with a positive emotional reaction and enthusiasm. An approving assessment of the preschooler's manifestations of responsibility is an incentive for the further development of self-regulation in their relationships and initiative in activities related to good deeds, so that someone approve of their actions, recognize actions achievements, believe in actions possibilities for further moral growth. In preschool, this mission is carried out by teachers, while at home, this remains the responsibility of the parents.

Methodology

Our survey was conducted in preschool education institutions of the Lviv Region (Yalynka Kindergarten, Truskavets, Anheliatko charitable kindergarten, Drohobych, Father Kyril Seletskyi Kindergarten No. 2, Drohobych). 120 children of senior preschool age were involved in the experiment. As the researcher of the morality of preschool children S. Zabolotska notes: "It is necessary to familiarize children with moral forms of behavior so that children perceive with interest and understand the need to observe them" (Zabolotska, 2013). Therefore, we used the method of group discussions based on the educational fiction they have read. Adventure novels for children were selected "The Adventures of Neznayko" by M. Nosov (Nosov, 2016) and problematic questions for discussion were offered (What was Neznayko like? What good deeds did he dream of doing? Why did he fail? How can you help your friends? Why should the nature be protected? How do you feel when they thank you?).

To collect information on the priority of values in the education of preschoolers, we used the methodology of L. Pisotska (Pisotska, 2011), which includes responsibility among important personal qualities. In the questionnaire for parents, a list of characteristics of human morality is provided, from which the respondents chose the ten most important ones and ranked them in order of priority from 1 to 10. The main attention was paid to responsibility in the process of raising children in the family.

Survey results

We conducted a survey among the parents of pre-schoolers according to the methodology of L. Pisotska, where a list of character traits relevant for raising a child of senior preschool age was given ("ability to survive", "ability to adapt to life", "business-like attitude", "ability to cope with difficult life situations", "decency", "competence", "initiative", "commitment", "vigor", "independence", "humaneness", "industriousness", "perseverance", "discipline", "endurance", "honesty", "love to one's neighbor", "friendliness", "benevolence", "love of mankind", "charity", "gratitude", "restraint", "courage", "determination", "will", "purposefulness", "confidence", "adherence to principles", "responsibility", "respect for parents") (Pisotska, 2011). The first to third place was voted by the parents to include "ability to adapt to life" (20%), "discipline" (18%), "respect for parents" (14%), "love of mankind" (12%), "independence" (8%), "benevolence" (6%), "responsibility" (4%), "mercy" (4%). As we can see, the problem of fostering a sense of responsibility, although it has been included in the list of important traits, was not given priority by the parents for the educational process within the family. We came to the conclusion that it was teachers who should compensate for insufficient attention to the problem of fostering a sense of responsibility.

We believe that one of the best means for achieving that is reading educational works of fiction and holding moral and ethical discussions based on the content of the books. H. Belenka notes that reading fiction leads to a desire to imitate the actions of favorite characters and implement their ideas and plans. "A children's hero should have the same troubles and adventures as a child. That's why children are delighted to hear about Pinocchio, Neznaiko, Vereda, Petryk. "The characters are close to them in terms of character and their behavior in various life situations serve as a behavioral model to imitate" (Belenka, 2015). Therefore, a pedagogically competent selection of fiction works and elaboration of their content during ethical discussions enables the child to understand the meaning of the actions of the characters, express their own attitude, and hear the opinions of their friends.

Children actively discuss the actions of their favorite characters of fiction or cartoons, who cause emotional impressions and are heroes (anti-heroes), they have a vivid model of responsible (irresponsible) behavior. Emotional satisfaction is brought by independent activity (following the model of a favorite character), responsible performance of an assigned task, or an activity initiated by a pupil that is related to social activities.

When observing the active participation of pre-schoolers in reading with works of fiction, we came to the conclusion that it is appropriate to use humor. So, in a humorous form, parodying the behavior of characters, who are often funny (according to the contrary rules), arouses the admiration and interest of

pupils. Yes, the irresponsible behavior of Neznayko, who, not knowing how to drive a car, gets down to business and causes a lot of trouble for the children of the Sunny City, can be discussed with great interest, because it presents events emotionally colorful and is an almost true story about the great desire of children to take on tasks beyond them which brings them to failure. Children, discussing the behavior of Neznayko, analyze his good impulses, the reasons for failure, harmful consequences of irresponsible actions, then try on and model their own behavior. Children think critically, predict their actions close to ideal in a similar situation. Thus, pupils (37%) paid attention to a responsible attitude to health, another group of children (20%) identified concern for parents who may be worried, part of preschoolers (18%) showed concern for the property damaged by the main character. Some of the children (15%) did not have any comments on Neznayko's behavior, they did not see the need to show responsibility neither in preserving health, nor in empathizing with parents, nor in careful treatment of the property that the character damaged. 5% of respondents did not take an active part in discussing the stories about Neznayko.

A dialogue between the children and the teacher based on a work of fiction they read, where events occur to the characters that are familiar to the children, cause empathy, the children try to feel the problems of the protagonists, become emotionally sensitive in the climactic moments of the plot, offer their own ways of solving the dilemma. The discussion of what has been read and problematic questions encourage a free exchange of thoughts and impressions, which both fulfils a direct educational task in the formation of moral concepts and develops communication skills, fosters a careful attitude to the opinions of other participants.

Conclusion

Responsibility characterizes the independence of moral decisions in specific situations of choice and, in general, the direction of the child's behavior and activity. The moral norm, if it is comprehended, is fixed as a motive for behavior at the stage of preschool childhood. Therefore, the desired moral quality can be started to be formed through familiarization with the corresponding moral norm, which demonstrates specific ways of acting in a certain situation.

The use of a humorous children's work in a moral and ethical conversation activates perception, awakens children's emotions, the desire to conduct a dialogue, and determine responsible behavior. Neznayko in many episodes is close to children in his irresponsible actions and the desire to help him finds a response in children's judgments. Emotional manifestations of sympathy for a humorous character always cause affection in children, and the teacher observes positive changes in the actions of pupils, their responsible behavior. When

someone behaves irresponsibly, it is appropriate to recall the episode from the play about Neznayko and the children then realize their mistake, recall with a smile the mistakes of the fictional character and discipline themselves. Volitional efforts, awareness of the act, the desire to be "more mature", "more reasonable" than Neznayko, an emotionally positive attitude to the impressions of what they have read encourage senior pre-schooler to demonstrate responsible behavior. Actions acquire meaning, and responsible actions acquire an initiative character, which is a positive trend of self-development. Educators recommend a selection of children's literature to the parents, where the problem of instilling the best character traits is raised, where a responsible attitude towards people, nature, social relations, and one's own health takes a leading place. Such works are stories for children by such Ukrainian writers for children as V. Sukhomlynskyi (2018), V. Nestayko (2019), I. Malkovych (2017), S. Dermanskyi (2022), and others. Their works raise the themes of coexistence that are relevant for children, talk about children's pranks with humor, raise the issues of moral choice in actions, and encourage reflection in modeling responsible behavior. Reflecting together with an adult on the behavior of literary characters, children can evaluate responsible and irresponsible actions, model their own actions in similar situations, and later transfer them to real life conditions.

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