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DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVITY OF CHILDREN AGED 5–7 IN DECORATIVE AND APPLIED ARTS CLUBS: APPLIED ASPECT

The objectives of the state and its education system are developing and realizing a person's creative potential, timely identification, and creating favourable conditions for manifesting creative abilities from childhood. Art is a powerful means of developing children's creativity on the boundary of preschool and school age, particularly decorative and applied arts. Research shows that decorative and applied arts appeal to children due to their aesthetic perception of objects, people, and interiors typical of this age. Children of this age are interested in working with various artistic materials, techniques, and methods, which help create beautiful things, attributes, and decorations for games and handmade crafts. Notably, the inclusion of decorative and applied arts in educational programs for children aged 5–7 has been proven to significantly enhance their achievements in drawing, modelling, and appliqué from previous preschool years, making it a universal form of creativity during this period [11, p. 278–279].

Educators use the significant potential of decorative and applied activities for developmental and educational purposes. For this purpose, decorative and applied arts clubs function successfully and remarkably well in institutions of general secondary, out-of-school, and primary art education. Each institution has its own specific approach; however, all these clubs share a focus on developing children's artistic creativity, a focus that has proven to be highly effective.

The problem of creativity and creative development has been studied in both international (J. Guilford, H. Gruber, J. Davidson, R. Mooney, P. Torrance, F. Barron, D. Harrington, A. Stein, and others) and national (I. Bekh, I. Bila, G. Kostiuik, T. Halkina, E. Hryhorenko, I. Demchenko, O. Kononko, P. Kravchuk, L. Liakhova, S. Maksymenko, V. Molyako, and others) psychological and pedagogical literature. In a broad sense, creative development is considered a dynamic process of personality formation aimed at expanding the spectrum of abilities and personal qualities, manifesting and enriching various activities, with results characterized by novelty and originality.

(Продовження статті на с. 34)

У контексті проблеми розвитку творчості дітей розкрито особливості реалізації творчого розвитку дітей 5–7 років у гуртках декоративно-ужиткового мистецтва на базі вітчизняних закладів загальної середньої освіти, позашкільної освіти та в центрах розвитку дитини. Виокремлено специфіку організації та реалізації цього процесу у зазначених освітніх закладах, де може бути впроваджена програма й методика творчого розвитку дитини (авторка В. Дихта-Кірфф). Розроблено зміст програми, спрямований на розвиток дитини в комплексі образного й логічного мислення, дрібної моторики пальців рук, уваги й пам'яті, а також методику творчого розвитку дітей. Розроблено комплекс творчих завдань, що розвивають уміння пізнавати об'єкт або ситуацію, перетворювати його та створювати творчий продукт.

Означено специфіку і відмінності організації гурткової роботи з дітьми 5–7 років у закладах загальної середньої освіти Польщі (з власного досвіду авторки В. Дихти-Кірфф). Зроблено висновки про відмінність організації позаурочної роботи в польських школах від українських, що дозволяє дитині мати більше різноманіття занять з різними педагогами на окремих шкільних локаціях, бути більш вільною у виборі бажаної діяльності. Уточнено спрямованість роботи педагогів у напрямі розвитку дитини: різні педагоги забезпечують розвиток дитини на локаціях (стадіон, ігрова зона, гурток, kort тощо), куди приводять групи зі «Світлиці» (аналога української групи подовженого дня). Акцентовано, що дитина має можливість занурення у різні види діяльності, які обирає за бажанням самостійно, але при цьому завжди залишається в полі зору педагогів. Наголошено, що особливістю польської освітньої системи є навчання дітей старшого дошкільного віку в школах (в класах, що мають назву «зеровки»).

За спостереженнями В. Діфти-Кірф, упровадження розробленої методики творчого розвитку дітей стимулює вихованців на виявлення самостійної художньої творчості, позитивних емоцій, емоційної сприйнятливості, уваги.

Ключові слова: творчість, діти 5-7 років, декоративно-ужиткове мистецтво, гуртки, заклади загальної середньої освіти, заклади позашкільної освіти, центри розвитку дитини.

