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DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVITY IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN THROUGH ARTISTIC ACTIVITY: THEORY, PRACTICE AND TEACHER TRAINING

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РОЗВИТОК ТВОРЧОСТІ В ДІТЕЙ ДОШКІЛЬНОГО ВІКУ ЧЕРЕЗ ХУДОЖНЮ ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ: ТЕОРІЯ, ПРАКТИКА ТА ПІДГОТОВКА ВЧИТЕЛІВ

The article investigates the problem of developing creativity in senior preschool children (aged 5–7) through artistic activity in preschool educational institutions (PEI). The phenomenon of creativity is examined from the perspective of foreign pedagogical science. Pedagogical conditions for its effective development are substantiated: the poly-artistic approach, the creation of a subject-developmental environment, and non-traditional techniques of visual arts. The role of arts disciplines in shaping the creative personality of the future preschool educator is revealed. The structural components of the educator's creative competence and practical forms of its development are identified.

Key words: creativity, preschool age, artistic activity, visual arts activity, non-traditional techniques, poly-artistic approach, creative personality of the educator, arts disciplines, professional training.

In contemporary society, the question of developing the creative potential of the individual is becoming particularly relevant. The ability to generate ideas, think unconventionally, and adapt to change are key qualities of a successful person. That is why one

of the priority tasks of preschool education is the formation and development of creativity – a personal characteristic manifested in originality, unconventionality, and maximum productivity of behaviour.

The development of creativity in senior preschool children (aged 5–7) is of particular importance. It is during this sensitive period that abilities for creative activity emerge, productive imagination, figurative thinking, and verbal activity develop – prerequisites for the individual's further creative formation. The importance of nurturing creativity is emphasised in the Basic Component of Preschool Education of Ukraine (2021), where it is defined as one of the basic characteristics of a 6–7-year-old child (*Basic Component...*, 2021).

At the same time, the problem of forming the creative personality of the educator is inextricably linked with the task of developing children's creativity: only a creative teacher is capable of nurturing creativity in their pupils. An educator who has themselves undergone a path of creative development is capable of organically incorporating artistic activity into the educational process, sensing the emotional needs of the child, and responding to them through the means of art.

The aim of the article is to

substantiate the theoretical foundations and pedagogical conditions for developing creativity in children aged 5–7 through artistic activity, as well as to reveal the role of arts disciplines in shaping the creative personality of the future educator.

The problem of creativity has traditionally occupied a prominent place in the research of both national and foreign scholars. In foreign scholarly thought, the views of L. Thurstone, J. Guilford, E. Torrance, and J. Renzulli are authoritative.

J. Guilford associated creativity with divergent thinking and identified a system of its indicators: speed of thought and its flexibility, originality, curiosity, the capacity to develop hypotheses, independence of response from stimulus, and fantasticity. The scholar distinguished convergent thinking, directed towards a single correct answer, from divergent thinking – directed towards finding multiple original solutions. It is divergent thinking that is the core of the creative process, enabling the individual to go beyond standard patterns and generate new, unusual ideas (*Guilford, 2017*).

E. Torrance developed a system of tests for visual creative thinking, designed to diagnose parameters such as fluency, accuracy, imagery, and originality in children from age 5. His tests employ models of creative

processes that capture spontaneous complexity across various spheres of activity: verbal, visual, auditory, and kinetic. Torrance insisted that creativity is not a rare talent of the chosen few – it is inherent in every person and requires systematic pedagogical development from early childhood (Torrance, 2016).

J. Renzulli proposed a concept of giftedness as the interaction of three components: above-average intellectual abilities, task commitment, and creativity. This model emphasises that creative abilities are an integral component of giftedness, not merely a secondary attribute. Contemporary researchers view creativity as a phenomenon belonging to the sphere of human creative activity: on the one hand, it is treated as the universal foundation of creativity, and on the other, it indicates its level.

V. Moliako defines creativity through corresponding practical skills: combining, searching for analogies, reproducing, and carrying out reconstruction. He attributes the following to the structure of the phenomenon under study: the predominance of motives and interests, enthusiasm for the relevant activity, orientation towards results, satisfaction with the process, awareness of the essence of the problem, intellectual strategies, speed in finding solution variants, and ingenuity (Moliako, 2019).

In pedagogical science, the concept of the creative personality is interpreted as an integrative characteristic that combines professional competence, creativity, initiative, emotional culture, and the capacity for self-development. According to L. Vygotsky, creativity is "activity that results in the creation of something new that did not previously exist" (Vygotsky, 2020). The outstanding educator V. Sukhomlynskyi emphasised that a teacher without creativity is a craftsman, not an educator (Sukhomlynskyi, 2018).

Thus, creativity is a complex subjective personal characteristic – an alloy of abilities, character traits, cognitive capabilities, and acquired

experience. It is closely linked with personal motivation, divergent thinking, processes of productive imagination, and cognitive curiosity.

