

DEVELOPING CREATIVITY IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN BASED ON THE REGGIO EMILIA APPROACH

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Abstract: The article discusses the theoretical and methodological foundations of the Reggio Emilia approach and its role in the development of creativity in preschool children. The main principles of the approach - the child's expression through "one hundred languages", the educational influence of the environment, the guiding role of the teacher and documentation mechanisms - are analyzed on the basis of scientific sources. Also, the possibilities of integrating the Reggio Emilia model into the preschool education system of Uzbekistan, its practical application, pedagogical advantages and methodological adaptation possibilities are studied. The article also contains scientific and practical recommendations for the application of this approach in the conditions of Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Reggio Emilia, Loris Malaguzzi, preschool education, creativity, pedagogical approach, learning environment, project activity, documentation, "one hundred languages", educational innovation, child development.

Introduction. Ensuring the comprehensive development of the child's personality in preschool education is one of the priorities of the global pedagogical process today. World experience shows that childhood is the most important stage in which such basic competencies as creativity, initiative, independent decision-making and problem solving are formed in a person's later life. Therefore, along with traditional approaches in the education system, innovative pedagogical principles that support the child's natural interests and reveal his inner potential are gaining increasing importance. One of such modern concepts is the Reggio Emilia approach, which has now become a successful model of the preschool education system in many countries, including Italy, the USA, Japan, the Scandinavian countries, South Korea, Australia, and Canada.

The Reggio Emilia concept dates back to the mid-20th century, in the small Italian city of Reggio Emilia, to the work of educator and psychologist Loris Malaguzzi. Malaguzzi's idea that "a child thinks in a hundred languages" forms the theoretical basis of this approach. According to him, every child has many ways of expressing himself - drawing, dance, construction, dramatization, music, plastic arts, imagination and other "languages", and the task of the educator is to create conditions for the child to freely express these inner possibilities.

Today, the Reggio Emilia approach occupies a special place in world pedagogy as one of the most effective methods for developing creativity, especially in preschool children. Because this approach aims not to adapt the child to a "ready-made model", but to develop his internal thinking mechanisms, interests and individuality. Therefore, the Reggio approach suggests building the educational process not according to a ready-made scenario, but on the basis of children's everyday questions, observations, interests, problem situations. This naturally forms their creative thinking, independent research skills and the ability to express their thoughts through artistic or constructive means.

The Reggio concept is based on the principle of “environment is the third educator”. A well-organized, aesthetically and functionally balanced environment encourages children to explore, and supports imaginative and logical exploration. Researchers say that Reggio groups are characterized by open spaces, natural light, exhibits that reflect children’s work, a variety of materials, and sensitive areas. This environment naturally develops all of children’s processes, from visual arts to construction, clay, problem-solving, and group creative projects.

The Reggio approach also sees the educator as a partner, observer, and guide, not a teacher. The educator records the child's interests, documents his or her activities, and on this basis creates conditions for further creative projects. This process develops in children not only creative thinking, but also high-level cognitive skills such as critical thinking, evaluation of results, and processing of ideas.

The Reggio Emilia approach is also of great practical importance for the education system of Uzbekistan as one of the effective methods for developing creativity in children. In particular, this concept, based on the principle of "each child develops in his own way", is consistent with the ideas of person-centered education put forward in the national education policy. The integrative, free-spirited and natural curiosity-supporting features of the Reggio model create ample opportunities for developing creative potential in preschool children.

Main part. Pedagogical and philosophical foundations of the Reggio Emilia approach.

The Reggio Emilia approach is a constructivist model aimed at developing the child's natural curiosity, need for exploration and creative potential in preschool education. Its theoretical basis is based on the ideas of Loris Malaguzzi and the principles of experiential education of John Dewey. Dewey's concept of "education through experience" places the learning process at the center of the child's activity, which is directly consistent with the basic philosophy of the Reggio method. In this approach, the child is considered an active, inquisitive subject who expresses his thoughts through various "languages".

Malaguzzi emphasizes that each child expresses himself through the metaphor of “a hundred languages” that exist in a child through images, plastic materials, music, movement, dramatization, part-constructors, creating stories, drawing pictures and many other means. This theory serves as an important scientific basis for illuminating the nature of creative thinking in preschool children.

The main principles of Reggio pedagogy are as follows:

The child is an active researcher.

