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Children's ability to make a moral choice in older preschool age as a component of the formation of moral values

Summary

Formation of the system of values and value attitudes is the result of moral education of the individual. An important indicator of moral values is the ability of an individual in situations of choice to adhere to norms of moral behavior, in other words, the ability to make a moral choice. The article cleared up moral development of children of preschool age and justified demands for the organization of various activities that optimize education of moral values. Results of the study are presented, highlighting the diagnosis of the ability of a child of older preschool age to make a moral choice.

Key words: moral values, ability to make moral choices, moral consciousness, moral feelings, communicative activities, play work, work.

Introduction

In the conditions of the humanization of the modern education system, the problem of educating the system of moral values in the younger generation, which is repeatedly stated in the Laws of Ukraine "On Education", "On Preschool Education", and the Basic Component of Preschool Education in Ukraine, becomes especially relevant. There is a decrease in the moral culture of the individual, his ability to make moral choices, to abandon the culture of consumption and utilitarian values.

Purpose, subject and research methods. The purpose of the article is to analyze peculiarities of moral development of a child of older preschool age, to diagnose his ability to make moral choices and to outline the ways of educating the ability to make moral choices in preschool age.

The following research methods were used: analysis of literary sources, experiment, observation, conversations with children.

Research results.

Moral values of older preschoolers are defined as weakly perceived, unstable semantic formations based on an emotional and valuable attitude towards another person, the need for connection with others, generalizing emotionally colored ideas and knowledge about relationships on the basis of justice, humanity, responsibility, human dignity, which are manifested mainly in adaptive behavior, oriented towards evaluations, norms set by adults. An important indicator of the formation of moral values is the ability of an individual to make a moral choice.

Let's consider the peculiarities of the moral development of a child of older preschool age, which affect his ability to make a moral choice.

Characterizing the development of a preschooler's moral consciousness, let's pay attention to the following points. According to the theory of J. Piaget, development of moral judgments of 4-6-year-old children is at the stage of "moral realism", because of this, the main points of reference for evaluating people's actions are not the motives of activity, but the results of such actions (whoever caused more damage is more guilty).

Pre-school children are characterized by pre-operational thinking, which causes impulsive behavior, inability to think in terms of ideas, to predict consequences of their own behavior. Egocentrism also characterizes a preschooler's thinking - the inability to see events through the eyes of another person, to move away from one's own point of view.

In older preschool age, such a thing as decentration of thinking appears, thanks to which the child gets rid of an egocentric position and acquires the ability to change his own point of view under the influence of comparison with others. There are also "internal ethical instances" which include emotionally supported ideas about what is good and what is bad, about the norms of socially approved behavior and determine the child's actions and the nature of his interaction with others.

Scientists (M. Boryshevskiy, J. Piaget, A. Pryhozhan, E. Subbotskiy) claim that older preschoolers develop evaluation standards. Babies begin to show increased attention to the moral aspect of actions of others, they seek to give them an ethical assessment. According to L. Bozhovych, if in the early and younger preschool age, the child's moral ideas and assessments are of a general, diffuse nature, merged with his direct attitude towards the person, then in the older preschool age, "the moral assessment is separated from the immediate emotional experiences of the child and becomes more independent and generalized" [2, p. 243]. So, at the end of the senior preschool age, children are already well acquainted with the moral norms of behavior, are able to correctly assess the situation and find an adequate line of behavior.

Let's consider development of moral feelings and motives of behavior in preschool age. From the first months of life, a child develops a sense of trust in people, an emotional and positive

attitude towards them. In the future, these feelings encourage the child to act in accordance with the requirements of adults. In the third year of life, such a feeling as "pride for achievements" is formed. The child tries to record the results of his activities and demonstrate them to adults. If an adult approves of a child then self-love is formed which is one of the most significant basic qualities of personality.