The period of 5–7 years is most favourable for the development of creativity. During this time, children experience an accelerated pace of speech development, mastery of figurative thinking, and development of productive imagination. It is precisely these characteristics, their organic combination within the structure of the child's personality, that become the natural foundation for creative expression.

The creativity of a 5–7-year-old child is often equated with giftedness, the principal components of which include: heightened sensitivity, excessive energy, the desire to achieve results quickly, the need for communication with emotionally stable adults, the desire to independently choose activities, tolerance, and emotional-axiological componential sensitivity towards others.

In the Basic Component of Preschool Education (2021), creativity is defined as one of the basic characteristics of a 6–7-year-old child. The capacity to perform creative tasks, interest in logic games, offering various variants for completing tasks, and the desire to transfer individual actions to a different situation are all emphasised. Significantly, creativity in the document is considered not as an additional trait, but as a systemic characteristic of a developed preschool personality (Basic Component., 2021).

The contemporary preschool child differs significantly from children of previous decades. Modern preschoolers are characterised by: heightened activity alongside reduced creative initiative and imagination; orientation towards obtaining quick and ready-made results; easy mastery of electronic devices with reduced experience of spontaneous communication with peers; restriction of children's independence by parents. All of this necessitates the search for optimal pedagogical approaches to developing creativity through artistic activity.

Artistic activity is understood as a

mode of interaction with reality directed towards satisfying the aesthetic needs of the individual and having a creative character. With regard to children aged 5–7, this is activity oriented towards nurturing creativity through the means of art. It enables children to embody their own emotional experiences of the surrounding world in images and to express their attitude towards it.

L. Vygotsky associates artistic activity with inner mental processes and the brain's capacity to combine information and transform it into something qualitatively new (Vygotsky, 2020). It is precisely this phenomenon that determines the creative character of human existence and constitutes the foundation of productive imagination or fantasy. In the period from 4 to 6–7 years, children develop a curiosity for actively mastering reality through artistic activity, as evidenced by the large number of children's questions directed at clarifying the unknown and unfamiliar.

Artistic activity encompasses: visual arts (drawing, modelling, applique, paper construction), music (listening to works, singing, playing instruments, dance), and artistic-verbal activity (reading and listening to prose and poetic works, dramatisation). Each type enriches the child's creative experience, developing various aspects of their creativity.

Drawing is the graphic and painterly form of representation that most contributes to the development of creativity, as it involves the use of diverse materials and techniques: paper, pencils, brushes, pastels, watercolours and gouache, felt-tip pens. Their combination and mixing yields extraordinary results, stimulating the expression of creative initiative.

Modelling – the production of small-scale sculpture from soft plastic material – develops spatial thinking and the ability to conceptualise form. Applique offers broad possibilities for developing creativity and imagination. Paper construction is the most complex form of visual arts and exerts the most substantial influence on the development of creative thinking. Musical-game dramatisation

accelerates the activation of creative capabilities, accustoming children to sense the expressive role of music and to respond emotionally to artistic images.

Analysis of theoretical sources and pedagogical practice allows us to identify three key conditions for the effective development of creativity in children in preschool educational institutions. The first and foremost among these is the implementation of the poly-artistic approach based on the integration of arts.

The interaction of various forms of art – literature, sculpture, architecture, folk art, music, and painting – is conditioned by their common aesthetic nature and shared laws of artistic thinking. The complex of arts, as opposed to its individual forms, influences the child holistically and systemically, forming perception of a qualitatively new, higher level.

The poly-artistic approach does not presuppose a mechanical combination of different types of artistic activity within a single session, but rather an organic synthesis in which each art form enriches another, revealing new facets of the artistic image. For example, listening to a musical work can serve as an impetus for visual arts activity, while a poetic text can serve as the foundation for dramatisation and rhythmic movement.

The second condition is the purposeful creation of a subject-developmental environment (SDE). The availability of necessary play attributes and visual materials for independent artistic activity promotes the emergence of interest in the corresponding forms of activity. The SDE must be systemic, correspond to educational goals, initiate activity, and take into account the specifics of age-related stages of personality development.

The artistic-aesthetic centre should contain: materials for drawing (paints, brushes, pencils, coloured paper, crayons, felt-tip pens), stencils, stamps, decorative pattern templates, reproductions of paintings, illustrations depicting nature and people, natural materials, clay, plasticine, and colouring books. It is important that materials be accessible

to children for independent use, and not only for sessions conducted under the teacher's guidance.

The third condition is the use of non-traditional visual arts techniques. Mastery of non-traditional visual techniques exerts a substantial influence on the child's personality: it promotes the emergence of positive emotions, reveals the possibility of using familiar objects as artistic materials, and removes the fear of "doing it wrong".

