Pedagogical Potential of Russian Folk Tales in Formation of Cultural Identity of Preschool Children

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Abstract—This article deals with the problem of pedagogical potential of Russian folk tales and their role in the interaction between preschoolers and educators. The authors have developed the levels of cultural identity of pedagogical potential of Russian folk tales which are characterized by ethnic specific content and provide formation of cultural identity of modern children.

Keywords — pedagogical potential, cultural identity, formation of cultural identity, Russian folk tales, components of pedagogical potential, value orientation

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the main tasks of preschool education, noted in the Concept of preschool education (1989), the Federal state educational standard of preschool education (2013) is the formation of value orientations, the basis of personal culture of preschool children. The focus on the formation of personal qualities that ensure social success in preschool age determines the vector of development of preschool education from the state position. These educational tasks are solved during the pedagogical interaction between teacher and children. These tasks also involve the education of moral qualities (friendly attitude to people, a sense of compassion, responsiveness, honesty, responsibility, decency, etc.).

One of the most important issues in the field of socialization of preschool children is the introduction of children to the humanistic values of society. The formation of the value core as a moral basis of the future personality is an important, but still insufficiently studied problem. It is obvious.

In our article, value orientations are understood as a complex formation containing levels and forms of interaction between internal and external, awareness of the surrounding world, one's own "I", as well as the interaction of the past, present and future [1].

II. METHODS AND MATERIALS

The questions of formation of moral value orientations of personality are reflected in modern philosophical and psycho-pedagogical studies, in particular, in the works of S. F. Anisimov [2], O. G. Drobnyzki [3], A. V. Kiryakova [4], A. N. Leontiev [5], S. Y. Shalowa [6], E. N. Shiyanyov [7], E. Fromm [8], D. B. Elkonin [9].

According to some researchers (G. Drobnyszki [3], A.V. Kiryakova [4], D.A. Leontiev [10], E.N. Shiyanyov [7], I.V. Dubrovina [10], Z.I. Vasilyeva [11], etc.), the main function of value orientations is to regulate the behavior of people and to determine the nature of their activities. There is no doubt that a person perceives and reflects a particular life situation through the prism of value orientations. A person sets tasks and chooses the ways to solve them.

In the study of S.Y. Shalowa [6], it is noted that the value orientations formed under the influence of human life circumstances transform personality.

Formation of value orientations of a person begins already from the preschool childhood. This position is based on the researches by leading psychologists of the 19th and 20th centuries, various schools both international (A. Adler [12], A. Bandura [13], A. Maslow [14], K. Rogers [15], S. Freud [16], E. Erickson [17], etc.) and domestic (L.S. Vygotsky [18], V.V. Davydov [19], A.R. Luria [20], A.N. Leontiev [5], P.Y. Galperin [21], D.B. Elkonin [9], B.C. Mukhina [22], etc.). Representatives of various scientific schools and directions attach special importance to the preschool period and early childhood in the formation of personality and its value forming components. They indicate that the process of formation of a personality core – a system of beliefs and value orientations – can be carried out not only consciously but also unconsciously; moreover, it is the most intense in preschool childhood [3–6].

The ability of preschool children to "capture" moral norms, values, rules, attitude to them and patterns of moral conduct allows us to work on the formation of children’s moral value orientations from an early age.

An important tool in the formation of value priorities of preschool children is a folk tale which allows to reveal the moral potential of children, to provide socially approved choice of their behavior, forming the inner core of the individual’s culture. The impact of folk tales on children is extremely strong. This is evidenced by numerous studies of folklorists, ethnographers, teachers. Well-known teachers K.D. Ushinsky, V.A. Sukhomlinovsky investigated the role of fairy tales in the spiritual and moral education of children, while emphasizing its huge impact on an individual [7]. Folk tales contribute to assimilation of all forms of language. The fairy tale penetrates into all activities of a preschool child. It lies at the foundation
of arts (T.S. Komarova [23], N.M. Sokolnikova [24] and others); musical activities (N.A. Vetlugina [25], O.A. Apraksina [26], etc.); gaming activities (T.A. Antonova, L.V. Artemova [27] and others).