A contradiction between pride and shame is characteristic of the development of a child of older preschool age. Trying to maintain a positive self-esteem, the preschooler tries to follow the learned rules of behavior and thus prevents the transition of pride in his moral qualities to shame, prevents the emergence of emotional conflict. According to scientists (V.Pikozh), the emergence of feelings of pride and shame contribute to the emergence of conscience as an internal ethical agency [4, p. 256].

According to L. Bozhovych, the desire to fulfill the learned norms of behavior and follow the requirements of adults causes development of a sense of duty in older preschool age which appears in the form of a generalized category "necessary".

In the older preschool age, co-subjugation (hierarchization) of motives takes place (L. Bozhovych, D. Elkonin). The research data of L. Bozhovych, M. Matyukhina, and T. Matis indicate that the first place in the hierarchy of motives among older preschoolers begins to be occupied by broad social motives (self-affirmation, self-improvement, the desire to please others). In the second place are narrowly personal motives (well-being, prestige). The third place is occupied by cognitive motives related to the interest in the process and content of education. The fourth place is occupied by negative motives. Out of all motives, the child determines the leading ones, the most significant for achieving success, which subordinate secondary motives. By doing this, the older preschooler becomes capable of moral choice. Social motives of children of 6-7 years of life are still quite unstable. Because of this, the choice of a child's line of behavior is significantly influenced by the presence of other people - adults or peers. Being alone with himself, the child finds it even more difficult to restrain immediate urges than in company].

It is common knowledge that the child's knowledge and feelings are reflected in his behavior. Psychologists claim that there is a discrepancy between the child's knowledge of moral standards and actual behavior. Because of this, although the child tries to behave according to the rules, the behavior is still determined by immediate desires. Moreover, the contradiction between the desire to do the right thing and real behavior does not cause the child to feel dissatisfied with himself, a positive attitude towards himself remains (O. Prihozhan). At the age of 5-6, arbitrary behavior begins to form, which plays an important role in the formation of the child's moral behavior.

We carried out diagnostics of the ability to make moral choices among children of older preschool age. The study was carried out in senior groups in the preschool educational establishment № 46 and Central Medical Center №. 55 in Zhytomyr. The following indicators of the ability to make a moral choice were checked: knowledge of norms and rules of behavior, formation of evaluation standards; presence of socially oriented motivation of behavior; the ability to adhere to moral behavior in situations of choice.

The data obtained during the interviews proved that older preschoolers generally know the basic rules of behavior and can sometimes explain their meaning clearly enough. However, under the condition of expanding the content of questions, it turned out that it is difficult for children to give a more complete answer. 21% of preschoolers were able to reveal the content of the rules in detail. Partial knowledge of rules was revealed by 39% of preschoolers. Such children know the basic rules that involve taking care of different body parts, requirements for their daily routines and food safety. They know the rules of behavior outside, in public places, in the educational complex. They know the rules of coexistence in the family and are aware of responsibilities of each family member and their own. They are aware of the differences between relatives, acquaintances and strangers and have superficial ideas about the rules of communication with these social groups. They have an idea about means of preventing conflicts with others. They are guided by basic moral requirements and values.

Analysis of the data obtained during conversations with children proves that only a small number of children are aware of and can explain the expediency of observing the proposed rules of behavior as those that contribute to the preservation of physical and mental health of the individual. The majority of preschoolers (77%) learned the rules of behavior at the level of simple reproduction, and their observance is limited to a certain situation (cases were observed when children could explain why it is necessary to wash hands before eating, but did not understand why it is necessary to wash an apple before eating). It can be argued that such preschoolers do not realize the expediency of following the rules of behavior. Among them, part of the children (48%) are guided by the requirements of authoritative adults or indicate the impossibility of causing physical harm: you can't fight, because mom says it's so ugly, screaming is ugly, because the eardrum will burst. The rest of the children have difficulties when it is necessary to explain the need to observe certain rules of behavior (29%).

The analysis of the results of the methods allowed us to come to the conclusion that preschoolers are poorly aware of the hierarchy, and therefore the relativity of moral norms. This makes it difficult for them to comply with the general requirements of the norm in situations of choice, when it is necessary to be aware of its content as a whole, and not just to follow a specific rule.

