

Primary socialization of young children and preschoolers as a scientific problem

Natasha Shklyar

leading worker Laboratory of pre-school education and training
at the Institute of Educational Problems
of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, Kiev

Corresponding author. E-mail: natasha_shklyar@bigmir.net

This article presents an analytical review of scientific and methodological works on the issue of primary socialization of young children and preschoolers as an important indicator of their social adaptation; the psychological aspect of the problem is considered; peculiarities of socialization in early childhood which is relevant to the current stage of the development of preschool education.

Key words : adaptation, preschool child, personality, primary socialization

Problem statement. One of the main tasks of the national education reform is the concept of its democratization and humanization, which presupposes considering a human as the highest social value, disclosure of their skills and abilities, and meeting various educational needs. The state national program *Osvita* looks at the personality potential of any child as the highest value of the nation. Therefore, the main purpose of the educational process is to develop an individual as a conscious, active participant, able to solve any problems, create, modify, and improve themselves and the world around them. Humanistic interpretation of goals of special education is to make lives of young children and preschoolers full and dignified.

The problem of successful socialization of children from their birth is an eternal one, as it takes on specific features in each historical period, relating to a particular society, social environment in which personality formation is going. The stated problem is of a scientific interest in many sciences such as philosophy, sociology, psychology, pedagogy and social pedagogy. Each of them studies its different aspects. For psycho-pedagogical and social-pedagogical researches the main directions of scientific studies are related to the specificity of the process of socialization itself at different age stages, determination of conditions facilitating its successful course according to peculiarities of each age and a particular social situation.

The moment of transition from the close family circle to the group of peers and adults in preschool institutions is a significant psychological problem for many young children, which leads to various neurotic reactions, negative forms of behavior, helplessness, reserve, reducing of speech and general psychological activities. The above mentioned displays may be explained by peculiarities of young preschool age. Its characteristic features are weak interest in social reality, not-formed abilities to play together and share toys, shyness, lack of initiative, active speech retardation, particular vulnerability of physical and mental health. On the other hand, the problem of child's adaptation to new social conditions can be caused by wrong actions of adults - parents and teachers, by absence of constructive interaction between them.

The purpose of this article is to present the results of the analytical study of scientific and methodical works that serve as theoretical basis for studying the peculiarities of formation of primary socialization of young children and preschoolers and distinguishing the characteristics of their social development.

Analysis of recent researches and publications. Socialization is one of the issues of current importance in many sciences: philosophy, sociology, psychology, pedagogy and social pedagogy. Each of them studies different aspects. Thus, the problem of socialization of personality is widely presented in works of philosophers (J.J. Rousseau, D. Feldstein), sociologists (M. Bugle, H. Giddings, I. Kohn, M. Lukashevich, S. Razuvaev, G. Tarde), psychologists (L. Vygotsky, V. Kudriavtsev, J. Feldstein), social educators (V. Abramenkova, N. Golovanova, I. Zvereva, A. Kaps'ka, S. Kurinna, G. Laktionova, A. Mudrik, S. Kharchenko and others).

The basic statements for the study are as follows: about the nature and content of socialization (B. Ananiev, I. Kohn, A. Mudrik, L. Novikova, B. Paryghin, V. Slast'onin); about socialization mechanisms (L. Vygotsky, E.H. Erikson, R. Nemov, V. Mukhina, A. Petrovskyi, N. Smelzer, N. Shevandrin); about the characteristic features of the process of socialization (V. Isaiev, I. Mishchenko, A. Mudrik, V. Slast'onin, E. Shyianov); about the role of personality in the process of socialization (E. Durkheim, T. Parsons, Ch. Cooley, James. G. Meade).

In psychological sources the problem of personality formation during childhood is studied in various aspects, including: personality development in ontogenesis and peculiarities of structuring of its components (O. Kononko, V. Kudriavtsev, A. Leontiev, A. Petrovsky, T. Pirozhenko, D. Feldstein); the formation of self-

consciousness, basic "I"-image as a condition of the formation of subjectivity as expression of person's intense activities in different stages of ontogenesis (B. Ananiev, M. Yelagina, V. Zenkovsky, E. Isaev, V. Mukhina, S. Novoselova, V. Slobodchikov, R. Stvorkina); peculiarities of formation of young children's and preschoolers' positive attitude to the world and themselves, the nature of its manifestation, focus and stages of development (N. Aksarina T. Bauer, L. Bozhovich, A. Vallon, L. Venger, Z. Gurina, D. Elkonin O. Zaporozhets V. Kotyrlo, B. Kuzmenko, S. Ladyvir, J. Neverovych, O. Proskura); the role of family and preschool institution in personality formation in early ontogenesis (N. Avdeeva, O. Kononko, G. Lublinska, S. Meshcheryakova); personality's moral values as part of an active position (G. Moreva, L. Pocherevina).