Folklore, folk tales act as a guide to the world of cultural values of people. Folk tales contribute to the education of belonging to the spiritual values of native culture: traditions and customs. In folklore, folk tales most fully and clearly have manifested cultural archetypes of the nation. An archetypal image, being the most important component of the cultural archetype, is a symbolic expression of certain archaic attitudes that determine the worldview and attitude of the people. The archetypal image plays a great role in the formation of human mental reactions in the process of socialization and identification in society. The cultural archetype is collective. Archetypal images form a system of values and act as a stabilizer of interpersonal relations. Folklore works contain an identification code that provides awareness of social belonging.

Based on common knowledge and common memory, folklore contributes to the cultural identity of an individual. Identity gives a person a sense of harmony with the social and natural environment. In folklore, the child’s well-being is associated with the life of a close-knit family, among their relatives at Home.

Fairy tales have a unique impact on the formation of cultural identity of Russian children, as the tale operates in a cultural context. Y.M. Lotman rightly argues that “culture is not a chaotic accumulation of texts, but a complex, hierarchically organized, working system” [28]. The text of the tale contains a concise mnemonic program, a common memory of native speakers about the system of cultural values existing in this society. The system of cultural values includes certain cultural universals related to social environment, nature, time, power, personal space, etc.

Philosophical and cultural bases of cultural identity were reflected in the works of many scientists: V.P. Anikin [29], A.M. Anokhin [30], E. Erickson [17], I.V. Malygina [31], etc.). The analysis of scientific works leads to the conclusion that cultural identity can be considered as “the unity of a cultural world of a person or a social group with a certain cultural tradition. The cultural system determines assimilation and acceptance of values, norms, the substantive core of this culture and the forms of its expression” [32].

Currently, there is a tendency of cultural identity deficit due to high rates of technical development and creation of a single information space. There is a weakening of ties within society and values of the experience of previous generations in the eyes of the younger generation. In the context of formation of a problem of person’s cultural identity, we have attempted to identify the pedagogical potential of Russian folk tales in the formation of cultural identity of preschool children in modern socio-cultural conditions. We proceed from the position that, having axiological characteristics, Russian folk tales successfully perform one of the leading social functions – the formation of cultural identity of an individual on the basis of the process of enculturation.

The study of approaches to the definition of “pedagogical potential” is very important for our research. Analysis of psychological and pedagogical research shows that the problem of pedagogical potential study is reflected in the works of many scholars. So, I.V. Vlasyuk and A.F. Kazakova consider pedagogical potential as “a set of opportunities, abilities, resources” [33]. N.V. Eremina understands pedagogical potential as opportunities that are available in its means, forms and implemented in a multi-age event community [34]. E.N. Trofimov determines the pedagogical potential as “the combination of inherent value and substantial funds, providing educational effect” [35]. In A.B. Teplova’s opinion, “pedagogical potential is educational opportunities inherent in the means of folk pedagogy - mother's folklore and traditional toys, values and meanings that are able to convey to a child, as well as forms of meaningful pedagogical activities that they initiate” [36].

In the context of our study, we understand the pedagogical potential of Russian folk tales as a complex system of spiritual and moral values. The system has been developed in Russian folk culture, the action of which is relevant or can be updated in specially created conditions and in the presence of certain factors to achieve any pedagogical goals.

Our analysis and systematization of scientific pedagogical and cultural knowledge about the phenomenon of Russian folk tales allowed us to draw some conclusions. Firstly, the Russian folk tale as a pedagogical phenomenon is an objective, real and necessary phenomenon that occupies an important place in the development of creative abilities of the modern child. Secondly, this phenomenon has a number of components: norms and meanings, a system of values, a sense of belonging to an ethnic community and solidarity, characteristic forms of behavior in our society. In general, the Russian folk tale allows us to understand the traditional cultural values of Russian people. Of course, Russian children belong to the Russian folk culture and are genetically attached to it, but they do not always feel belonging to it due to the lack of life experience.

In pedagogical researches, the Russian folk tale is treated differently. Thus, from the viewpoint of a cultural approach, the Russian folk tale is considered as a mean of Russian folk pedagogy and an integral part of Russian spiritual culture. (V.P. Anikin [29], A.S. Kargin [37], etc.). The axiological approach allows us to understand the Russian folk tale within the framework of Russian folk pedagogy as a socio-cultural phenomenon that preserves the traditional ethical and aesthetic values of the Russian people (A.B. Izmailova [38] and others.).