Conversations with children proved that evaluation standards for preschoolers are not clear enough yet. The vast majority of children understand the essence of the moral concepts that they were asked to describe correctly. At the same time, the received answers made it possible to reveal a certain limitation in their interpretation: kindness is often equated with honesty, obedience, friendliness with the ability to forgive and not fight. It can be seen that personality qualities are characterized by preschoolers in terms of relationships with others. A small number of children (35% of preschoolers) could not verbalize their own ideas about personality qualities.

It was also noticed that in conflict situations or in situations of choice, most children do not know how to identify and formulate a moral problem (87%). It is difficult for children to explain the causes of a conflict situation, to understand the motives of the actions of others, to adequately evaluate their own actions in the current situation. Naturally, this is the defining reason why preschoolers cannot solve a moral problem. Among them, 36% of preschoolers need minor help from an adult to find out causes of the conflict and justify options for getting out of the problem situation, other children require a detailed explanation.

In view of the above, it can be asserted that older preschool children have elementary knowledge of rules of behavior, however, this knowledge has a fragmentary, fragmentary nature, which indicates a lack of systematicity in their assimilation; most children do not understand the expediency of fulfilling the norms of behavior, do not know how to identify and formulate a moral problem, which leads to discrepancies between existing theoretical knowledge, assessment of events and behavior in real situations.

The ability to make a moral choice presupposes the presence of socially oriented internal motivation of behavior; developed motives of duty; compliance with social motives of behavior in a choice situation; the desire to establish and maintain positive relationships with others; orientation in behavior towards universal human values.

We received separate data on the development of children's motivational sphere during the interviews described above. Along with this, we used additional methods.

In order to identify the formation of value orientations, the method "Identification of moral values and ideals" was carried out. Also, in order to find out whether children's behavior is guided by socio-cultural values, projective methods were used: 1) drawing test (we asked children to draw several pictures: some show good deeds, others show bad ones), after drawing, children explained what caused the deeds depicted; 2) a set of story pictures depicting positive and negative actions of people was shown, after looking at it children were asked to explain the motives of the actions of the depicted characters. In order to study the effectiveness of social and personal motives for behavior, to identify orientation towards socially approved norms of behavior, older preschoolers were put in situations in which they had to make a choice. "Choice 1" and "Choice 2" techniques

were used to study the formation of duty motives. To identify children's desire to establish positive relationships with others, their behavior was observed in natural and specially created situations. After carrying out certain actions, they were asked to justify their expediency.

The analysis of the results of methods conducted allows us to state that preschoolers seek to orient themselves in their relationships with those around them on universal human values. Among them, they distinguish kindness, friendliness, and sincerity. However, in real behavior, children are mainly guided by utilitarian and practical values (84%). This is manifested in the fact that peers are perceived by them as a means to achieve their own desires, the motive of "usefulness" prevails in relationships.

The analysis of the data obtained as a result of implementation of projective methods proved that in situations of moral choice external motivation of behavior prevails: awareness of need to fulfill the requirements of adults, desire to receive the praise of an adult, to avoid punishment (84%). Moral motives (getting pleasure from positive actions, desire to please others, desire to help, desire to avoid conflict, etc.) were shown by 16% of preschoolers.

The data obtained as a result of performing all the tests proved that selfish motives of activity prevail among children. 18% of preschoolers showed an orientation towards socially approved norms of behavior. They immediately agreed to give the toys to babies. 52% of preschoolers chose the motive "for babies" at the prompting of an adult. It is difficult for such children to restrain their desires, they cannot make a choice yet, they feel dependent on the guidance of an adult. The rest of the children (29%) refused to give the toys to babies, so they showed selfish motives for their behavior.

During the second stage of the experiment, when the children made a choice on their own, the following results were obtained: 4% of preschoolers, mainly those who have a brother or a sister, identified the motive "for babies" (toys were given to babies) and 86% preschoolers preferred a game with an interesting toy.