(Продовження статті. Початок на с. 31)

Delving into the scientific principles regarding the developmental patterns of children aged 5–7 (N. Bibik, I. Bila, A. Bohush, N. Havrysh, O. Kononko, T. Pirozhenko, O. Savchenko, and others), it becomes evident that this age group is uniquely sensitive to creativity. Various aspects of the problem of developing creativity of children on the border of preschool and primary school age through artistic means are examined by S. Harbar [10], K. Demchuk [1], O. Dronova [11], O. Jafarova, O. Komarovska, V. Kotlyar [5], O. Kulchytska, I. Onyshchuk, O. Polovina, V. Ragozina, N. Skrypnyk [10], G. Sukhorukova [11], A. Shevchuk, N. Chen [12], L. Shelestova [13], L. Shulha, and others. Researchers emphasize creating a favourable and stimulating educational environment, including elements such as freedom of expression, exposure to diverse artistic forms, and encouraging risk-taking to develop a child's creativity. They explore the potential of primary art institutions (O. Komarovska), extracurricular education institutions (O. Semenov [9], A. Kornienko [4]), and child development centres (V. Dykhta-Kirff [2]). The variability of conditions in these institutions, where the creative development of children aged 5–7 in decorative and applied arts clubs unfolds and contributes to enhancing artistic skills and the experience of such activities, is a focus of research interest for both scientists and practitioners.

The aim of the article is to uncover specific aspects of developing the creativity of children aged 5–7 in decorative and applied arts clubs, which can occur within institutions of general secondary education, institutions of out-of-school education, and child development centres. Additionally, it aims to provide examples of working with children of this age group.

Clubs effectively develop children's talents and abilities by creating conditions for their identification and growth. The advantages of club activities lie in their widespread nature and their ability to involve many children in various types of creativity, such as artistic, technical, research, sports, and

more. Children at the boundary of older preschool and primary school age must experiment with different activities and find their interests. Clubs offer broad opportunities for this exploration.

Art-oriented clubs, particularly those focusing on visual, and decorative and applied arts, are highly sought after by parents and children. These clubs provide a unique platform for children to have their first encounter with these forms of art, fostering their creativity and imagination. Club programs are diverse, offering children a range of decorative activities (paper designing, doll making, quilling, egg decorating, etc.). Some clubs even specialize in a single type of activity, such as embroidery, basket weaving, macramé, crochet, and more, providing a focused and immersive learning experience.

The rich heritage of local folk crafts often influences the presence of certain clubs in institutions. These clubs provide a unique opportunity for children to engage in specific crafts under the guidance of local artisans, fostering a sense of community and cultural appreciation.

As mentioned earlier, different institutions have unique features that ensure the creative development of children. Institutions of general secondary education can promote children's creative development through clubs focusing on visual, decorative and applied arts, led by visual arts teachers.

Institutions of out-of-school education are characterized by a greater variety of clubs, driven by the need to satisfy their students and parents' broad demands, especially in larger cities. These institutions create the necessary conditions for artistic and creative development, as noted by O. Semenov [9]. These conditions include the aestheticization of the educational space, the problematization of the content of productive activities, the connection between activities organized by educators and the child's independent experimentation and creativity, and the integration of various activities [9, p. 227]. These institutions have modernized the educational process in recent years by introducing experimental research

in collaboration with scientists and implementing innovations [4; 6].

In child development centres, which are typically private, both the demand from children and their parents, as well as the preferences of the management and the availability of specialists drive the presence of clubs, sections, studios, and workshops for children up to 5–7 years old. Parents play a crucial role in this process, as they often seek out these centres to supplement their children's education. Children who attend these centres may also be enrolled in other institutions of preschools or general secondary education, or they may be home-schooled and require creative development support in line with their inclinations and abilities from an early age. Among the most common are aesthetic clubs, particularly those focused on visual activities [2, pp. 66–67, 69]. Conditions that foster the development of children's creativity include individualized and varied programs, including custom-designed ones; an appropriately resource-rich environment; a favourable emotionally positive psychological climate; and alignment with the psychophysiological characteristics of children. An analysis of the successful experiences of some of these centres demonstrates the positive impact of their developmental environment on fostering creativity in older preschool children [2, p. 78].

In the research context, V. Dykhta-Kirff [2] developed a program and methodology for fostering the creativity of children aged 5–7, which was tested in child development centres. The program aimed to develop children's cognitive processes and form their abilities to tackle inventive, prognostic, and research tasks. The content of the program was designed to comprehensively develop the child: imaginative thinking (1st content block), logical thinking (2nd content block), fine motor skills (3rd content block), imagination, and memory (4th content block). This program has shown promising results, demonstrating the potential to enhance significantly children's creative abilities [2, p. 240].