The tale is collectively created and stored traditionally by the people of prosaic art of oral storytelling of such a real content, which of necessity requires the use of techniques of an implausible picture of the reality.

It should be noted that the pedagogical potential of the Russian folk tale is characterized, in our opinion, by the presence of three main components in its structure: teaching; developing and educating ones.

Let us consider in more detail the content of selected components of the structure of pedagogical potential of Russian folk tales.

The teaching component of pedagogical potential of Russian folk tales is the formation of cultural content which
contains a complex of knowledge about Russian folk culture, moral norms and forms of behavior. The child's acceptance of himself or herself as a part of Russian folk culture means the awareness of himself or herself as a person of a certain culture. The fairy tale has no direct instructions, but always contains a hidden lesson which is assimilated by children after repeated fairy tale perception. For example, the tale "Turnip" teaches us to be hardworking and friendly. Wise qualities are praised in the fairy tale "the Man and the bear". The fairy tale "Masha and the bear" teaches children to be careful, not to go to unfamiliar places. In fairy tales "Geese-swans", "Sister Alyonushka and brother Ivanushka", there is a mandate to obey the grown-ups. The fairy tale "Teremok" teaches children to live in friendship, be helpful. Cunning is ridiculed in fairy tales "Fox and wolf", "Fox and crane".

If the system of activity of the child unfolds in the space of children's games, the system of thinking of children forms a fairy tale. According to L.S. Vygotsky's idea, mental development is mediated by the development of sign systems deployed in the communication of children with adults and culturally transforming their activities [18]. Such a system mediating the mental development of a preschool child is a fairy tale as a special cultural phenomenon.

The developing component of pedagogical potential of Russian folk tales provides creative activity of children. Folk tales teach us to think, analyze, draw conclusions. One of the important educational tasks in childhood is the acquisition of each person from the world of fairy tales. All that is necessary for children's development. The great teacher K.D. Ushinsky emphasized that simplicity and spontaneity of fairy tales correspond to properties of children's psychology [39].

The educational component of pedagogical potential of Russian folk tales provides an impact on the moral and emotional side of children's behavior; the formation of Patriotic feelings for their country; familiarization with national traditions, customs and folklore. In all fairy tales, there are moral and value concepts in the images of heroes – kindness, honesty, humanity. The tale is a moral compass for every child, as in fairy tales there is always a reference point: the characters are either entirely good or bad. This is important in distinguishing the complex dual feelings of the child, while the child identifies himself or herself with a positive character, which forms correct value guidelines. Combining the availability, ease, simplicity, rich spiritual world, accumulated by our ancestors in observations of natural development of children, the Russian folk tale is one of the effective means of formation of preschool children’s value orientations. It is a good foundation for the formation of spiritually-moral sphere of preschoolers [40].

So, the education of children on the material of Russian folk tales has a huge pedagogical potential and contains two key provisions:

1. At preschool age, perception of the tale becomes the specific activity of a child (apart from games and artistic activities), which has an incredibly attractive force, allowing him or her to dream and fantasize freely. A special reality allows us to push the boundaries of everyday life and face complex phenomena and feelings. That all helps the children comprehend the adult world of feelings and experiences. Only in a fairy-tale-form preschoolers are faced with such complex phenomena and feelings as life and death, love and hatred, anger and compassion, betrayal and deceit, etc. Image form of these phenomena is special, fabulous, accessible to understanding of a child, and the depth of manifestations is "adult" in nature.

2. A small child has a highly developed mechanism of identification, i.e. the process of emotional unification of himself or herself with another person, a character and the assignment of his or her norms, values, samples as his or her own. Therefore, perceiving a fairy tale, a child, on the one hand, compares himself or herself with a fairy-tale hero. This allows him or her to feel that not only he or she has such problems and experiences. On the other hand, by means of unobtrusive fairy-tale images, a child is offered solutions to various difficult situations, ways to resolve conflicts, positive support for his or her abilities and self-confidence. In this case, a child identifies with a positive hero. This is not because the preschooler is so well versed in human relations, but because the position of the hero is more attractive compared to other characters. This allows a child to learn the right moral norms and values, to distinguish between good and evil.