These indicators change significantly in the conditions of collective activity, in the presence of a common goal, especially if the teacher has previously emphasized the importance of completing the task. Thus, only 14% of preschoolers showed egoistic orientation. Thus, it can be argued that collective activity greatly contributes to the formation of social motives for behavior.

Analysis of answers using the "Finish the situation" method, observation of children's behavior in natural and specially created situations of choice showed that 36% of older preschoolers strive to maintain positive relationships with others. Some children (64%) are selfish. They support positive relationships with others, if it does not conflict with their own interests. Among them, 31% of children change their position when an adult intervenes. The rest of the

children do not enjoy joint activities with their peers. Interaction is possible when they need to satisfy their desires.

Carrying out the "Choice" method made it possible to establish that 19% of preschoolers have active, stable motives of duty (in some cases, they are not sufficiently stable). 34% of children demonstrated that the motives of duty are passive and not sufficiently stable. It is difficult for such children to bring the started work to an end, they do not show initiative when performing various tasks. The rest of the children have undeveloped motives of duty.

Taking into account the above-mentioned features of the development of preschool children and the results of diagnostics made it possible to identify the types of activities in which the child's ability to make moral choices develops.

Education of moral values and the ability to make moral choices in the process of communicating with adults.

Communication is the main way for educating the child and if necessary, the educational process is corrected. From the first months of life, a child develops need for communication with adults. Initially, the initiator of communication is an adult, later the initiative passes to the child (the first sign is the "revival" complex). During early childhood, the development of a child's communication with an adult overcomes two stages: emotional-personal, situational communication (from birth to 12 months); practical, effective communication (from 12 months to 3 years). At this stage, the adult acts as a partner in subject-manipulative activity, a role model, a person who evaluates the child's knowledge and skills. If the adult continues to initiate emotional forms of communication and the child already seeks activities with objects, conflict behavior may arise.

In preschool age, the child's opportunities to learn about the world around him and communicate with adults expand. In the process of cognitive communication between two children, ideas and knowledge about objects and phenomena of the surrounding world that are not in his field of vision are formed, mental qualities such as inquisitiveness, criticality, intelligence are cultivated. During personal communication, the child satisfies his need for respect, recognition of an adult, support and approval of his own behavior. If a child is sure that an adult is fair and treats him positively, he calmly listens to his comments and wishes regarding his knowledge and skills, actively reacts to them, and tries to adjust his behavior or actions accordingly [5, p. 226].

I.D. Beh claims that in order for communication to be effective, the educator must have psychological culture, which comes down to the following requirements: knowledge of the peculiarities of the child's development at preschool age and the ability to correctly assess his individual characteristics (temperament, character, life experience, etc.); knowledge of the features of detecting basic emotions and the ability to adequately respond to the child's behavior and mental

states; to choose such a way of behavior with the child that best corresponds to his individual characteristics [1, p. 251].

As for the qualities of the educator's personality, according to experimental research, the most favorable are: emotional stability, high self-esteem and self-satisfaction, acceptance of social norms and adequate behavior in society, the ability to experiment, professional skills, and the ability to be creative. Conversely, the qualities of a teacher's personality that negatively affect his professional activity are the following: neuroticism, authoritarian and paranoid tendencies, an inferiority complex, excessive self-control.

From the point of view of children, the most important qualities of a teacher are those that demonstrate interest and respect for children as individuals and manifestation of which does not suppress the dignity of children [1, p. 252].

We can single out the following requirements for the organization of communication: showing love, a friendly attitude towards the child, interest in him; the use of an emotionally positive appeal to the child (as opposed to a neutral appeal); expressiveness, emotionality of the teacher's speech, facial expressions, gestures; communication in a language understandable to the child; sequence and gradualness of providing evidence; when setting requirements, the use of arguments that are valid for the child, and not for the educator; development of children's communicative activity, their emotional culture; satisfaction of the child's need for a positive assessment of an adult; providing emotional comfort.