The techniques employed in PEIs are diverse: blotting, finger painting, painting with salt, soap bubbles, wax, the "scraping" technique, watercolour wash, paper sculpture, and others. Each of these opens new possibilities for the child's creative self-expression and supports their intrinsic motivation for artistic activity. Unusual ways of depicting reality inspire children to strive to organise exhibitions of their own works, which fosters a values-based attitude towards their own creativity.

The identified pedagogical conditions – the poly-artistic approach based on the integration of arts, the purposeful creation of a subject-developmental environment, and the use of non-traditional visual arts techniques – constitute a complex system, the effectiveness of which is ensured by their simultaneous and interconnected implementation in the educational process of the PEI.

The contemporary system of future teacher training is oriented towards the formation of a specialist capable of creative thinking, flexible response to change, and the application of innovative approaches in professional activity. An educator at a preschool educational institution must be not merely a bearer of knowledge, but also an inspirer, initiator, and organiser of children's creativity.

Arts disciplines (visual arts, music, artistic labour, dramatisation, design fundamentals) serve as an important means of developing the student's creative potential. They not only ensure the formation of practical skills necessary for organising children's artistic activity in PEIs, but also stimulate the future educator's own

creativity. Art exerts a synergistic influence: it combines the intellectual, emotional, and motivational spheres of the personality.

Results of pedagogical research O. Komarovska (*Komarovska, 2020*) N. Lysenko (*Lysenko, 2017*). T. Tkachenko (*Tkachenko, 2021*) demonstrate that the effectiveness of forming the creative personality of the educator is ensured by: the integration of arts disciplines into professional training; the creation of a creative educational environment; the use of innovative teaching methods and reflective practice. Only through the comprehensive observance of these conditions does the future educator become a truly creative personality.

The professional-creative competence of a preschool educator encompasses four key components. The cognitive component encompasses knowledge of the laws and principles of art, understanding of its educational function, and the capacity to integrate artistic knowledge into pedagogical practice. The motivational component involves the desire for self-expression, aesthetic interest, and the wish to develop children's creativity. The emotional-value component includes sensitivity, empathy, aesthetic taste, and the educator's inner culture. The activity-based component is manifested in the ability to apply art in the pedagogical process, develop creative tasks, and organise collaborative artistic activity (*Kulish, 2023; Rudenko, 2022*). All four components are formed in inseparable unity throughout the entire process of professional training.

In the process of preparing students in the "Preschool Education" specialisation, the following forms of work are effective. The master class "Non-Traditional Visual Techniques in Working with Children" – students master techniques for drawing with sand, wax, soap bubbles, prints, etc., and after completing their own works, develop methodological recommendations for sessions with children. The project "Art and the Child" involves the preparation of a series of integrated sessions for preschoolers combining music, word,

painting, and movement. The training "I am a Creative Personality" includes exercises for developing imagination, associative thinking, and emotional self-expression. The student exhibition "Palette of Mood" involves a demonstration of one's own creative works (painting, collage, educational environment design) and their reflective discussion.

Through such forms of learning, future educators come to understand that creativity is not merely an element of the curriculum, but an integral part of their professional and personal formation (Lazarovych, 2026; Lazarovych, 2024). Of particular significance is students' awareness of their own creative position as the foundation of pedagogical mastery. At the same time, the development of the educator's own creative potential is only a prerequisite – and acquires its full meaning only when it is transformed into real pedagogical action in interaction with the child.

Artistic activity is an effective factor in the child's development: it provides unique opportunities for self-expression, fosters independence, and satisfies aesthetic needs. Inextricably linked with the task of developing children's creativity is the formation of the creative personality of the educator. Arts disciplines play a leading role in developing creativity, emotional sensitivity, aesthetic taste, and the individual style of students' pedagogical activity. Only an educator who is themselves a creative personality is capable of becoming a true guide for the child into the world of art and inspiration.

Thus, artistic activity is a powerful means of developing creativity in preschool children. The effectiveness of this process is ensured by a complex of interrelated pedagogical conditions: the poly-artistic approach based on the integration of arts, the purposeful

creation of a subject-developmental environment, and the systematic use of non-traditional visual arts techniques.

Analysis of foreign and national scholarly approaches (Guilford, Torrance, Renzulli, Moliako) attests to the multi-dimensionality of the creativity phenomenon and the necessity of its purposeful development from preschool age. The sensitive period of 5–7 years is particularly favourable for this, when the child's natural creative potential is most open to pedagogical influence.

Equally important is the conclusion concerning the interdependence between the creative personality of the educator and the level of creativity development in their pupils. Arts disciplines in the system of professional training play a key role in forming all four components of creative competence – cognitive, motivational, emotional-axiological, and activity-based.

Prospects for further research are seen in establishing the relationship between visual arts and other types of creative activity in preschool children, in studying the influence of family upbringing on the development of creativity, in developing individual programmes for gifted children, and in researching the effectiveness of digital arts technologies in the preparation of future educators.

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