The analysis of current researches on preschool childhood (L. Artemova, A. Bogush, Z. Borisova, N. Gavrish, I. Kindrat, O. Kononko, S. Ladyvir V. Orzhehovska, Z. Plokhii T. Ponimanska V. Postovyand others) shows intensive studying of scientists and practitioners as for updating the content of education and upbringing of children, realization of personality oriented educational technologies, organizational and pedagogical conditions of functioning of various educational institutions, psychological and pedagogical environment for optimal development of children in the family and pre-school institutions. The results of researches on the educational potential of the family and pre-school as the main institutions of socialization in the early stages of ontogenesis are also presented in works of O. Bohinich, V. Kotyrlo, O. and B. Nikitins, M. Osorina, L. Ostrovska, T. Pirozhenko, O. Hartman and others.

The main material of the research. Personality primary socialization in stratified society is an important but poorly studied aspect in researches on socialization (A. Kovaleva, M. Lukashevich, R. Merton, A. Mudrik, T. Parsons, A. Taschenko and others).

In international documents of the UNO, UNESCO, UNICEF they made a clarification on the terms: *child* is used to name a human being up to the age of 18, *young age* is the stage from birth to 7 (8) years; *early childhood* is a baby-period. Among the characteristics of young children, scientists note the following: it is the most intense period of growth and changes—the body is being formed, nervous system is being developed, mobility increases, children gain life experience and acquire communication skills; children show emotional attachment to their parents, expect care, guidance and protection from them; establish relationships with adults and children, learn to discuss and coordinate joint actions, to resolve conflicts, to execute agreements and to take on responsibilities for others; they actively perceive physical, social and cultural influences of the environment, gaining their own experience; develop their cultural and personal identity; display features of growth and development, depending on the identity, gender, living conditions, family environment, care and education systems and attitudes to children [3].

According to works of scholars in psychology, one of the priorities of children development in the transition period from early to pre-school age is the formation of preschoolers' self-identity - understanding of one's own *self*, understanding of oneself as an individual and as a participant of social relations who must obey certain social norms. Studying the psychological basis of personal development of preschoolers, O. Kononko notes the importance of appearing of such a position as *I am in the world*, which accumulates their experience, defines the ability of orientation in different situations, synthesizes value-based attitude to the object and human worlds, and their own *self* [4].

Numerous psychological works by L. Bozhovich, A. Leontiev and others consider general and specific aspects of the problem. Thus, to describe personality, L. Bozhovich used concepts that characterize internal properties and characteristics of a child. Basing on the concept of leading activity and social situation of development, brought in by L. Vygotsky, the author showed how, in a complex interaction of activities and child's interpersonal communication in different periods of life, a particular view of the world is formed, which is called the inner position. The latter is marked by the author as one of the main characteristics of the personality, the premise of the development and is understood as a set of leading motives for activities.

It is important for our research to study the motivational sphere of a child, that is the driving forces of behavior, which make the core of personality and determine the character of personality development. Some researchers (B. Ananiev, M. Elagina, V. Zenkovsky, E. Isaev, V. Mukhina, S. Novoselova etc.) believe that the needs are the primary sources of child's mental activities and the most important of them are sociogenic needs, the ones which are generated by the life of children in society.

Children of three or four years begin to feel themselves human beings, independent of adults. There is a contradiction: on the one hand - children still depend on adults' help and support, on the other hand, when getting it, they get irritated, defend their own independent efforts. Thus, at this age stage, child's independence is developed, the principle "*I myself*" appears [4]. Thus, there is a tendency to independent activities, when adults are role models of actions and relationships in the surrounding world. The above mentioned features of the development at the beginning of the young preschool age are of vital importance

for the development of the child as a personality, formation of their primary social experience, attitudes towards the world and towards themselves.