Education of moral values and the ability to make moral choices in game activities.

It is common knowledge that play activities are leading activities in preschool age. It is in it that the main neoplasms in the structure of the preschooler's personality are formed. In the game, the child actively learns about the world around him, relationships between people, rules and norms of behavior, himself, his capabilities. It is in it that the arbitrary behavior of the child is formed. L. Vygotsky wrote that the game awakens strong and bright feelings in the child, it teaches not to follow emotions, but to harmonize them with the rules of the game and the ultimate goal.

In order for the game to optimize the process of educating moral values, it must meet the following requirements.

1. Encouraging the child's self-activity, limiting adult intervention in the game. The teacher should make sure that the game enriches children's impressions, feelings, and their knowledge of the world around them and exclude everything that interferes with children's self-activity.

2. Focusing attention on the detection of humane feelings in the game Experimental studies have proven that children begin to follow the rules of behavior in the game that they do not yet follow in real life. (For example: the rule to share toys with friends in a real activity is not followed by almost half of the children without a reminder from an adult, but in the game this rule is

followed by 96% of preschoolers). However, we should pay attention to the fact that, despite the careful performance of duties that involve roles, children do not yet show humane feelings in the game. Thus, the detection of moral feelings should be introduced as a mandatory element in the game.

3. Providing assistance to the child in identifying moral feelings. For some children, whose emotional experience is diverse, moral manifestations when performing roles are already mandatory. Other children with poor emotional experience, closed still need the help of adults.

4. Active position of each participant in the game. The child should feel like a full-fledged, irreplaceable participant of the game. Only in this case, the preschooler is aware of the role's requirements, he not only reflects the image of a certain character, but also feels like him (a kind, attentive doctor, a gentle, caring mother, etc.).

Education of moral values and the ability to make moral choices in work

The peculiarity of children's work is that work is not a vital necessity for them, does not involve the creation of new material and spiritual values, their inclusion in the socio-economic system. However, it is also effective, its result is not so much a material essence (a grown plant, a set table, etc.), but a moral aspect (the child realizes the value of the efforts spent, the value of his efforts for others and for himself, the education of children is carried out industriousness, responsibility, purposefulness, organization, a sense of collectivism, etc.).

However, not every work activity is educational. For this, it must meet the following requirements.

1. Helping an adult, encouraging children to interact and help each other. Practice shows that younger preschoolers rarely come to help a peer on their own initiative. This requires the active intervention of the educator, who stimulates children to help each other using various methods. The main goal is to develop the child's desire to help a friend, to awaken compassion for others.

2. Observing the work of adults (babysitters, cooks, janitors) so that preschoolers understand the importance of domestic work of adults in preschool educational establishments. Such observations not only form children's ideas about the labor activity of adults, interest and respect for it, but also become the basis for the development of preschoolers' desire for independence, the desire to participate in hard work, to do something useful for adults and friends.

3. Involvement of children in the necessary participation in household work - remove toys, books, water indoor flowers, lay out materials for art classes on the tables, arrange plates, etc. At first, children act only as assistants to adults, who gradually accustom them to independence and the ability to interact in various types of work. At the same time, the adult must emphasize the fact that the activity is performed together and has a socially useful result.

4. Use of everyday situations that arise in children's everyday life.

5. Positive assessment from an adult. It evokes a positive emotional response in children, brings them real pleasure from the results of their work and the fact that an authoritative adult has evaluated it. This is how children develop a desire to do something useful for their peers. The educator's assessment of labor actions has an impact on all other children as well. By comparing their behavior with the behavior of their peers, which is evaluated by the teacher at this time, children gradually learn to understand the moral side of their own actions and deeds, to be guided by the norms and rules of relationships that prevail in the preschool educational establishments.

Conclusions. Therefore, involving preschoolers in various types of activities and compliance with the above-mentioned requirements for the organization of these types of activities will contribute to the optimization of the process of educating moral values in preschool age.

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