In order to identify pedagogical potential of Russian folk fairy tales as the basis for the formation of cultural identity of an individual, we conducted a pilot search work, including ascertaining, forming and control stages.

For the ascertaining stage of the experimental research work with the purpose of formation of ideas of preschool children about Russian folk culture, awareness of children belonging to the native culture, a range of psycho-pedagogical research methods was used:

- conversations with children;
- observation of self-expressions of children in play activities;
- didactic game tasks;
- situations etc.

III. RESULTS

The results of the study of children’s manifestations were recorded in the protocols and subsequently analyzed by the researchers.

Pedagogical diagnostics includes three types of diagnostic tasks:

Type 1 tasks aim at determining the level of mastering the Russian folk ideas about nature (conversation with the children about questions, pictures, models, in the process of didactic games, in the conditions of a verbal situation).

Type 2 tasks aim at determining the level of cognitive interest of children (observations in the course of educational activities of children, conversations).

Type 3 tasks aim at determining the ability to implement their own experience in unusual conditions for a child in order to display the attitude to Russian folk culture (observation of
children in specially created conditions and natural environment).

For the analysis of the volume and nature of the ideas mastered by children, the following indicators are used:

1) amount of knowledge acquired;
2) depth of acquired knowledge.

The amount of knowledge is a quantitative indicator. It testifies to the full development of the program of children.

The depth of knowledge development is a qualitative indicator that reflects the specificity of children's ideas, the degree of children's awareness of the essence of traditions and customs of Russian folk culture, the degree of generality and consistency of children's ideas about the life of Russian people in the old days, their traditions and customs.

In the course of the study, we have identified the following criteria for the formation of cognitive interest in Russian folk culture:

- cognitive activity in the course of educational activities devoted to Russian folk culture;
- a characteristic of emotional-verbal reactions and actions (questions to the teacher, the observation pose, the expression of intellectual emotions);
- stable cognitive need in relation to Russian folk culture.

The criteria of formation of respect for Russian folk culture are:

- negative assessment of activities harmful to cultural heritage;
- desire to participate in various children's activities aimed at immersion in Russian folk culture.

At the ascertaining and forming stages of the experiment on the formation of cultural identity in the process of introducing children of preschool age to Russian culture, 65 children 6-7 years old of preschool educational institutions in Shadrinsk took part. At the final control stage of the experiment, 30 children were studied as an experimental group and 35 children as a control group.

On the basis of the research work carried out in experimental and control groups, we have identified three conditional levels of development of cultural identity of preschool children - high, medium, low.

The high level of cultural identity formation is characterized by the children's knowledge of their ethnicity; the presence of interest in Russian folk traditions and customs, folklore, fairy tales; the presence of ideas about traditional norms and rules of behavior. The knowledge gained by a child through the perception of Russian folk tales about the norms of relations between people, the rules of etiquette, enshrined in their own behavior. A child often shows social qualities, such as respect for loved ones and others, honesty, justice, kindness, hospitality, mutual assistance, compassion, etc.

The average level of cultural identity formation is characterized by correct, but largely fragmentary surface ideas about traditions and customs, folklore, fairy tales, insufficiently clear differentiation of ideas about the object by the presence of national elements. Preschoolers, referred by us to the average level of cultural identity development, are characterized by weak awareness in the structure of the image of "I" national-cultural identity. Children's own attitude to the fact that they belong to Russian culture is not formed, although children know they are Russians. The average level of cultural identity is characterized by an unstable interest in the subjects of native culture, lack of motivation in the choice of subjects of national life. Preschoolers cannot always use the knowledge of traditions in gaming activities; communication skills and cultural values are at the average level of development and often complicate communication with peers and other people.

The low level of formation of cultural identity is characterized by undifferentiated ideas about Russian folk culture, inability to distinguish objects of Russian culture; lack of understanding of cultural values; lack or uncertainty of expression of interest in the objects of native culture; inability to use knowledge about traditions in gaming activities (template game stories and actions; difficulties in changing the role). Children, conventionally referred by us to the average level, did not have much interest in enriching and deepening their knowledge, especially in the practical application of them in various activities. Communication skills and cultural values are at a low level of development and make it difficult to communicate with peers and other people.