Scientists emphasize the importance of the role of social and cultural environment in which the child lives. Thus, dividing the social environment into close and distant ones in accordance with the intensity of contacts, the modern scholar I. Pidlasnyy notes that children reach a higher level of development when close and distant surroundings provide them with the most favourable conditions [5].

This opinion is shared by O. Kononko, who mentioning the role of the social environment as an essential factor in personality formation, pays special attention to family relations, general emotional atmosphere in the family, where the child is brought up [4]. As background she uses the theory of J. G. Mead about three stages of socialization. The first stage is imitation - children imitate adults' behavior not always understanding it. That is why this first period is an extremely important for the creation of surrounding which is worth imitating. The second one is the stage of role-playing - children, "trying on" adult roles in their games, learn to give their thoughts and actions the same meaning as adults do that is they learn certain social norms intuitively. In the final, third stage - stage of collective games - children learn to take into account other people's existence in the world, besides them, learn to focus on the expectations of individuals, trying to meet the expectations if they coincide with the position of the children themselves [6].

The French psychologist Jean Piaget, keeping to the idea of different stages in personality development, emphasized the development of cognitive structures of the individual and their further changes depending on experience and social interaction. These stages follow each other in a certain sequence: sensorimotor (from birth to two years), pre-operational (from two to seven years), concrete operational stage (seven to eleven years).

Modern scientists experimentally prove that involving children into social life contributes to the versatility of the personality development of preschoolers (L. Venger, O. Kononko, V. Petrovsky, T. Ponimanska, L. Paramonova etc.). Acquiring the idea of society, children begin to successfully orient themselves in the world around them. Therefore it is important to constantly expand the range of social representations, provide active position of children in perception process. Taking into consideration peculiarities of mental processes at the early and young preschool age researchers note that children's knowledge of the environment should be coloured with feelings, should carry a potential that generates emotions. T. Ponimanska points out that only this knowledge will encourage children to perform actions, will teach to regulate behavior and organize their activities, which are, conditions and at the same time means of active studying of the social world. [8]

Taking the ideas of L. Vygotsky as basic ones for many issues, M. Lisina calls the leading factor in children's mental and personality development their needs for communication and L. Bozhovich mentions their needs for impressions. From two years' age children come into a period of intense formation of motivational sphere, which is largely developed on preconditions that are formed in early childhood. During this period, new formations can be observed in children's motivational sphere which are characterized by new properties and structural features. This is facilitated by the following factors: speech development, children's communication with adults and peers, involving them in various activities.

Thus, one of the most important conditions for children's achievements is their ability to estimate their own capabilities. According to scientists (N. Aksarina T. Bauer, L. Bozhovich, A. Vallon, L. Venger, Z. Gurina, D. El'konin, O. Zaporozhets, V. Manova-Tomova etc.) at the age of three- four years, some preschool children are able to self- evaluate some of their own capabilities and correctly predict the results of their actions on the basis of their own experience.

Most modern authors who study the development of child's personality (N. Avdeev, N. Gavrish, N. Diatlenko, O. Kononko, S. Ladyvir, S. Mescheriakova T. Pirozhenko, O. Reypolska and others.) agree that personality is manifested in human interaction with the surrounding world in the broad sense. These components, according to scientists' researches, are three main types of children's attitudes: attitude to the people around them, to themselves and to the object world. Scientists believe that personality is manifested from the time when children begin to interact with the surrounding world and the process of their personal development starts.

In preschool pedagogy the problem of adaptation of infants and young preschoolers to public education conditions was considered by N. Aksarina, N. Vatutina, L. Golubeva, A. Myshkis, T. Naumenko, J. Yuzvak and others. Researchers emphasize the complexity of children's adaptation to conditions of public education and the importance of its correct organization for preschoolers' personal development.

Due to transition from one social institution into another the content of *adaptation* is actualized (translated from Latin means *make suitable, adjust, accommodate*). K. Rubchevskyy proposes to consider adaptation as a form of socialization course in two aspects: social and psychological. The social aspect of the

adaptation phenomenon shows the type and nature of relationships between an individual and social environment, when requirements of society and demands and possibilities of the individual to meet those requirements begin to interact. (F. Baos, B. Malinovskyi and others). The psychological aspect of adaptation involves unity of mutual influence of the individual and the environment: the environment affects the individual who, in accordance with their inner nature, processes this influence, and the individual, in turn, actively influences the environment [9].