The program content, designed to foster the creative development of

children, has a profound impact on their cognitive and creative abilities. A series of creative tasks were developed, each has a specific focus. Series A tasks, with a cognitive focus, enhance the ability to understand an object or situation. Children learn to classify objects of the material world by specific characteristics, systematize them, identify their features, perceive their quantitative and qualitative characteristics, see an object as a contradiction of its features or values, and generalize information about objects. On the other hand, series B tasks are creative in nature, aimed at developing the ability to transform an object or situation and create something new. Children learn methods of changing an object or situation to create a creative product.

Practical pedagogical tasks were carried out to develop children's abilities in real-world scenarios. They were encouraged to formulate ideas for solving semi-open and open-type tasks; evaluate ideas and detail the most successful ones for problem-solving and creative tasks; change perspectives on an object based on additional information obtained during discussions; and transform an object and its features as a realization of a creative concept.

Let us consider how the content is implemented through the creative tasks offered to children in decorative and applied activities.

The content of the first block involved creating images of objects (sounds, letters, signs, phenomena, states, processes), which was preceded by developing children's abilities to observe, compare, identify the essentials, and make generalizations. These skills were practiced during the perception and discussion of artistic works. For example, the teacher might present unusual illustrated letters (H. Narbut, "Ukrainian Alphabet") and then ask the children to explore the first letter of their name: what is its character, what shape does it have, what does it remind them of, what colour is it? (Series A task). Then, the children would create an artistic image of this letter, embodying their idea through colour, texture, shape, etc., in an appliqué or modelling project of their choice. The

created image was then dramatized: stories were created about it, it was depicted through body movements, and dialogues were invented (Series B task).

To teach the skills to create objects with new properties, the program focused on combining the features of objects with different functions into one (e.g., a helicopter carpet and boot flowerpots). Children practiced tasks like "Invent a Fantastic Story" (about characters who "borrowed" each other's qualities, such as Telesyk and Kyrylo Kozhumiaka); "Chain of Associations" (inventing associative words); and "Create a New Thing" (using parts that do not seem to fit together at first glance, such as a net and a ball).

In the second block of the program, work with children was aimed at developing their logical thinking in the construction process from paper to improvised, natural, and residual materials. Familiarizing children with geometric shapes preceded construction, orientation in space and time, and concepts of size and magnitude. First, children were taught to analyze the construction of an object from the point of view of its practical purpose (tasks of series A). Then, they were encouraged to find separate constructive solutions, to assemble simple structures according to the instructions, using different methods of fastening parts together (with the help of a teacher). The children embodied the acquired skills by creating various constructions from parts and toys for games (clock, animal figure) (tasks of series B). The "Typical Fantasizing" became helpful in the development of logical thinking (transforming an object or changing its properties – for example, to mold a large hare and a small fox, which a hare can now hunt, etc.)

Significant opportunities for children's decorative and practical activities are laid in the content of the third block. It was devoted to developing fine motor skills of children's fingers in various artistic activities. Children familiarized themselves with artistic materials during cognitive tasks (tasks of series A) and explored their pictorial properties. As a result, in the process of creating images of objects, animals, dishes, etc. children drew with paints, chalk, wax, gouache,

felt-tip pens and pencils, pastels, etc., analyzed how the choice of materials affects the created image (a hedgehog drawn with felt-tip pens or pastels has a different character). In the process of drawing, children's ideas about the shape of objects, their similarities and differences, and deviations from the basic shape were clarified; they were encouraged to distinguish, name, and use all the colours of the spectrum and complex shades; choose warm, cold tones of colours, colour of paints by the background of the paper; perform drawings from imagination, from memory, from nature; to the independent search for image techniques. Moreover, children developed a sense of colour when making patterns in forms depicting household items (apron, dress, and rug); taught to draw patterns based on Petrykivka painting and decorative compositions; mix colours to get new combinations; independently use various techniques of taking into account the expressive qualities of materials and use improvised means for drawing.

During the creation of appliques, children were introduced to the rules of cutting symmetrical shapes from folded paper (leaves, dishes); they were taught to use techniques of silhouette cutting and torn appliqué; to select paper of different textures (glossy, velvety, etc.), natural materials, fabric depending on the nature of the image; to create works from life and imagination (flowers, mushrooms, vegetables, toys); to create silhouettes of shadow theatre characters; to arrange a still life with 2–3 objects; to arrange the appliqué on the paper sheet beautifully. Additionally, they made decorative appliques from geometric (polygons) and botanical elements (flowers, leaves, and berries), using fragments of patterns from Opishnia ceramics, embroidery, and carpet weaving, empowering them to express their creativity.