The teacher is a guide and partner.

The learning environment is the third educator.

Continuous documentation of the creative process.

Parental cooperation is an integral part of the pedagogical process.

Based on these principles, children master complex cognitive processes by freely searching, asking questions, finding explanations, and expressing imagination.

In the Reggio Emilia system, the educator participates not as a “teacher”, but as a partner, guide and observer. In this approach, the task of adults is not to limit the child’s initiative, but rather to strengthen, develop and direct it in a meaningful direction. The environment is considered the “third teacher”, therefore it should be aesthetic, functional, comfortable and provide equal opportunities.

In Reggio Emilia practice, the daily documentation of children’s creative ideas, questions and findings plays a central role. The educator records each small achievement, idea and experience of the children in video, picture, audio or written form. This serves two purposes:

-show the dynamics of the development of the child’s thinking;

-determine an individual approach in planning future activities.

Documentation stimulates creativity, because the child sees that his idea is appreciated and strives to try new experiences.

In the Reggio Emilia approach, the educational process is organized not through short lessons, but through long-term projects. A project can last several days or even months. The topic of the project is determined not by the educator, but based on the interests, questions, and observations of children in everyday life. For example: “What are shadows?”, “Where does the sun go?”, “Why do birds fly?”, “How does the sound of water change?”

Children draw, experiment, build, tell stories, and argue within the framework of the topic - this process serves the natural development of creativity.

The process of integrating the Reggio Emilia approach into the preschool education system of Uzbekistan. In recent years, the introduction of innovative approaches to preschool education in Uzbekistan has become a priority area of state policy. In particular:

- “State requirements for the development of children of early and preschool age”

- “First step” state curriculum

- A number of decisions on the modernization of preschool educational organizations have created the basis for adapting some elements of this approach to the national system.

Many non-governmental and state preschool educational organizations have begun to equip group rooms based on the Reggio Emilia concept with:

natural materials (stones, pieces of wood, paper, threads, clay);

free creativity zones (watercolor, gouache, clay, building materials);

“discovery centers” focused on self-study;

transparent and open shelves - to increase freedom of choice.

These changes are creating conditions for children to think freely, experiment, and try different means of expression.

In recent years, trainings, seminars, and master classes on Reggio Emilia have been held for educators in Uzbekistan. While some private kindergartens have implemented the full Reggio model, state kindergartens use an integrated version — that is, a form harmonized with the national program. This makes it possible to form a practical model of the approach adapted to the conditions of Uzbekistan. The Reggio Emilia approach also makes parents active participants in the cooperation process. The following processes are expanding in the preschool education system of Uzbekistan in this regard:

-involving parents in projects;

-jointly reviewing children's portfolios;

-organizing family creative activities.

This direction serves to continuously develop children's creativity between home and kindergarten. This approach, which is being introduced into the education system, is expected to yield a number of promising results. For example:

-independent thinking and initiative in children will increase;

-broad conditions will be created for the natural development of creative thinking;

-social communication, cooperation and joint problem-solving skills are developed;

-the principles of the "creative approach" in the national program are enriched with practical content.

The Reggio Emilia approach is being developed as a flexible, child-centered, high-quality pedagogical model for preschool education in Uzbekistan, which opens up a wide range of creative possibilities.

Conclusion. The Reggio Emilia approach is demonstrating its effectiveness internationally as a modern and sustainable pedagogical innovation aimed at developing creativity in preschool children. This approach creates a great opportunity for the child's natural curiosity, free exploration, expression of his ideas through various means of expression and formation as an active subject. The concept of the environment as a "third educator", the role of the educator as an observer and guide, and the documentation process serve as a decisive factor in the deep development of children's creative thinking.

The need to integrate the Reggio Emilia approach in the preschool education system of Uzbekistan is explained by the fact that current educational standards are competency-oriented, aimed at developing skills such as creativity, communication, cooperation, and problem-solving. Such aspects of the approach as project-based learning, organization of group activities, extensive use of artistic means of expression, and involvement of parents in the process are suitable and applicable to national preschool education. However, the full implementation of the approach requires specially trained teachers, an adapted learning environment, methodological guides, and scientific and practical centers. The integration of the Reggio Emilia model into the national education system will serve to educate a future generation of children who are creative, independent thinkers, take initiative, and can find new solutions in different situations.

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