Research on verbal communication as one of the leading early childhood new formations is very important for successful socialization of children. Speech development of 3 or 4-year old children is connected with the expansion of their range of functions: first of all, establishing of cooperation and relations with close adults and children (A. Bogush, N. Gavrish, T. Hurkovska, K. Krutii, G. Lopatina, T. Naumenko, O. Saprykin and others). The authors emphasize that children learn the basic form of verbal communication - dialogue. They try to speak actively, ask questions and answer by themselves, address to the people around them making requests and suggestions. According to N. Gavrish, the main new formations in the content and structure of speech appear in the process of children's initiative speaking. Therefore, children must be able to express themselves of their own free will. Speech development becomes one of the factors that allows children to enter a wider social environment, to join the circle of peers. [1] This is also conditioned by the emergence of the phenomenon *I myself*, which means gradual separation of children from adults, with whom, according to D. Elkonin, moving away they establish deeper relationships.

At the young preschool age, peculiarities of development are still largely conditioned by children's state of health. Children with full physical health not only get ill less frequently, but are also better developed mentally: during prolonged illness children lose acquired skills, speech and motor skills. Minor health disorders of children affect their emotional sphere (O. Bohinich, M. Efimenko, O. Kocherga, I. Makarenko and others).

According to scientists (N. Aksarina, L. Venger, N. Sakulina, N. Schelovanov) at preschool age (three to seven years) children's needs for movements are growing, motor memory is being developed, movements become precise and coordinated, ability to physical and mental performance increases. It is at this age that children's self-perception is formed, which depends on social adaptation.

In object-oriented activities, the focus is gradually shifting from the process to the outcome, which becomes the regulator of children's actions. According to S. Novoselova, object-oriented activities and their development is the source from which children's intellectual development starts, which also becomes the basis of the individual social experience formation, as children learn how to deal with objects, how to communicate with other people, master speech and so on. All these forms of human, historical experience are acquired by children in the course of communication with the surrounding people. Some behaviors are adopted by unintentional imitation, others - during specially organized training.

The review of scientific and methodological works on the family as the fundamental institution of primary socialization shows that this problem has recently been highlighted regularly on the pages of educational periodicals. The idea that runs through all the publications is that there is a necessity for purposeful work directed on formation of parents' pedagogical culture, for the usage of the most effective ways of actions, for assisting the family in creating conditions favorable for children's development. It is proved that the effectiveness of cultivating self-dependence is determined by the conditions created for children's development, for their gaining human experience. It is in the family that children become adapted to life in simple and natural ways and their personality is moulded. Psychologists and educators emphasize that emotional relationships with close adults which are based on love, trust and mutual interest are the main things that determine formation of a free, competent, confident, self-dependent individual (O. Kocherga, S. Ladyvir T. Pirozhenko, O. Hartman).

However, despite the unique role of family education and the family as an institution of socialization, scholars note that it is impossible to keep the situation of social education unchanged for a long time. They state that it is in social educational institutions that favorable conditions for children's realizing themselves as human beings and familiarizing with standards and norms of human behavior are created. Scientists show the importance of sequence between family and social education in gradual expansion of children's social experience, their handling with family relationships and rules, learning elements of social competence, the main laws of human common life, laying principles of attitudes to themselves, to human and natural environment as well. (O. Kononko, K. Krutii, T. Naumenko, I. Makarenko, V. Panina and others). This is achieved by creating such conditions in the country's cultural environment when children feel themselves human beings, desired family members, residents of a neighbourhood, a city, a country. Social education is to open for children the world, to define their way to the national culture through the family one and then, further ahead to human culture.

The review of programme and methodological support of the process of children's entering social environment of a preschool institution (programsof children's development and education *Malyatohko*(Kiddy), *Zerniatko*(Seed),*Schaslyvedytynstvo* (*Happy Childhood*), *Ya u Sviti*(*I am in the world*) shows attention to the problems of personality formation in early ontogenesis, creating favorable conditions in the family and social institutions, attention to parents as active participants of the educational process, efforts to provide psychological and pedagogical support of children's development adequate to their needs. (O. Bohinich, T. Hurkovska, A. Goncharenko, O. Kononko, K. Krutii, V.Ragozina, O. Saprykina).