The procedure of assessing the level of formation of cultural identity of children also involved a survey of parents and educators, a collegial discussion of the level of formation of cultural identity of children.

The formative stage of the research work involved the implementation of an educational program of preschool education "Russian world" which is the first author's attempt to generalize the rich cultural content associated with the spiritual and material values of Russian folk culture. Immersion of preschoolers in the "Russian world", originality and polyphony of Russian folk culture creates unique opportunities for the formation of the subjective properties of the preschooler’s personality, the development of his or her activity, creativity, education of moral qualities and aesthetic feelings. The model of the educational process, based on the centuries-old traditions of Russian people, their rich cultural heritage, has an enormous educational and developmental potential. The task of the teachers of the preschool educational organization was to create conditions for immersion of preschool children in the world of Russian folk culture and cultural identification through reading and joint discussion of Russian folk tales.

The introduction of preschool children to Russian folk culture does not exclude, but rather involves the creation of all necessary conditions for the knowledge of other cultures and building a dialogue with other cultures and peoples.

The main idea of the Program is the creation of pedagogical conditions for immersion of children in the world of Russian folk culture and development of their cultural identity.

The purpose of the program is to create conditions for the introduction of preschool children to Russian folk culture,
promote the development and self-development of their cultural identity and patriotism.

Program objectives:

- education of preschool children cognitive interest in the world of Russian folk culture;
- creation of conditions for positive socialization of children of preschool age on the basis of introduction to progressive traditions of Russian folk culture;
- formation of cultural identity of the child's personality on the basis of familiarization with values of Russian folk culture;
- support for the formation of a child's individuality in the process of familiarizing with traditions of Russian folk culture;
- education of active life position of a person on the basis of ideas formation about the phenomena, traditions and customs of Russian folk culture;
- promoting the amplification of a child development through active knowledge of Russian folk culture;
- education of a value attitude to the nature and culture of native land;
- teaching preschoolers a dialogue among cultures, educating children in the spirit of peace and respect for other peoples and their cultural values.

The main emphasis in the program is not on informing a preschooler about Russian folk culture, but on immersing a child in culture, its research and on this basis, the development of personality.

The content of the program is represented by interconnected modules: "the World of Russian life", "the World of Russian folk tales", "the World of Russian folk games and toys", "the World of Russian folk music".

Knowledge of folklore works, Russian folk tales is based on the inclusion of children in various activities: communicative, gaming, labor, visual, cognitive ones. This also involves the inclusion of preschoolers in various cultural practices (role-playing games, collecting, weaving, yard games, children's folklore) which contribute not only to the formation of cultural identity, but also to the amplification of children development.

At the control stage of the experimental search work, the same diagnostic procedures were used as at the ascertaining one. The results of the control of the slice showed that there was a significant positive change in the development of ideas of the children in the experimental group about Russian folk culture. In general, according to the results of the control stage of the study, it can be noted that all pupils have positive dynamics in the formation of cultural identity. The study showed that children became aware of their ethnicity, which was expressed in the presence of interest in Russian folk traditions and customs, folklore, fairy tales; in the demonstration of a fairly complete understanding of traditional norms and rules of conduct, national cultural objects. Knowledge of the rules of etiquette often manifested in the behavior of children. In the story-role-playing games, they began to present stories from Russian folk tales, transmitted images became more detailed.

After the formative work, the frequency of manifestation of social qualities by preschoolers, such as respect for relatives and others, honesty, justice, goodwill, hospitality, mutual assistance, compassion, etc., has increased.

IV. CONCLUSION

Thus, we came to the conclusion that pedagogical potential of Russian folk tales is an integrative education which is characterized by ethnic specific content and provides the formation of cultural identity of modern children. The components of pedagogical potential of Russian folk tales do not exist in isolation from each other, but are complementary elements of the formation of preschool children’s cultural identity. Archetypal images present in Russian folk tales contribute to the formation of the children's system of cultural values of Russian people and the awareness of preschool children of their cultural affiliation.

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