Children were engaged in the learning process of making simple (vegetables, fruits) and then complex-shaped (birds, dolls) clay objects following the types of folk toys (Opishnia); they were taught to sculpt after observing the shape of the object, identifying and naming its specific parts, using knowledge of solid

figures (sphere, cylinder, cone), conveying characteristic movements of humans and animals, aiming for expressive poses (a galloping horse, a swimming duck); to use sticks to reproduce features (feathers in a rooster, shaggy fur in a bear). Children were taught decorative sculpting on the plane (reliefs with images of flowers and animal silhouettes), to sculpt toys and bas-reliefs based on folk art motifs, and to know how to paint the product, decorate it using available materials (combs, sticks, ropes, etc.).

The fourth block of the program involved the development of imagination and memory through singing, musical rhythmic movements, role-playing games, and theatrical performances.

As we are more interested in the artistic component of the program, let us focus on it and provide examples.

The support of children's creative development should consider their level of development and artistic abilities. In the initial sessions with children, the teacher may focus their attention simultaneously on cognitive tasks related to mastering a particular technique and on developing skills in working with specific artistic materials. For instance, to train children in creating thin and thick coils of different lengths, twisting them into spirals, and rolling out clay with a rolling pin, the teacher offered individual tasks, the results of which were then transformed into a collective decorative composition called "Rug" in front of the children. The teacher showed pictures of rugs and carpets made using patchwork techniques. Cognitive tasks were proposed: to create a "patchwork rug" from available materials on the floor, a "living rug" from children's palms, and a paper "rug" from paper pieces. The main task was for the children to understand what "patches" are, why they are needed, and what can be created with them (a new product).

After this, the teacher explained systematically that each child would make such a "patch" – as an element of the overall rug:

Step 1: Soften the clay and make two thin coils of different colours;

Step 2: Twist them into a spiral and place them on the table; then twist a coil

of a third colour and wrap it around the spiral on the table;

Step 3: Make several more coils of preferred colours and wrap them around the spiral to arrange them on the table to form a "lying snail";

Step 4: Place a film on the multicolored spiral and roll over it with a rolling pin;

Step 5: With the teacher's help, arrange all the individual compositions on a large cardboard so that they form a rug made of multicolored clay "patches". At the end of the session, the children discuss the image created.

During the "Sea" themed lesson, children explored the sea as a natural object and created a free composition where they could express their creativity to the fullest. At the beginning of the session, the teacher asked the children to share everything they knew about the sea: what it is and how it forms, what size and colour it can be, who can live in the sea, etc. Then, the children's experiences were actualized – whether they had been to the sea and what they remembered. Next, the children were invited to play with cards featuring images: the teacher showed a card, and the children signalled with yellow fish (silhouettes of fish on sticks) if the item was related to the sea (pictures of waves, fish, ships, sand, etc.) and with purple if it was not (house, clown, saw).

Following the engaging discussion, the teacher introduced the children to works of art depicting the sea, carefully selected to inspire their imagination. The creative task was to close their eyes and let their imagination run wild, envisioning their own unique sea. They were then encouraged to bring their vision to life using plasticine. This required them to choose colours and appropriate techniques to accurately convey a stormy sea (for example, waves – thin rolls of matching colours intertwined with each other and lightly pressed onto cardboard) or a calm sea surface (smoothing plasticine on cardboard). Throughout the process, the teacher demonstrated various techniques for working with plasticine, further fuelling the children's imagination and creativity.

V. Dykhta-Kirff's teaching experience in Ukraine, adapted to the context of

work in a Polish educational institution, where the author currently teaches and helps children unfold their creativity, allowed for certain generalizations.

In Ukraine, children aged 5–7 can attend preschool (in the senior group) and simultaneously participate in interest clubs at a child development centre or extracurricular institution. These interest clubs are specialized groups where children can explore their hobbies and interests, such as art, music, sports, etc. Similarly, 6–7-year-old students: after school, they can stay in an extended day group and attend clubs at schools or in institutions of out-of-school education. The educator works in an extended day group with a fixed number of children; for all of them, the routine moments are the same (lunchtime, homework time, playtime, club time, etc.). Apart from club activities, students have no opportunity to choose their own activities according to their preferences and freely switch from one activity to another at any time.