Thus, the program of development, training and education of young children and preschoolers *Malyatohko* (Zaporizhzhia, 2009), which is part of the program *A child at preschool ages* – is a document of a new type, focused on the values and interests of children, taking into account age opportunities, maintaining subcultures, enriching children's development, ensuring interdependence of all aspects of children's lives.

The program of development and education of young children *Zerniatko*(2014) is based on the scientific achievements of Ukrainian and foreign psychologists, doctors and teachers. It reveals the content of children's family and social education, it defines the conditions under which natural potential of children of early ages and young preschoolers are manifested and developed, the ability to state their own *self* and implement it, be active participants in life activities. The central idea is the formation of a self-dependent, competent individual in early ontogenesis and creation of favorable conditions for this in the family and social institutions.

The most recent Program of preschoolers' development *Ya u Sviti*(*I am in the world*)(2014) is a program of a new strategic type. It contains the new content of preschool education, which presupposes harmonious and versatile development of preschoolers, formation of their personality in preschool educational institutions with developing of living space favourable for: laying the foundations of their competence, formation of intellectual, social and emotional maturity, creative attitude towards life and the like. In the Basic program it is emphasized: the main purpose of adults is to help preschoolers to live on their own, in harmony with the environment and in harmony with themselves as active subjects of life activities. That is why the first basic quality of the individual is self-dependence. The above mentioned programs are focused on family and pre-school institution interactions for the sake of children's psychophysical wellbeing.

Thus, researchers and practitioners emphasize the need for providing harmonious development adequate to children's age, through satisfying their main needs which lie in their perceiving of the world through practical actions with objects: in contacts, attention, communication with close adults and peers, in physical activities.

Conclusions. Thus, a brief review of the scientific and methodological literature that forms the theoretical platform for studying this complex and diverse issue of children's primary social adaptation and their positive attitude to a preschool institution, showed that the mentioned problem lies at the intersection of interests of psychology, theory and methodology of education, social pedagogy and requires an integrated approach to technology of formation children's positive attitude to pre-school institution as an institution of socialization.

REFERENCES

1. Havrysh N. V. Rozvytok movlennievoi tvorchosti v doshkilnomu vitsi : [monohrafiia] / N. V. Havrysh. – Donetsk : TOV «Lebid», 2001. – 218s. 2. Vsemirnyi doklad po monytorynhu ODV 2007 Obrazovanye y vospytanye detei mladsheho vozrasta Yzdano v 2007 h. Orhanyzatsyei Ob'edynennykh Natsyipo voprosam obrazovaniya, nauky y kul'tury7, Placede Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France. 3. Komytet po pravam rebenka. Sorok pervaiasessyia. Zheneva, 9 - 27 yanvaria 2006 hoda ; Zamechaniya obshcheporiadka. – №7 (2005). Osushchestvlenye prav rebenka v rannemdetstve. – 20 s. 4. Kononko O. L. Sotsialno-emotsiinyi rozvytok osobystosti (v doshkilnomu dytynstvi) : [navch. posibnyk dlia vyshchykh navchalnykh zakladiv] / O. L. Kononko – K.: Osvita, 1998. – 255 s. 5. Korektsiia deviantnoi povedinky molodshykh shkoliariv [Tekst] : eksperementalni materialy / I. P. Pidlasyi, O. V. Sharapova ; Cherkas. obl. in-t pislidiplom. osvity ped. pratsivnykiv, Cherkas. derzh. tekhnol. un-t. - Cherkasy : ChDTU, 2002. - 44 s. 6. Myd M. Kultura y myr detstva : [Tekst]. / M. Myd. – M., 1998. – 429s. 7. Naumenko T. I. U dytiachyi sadok pryishly novenki (Sotsialna adaptatsiia ditei molodshoho doshkilnogo viku) / T. I. Naumenko. – Zaporizhzhia : LIPS. Lto, 2002. – 72 s. 8. Ponimanska T. I. Doshkilna pedahohika : pidruchnyk / T.I. Ponimanska. – 2-he vyd., dopovn. – K. : Akademvydav, 2013. – 464 s. – (Serii «Alma-mater»). 9. Rubchevskiy K. V. Sotsyalyzatsyia lychnosti: ynteryoryzatsyia y sotsyalnaia adaptatsyia / K. V. Rubchevskiy // Obshchestvennye nauky y sovremennost. – 2003. – № 3, S. 147-151.