The organization of extracurricular activities in Polish schools differs slightly. In the Polish school where V. Dykhta-Kirff works, after regular classes, students remain in the "Svitlytsia" group (equivalent to an extended day group in Ukraine), where they can do homework, play in organized areas, go to the stadium, play tennis, or attend clubs. The "Svitlytsia" group is a structured environment where children can engage in various activities under the supervision of educators. Children of older preschool age also stay in school, not in a preschool institution as in Ukraine. Such classes are called "zerowka" (zero grade).

Most children stay at school after classes. Therefore, interest clubs operate



Ill. 1. Children in the "Svitlytsia" group



Ill. 2. Children in the playroom



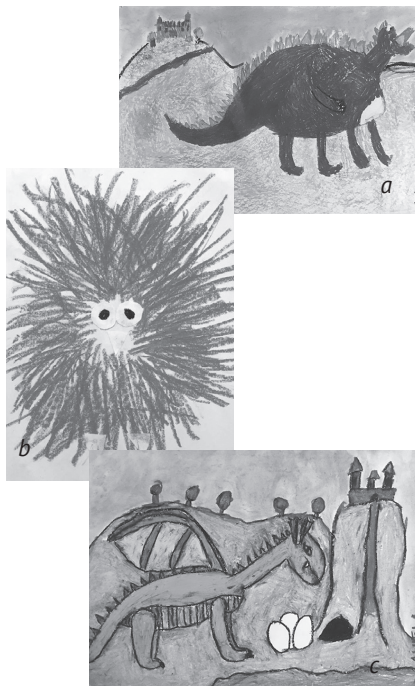
Ill. 3. Bicycle route

for them in the "Svitlytsia". According to their schedule and the list of club members, club leaders pick them up from the "Svitlytsia", and after classes, they accompany them back to the "Svitlytsia".

The educational process in Poland after classes is structured to offer a diverse range of activities. Educators facilitate the development of children in various locations (stadium, play area, club, court, etc.), where they bring groups of children (see illustrations 1-3).

The next educator in the "Svitlytsia" observes the children in the group and ensures that the "location educators" promptly pick up different children for their various activities. This ensures your child has an excellent choice of interest-based activities, always under the supervision of educators.

V. Dykhta-Kirff conducts art classes and utilizes her experience. The tasks engage children to create interesting thematic works on free topics. The results demonstrated by the students show educators and parents how creative and liberated the children are and how exciting ideas they embody



Ill. 4a, 4b, 4c. Children's works on the theme "Dinosaurs"



Ill. 5. Children's works on the theme "Owls"



Ill. 6. Composition using combined techniques (painting, collage)



Ill. 7. Collage "A Walk in the Forest" (group work)



Ill. 8. Three-dimensional composition using various materials and techniques

using various techniques and methods (see illustrations 4-8).

Conclusion. Accordingly, decorative and applied arts clubs in national institutions of general secondary education, institutions of out-of-school education, and child development centres have significant potential in fostering children's creative development, as evidenced by researchers' findings.

The author's experience working in various educational institutions in Ukraine and Poland confirms the high interest of 5-7-year-old children in decorative activities and their inclination towards creative self-expression through different techniques and methods of working with artistic, natural, and leftover materials, allowing them to create new products. Implementing the developed methodology for children's creative development has contributed to fostering children's attitudes toward creativity, emotional sensitivity, and independent creative actions.

A promising direction for further research is the comparative analysis of visual arts education for 7-year-old students in Polish and Ukrainian schools

(approaches, methodologies, and work organization).

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Development of creativity of children aged 5-7 in decorative and applied arts clubs: Applied aspect

In the context of the problem of children's creativity development, the specifics of implementing creative development for children aged 5-7 years old in decorative and applied arts clubs based on national institutions of general secondary education, out-of-school education, and child development centres are revealed. The particularities of organizing and implementing this process in the mentioned educational institutions where a program and methodology for child creative development (by author V. Dikhta-Kirfff) can be introduced are outlined. The program content, methodology for child creative development, and set of creative tasks for children are developed.

The specifics of organizing extracurricular activities with 5-7-year-old children in Polish institutions of general secondary education (based on V. Dikhta-Kirfff own experience) and its differences from Ukrainian practices are identified.

Keywords: *creativity, 5-7-year-old children, decorative and applied arts, clubs, institutions of general secondary education, institutions of out-of-school education, child development centres.*

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