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ART AND VISUAL ART EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CREATIVE PERSONALITY.

Пріоритетним завданням державної політики в галузі освіти в сучасних умовах є формування і розвиток творчої особистості. Мистецтво як можна краще призначені для активізації фантазії та уяви учнів. Роль мистецтва у формуванні творчого потенціалу особистості полягає в його поліфункціональному впливі на свідомість підростаючого покоління. Саме тому завдання педагога образотворчого мистецтва полягає в тому, щоб створити атмосферу свободи, спонтанності і бажання творити.

Ключові слова. Візуальне мистецтво, творчість, методика, художнє виховання, естетичне виховання, стандарт візуального освіти.

Приоритетной задачей государственной политики в области образования в современных условиях является формирование и развитие творческой личности. Искусство как нельзя лучше предназначено для активизации фантазии и воображения учащихся. Роль искусства в формировании творческого потенциала личности состоит в его полифункциональном воздействии на сознание подрастающего поколения. Именно поэтому задача педагога изобразительного искусства заключается в том, чтобы создать атмосферу свободы, спонтанности и желания творить.

Ключевые слова. Визуальное искусство, творчество, методика, художественное воспитание, эстетическое воспитание, стандарт визуального образования.

The formation and development of a creative personality is a priority for the state education policy nowadays. Art excellently activates the imagination of learners. The role of art in the formation of a creative potential of an individual is that of multifunctional influence on the learner's mind. Thus, it is the mission of every art pedagogue to create an atmosphere of freedom, spontaneity and creativity.

Key words. Visual art, creativity, method, art education, esthetic education, visual education standards.

Problem formulation. A contemporary educational process strives the shaping of a future personal qualities – educating a person with a high level of integrity, creativity and ethical culture.

Is the intellectual potential of creativity values sufficiently represented in the educational process, in the content of educational programmes and curricular today? It may be said with confidence that the creativity side of development of a future Versatile and spiritually rich personality is inexcusably neglected and disregarded.

Many educational institutions consciously discard humanitarian and arts subjects in favour of strengthening professionally oriented disciplines. The tendency of education towards larger practicalness and pragmaticality is caused by today's realia. Education is concentrated on the solution of immediate questions. The effectiveness of education is basically evaluated in the predicates of efficiency, usefulness and utility. But while solving the pragmatic, immediate problems, education should not lose sight of the semantic basis of European education – comprehensive spiritual education of a person and belonging to the Absolute. Education should be perceived as a solution not only to procedural and technological, pragmatic tasks, but also as a motion towards overcoming the finiteness of human existence through the assertion of the ideals of Truth, the Good and Beauty through creativity [*S. Krymskyi, 2003: p. 57*]. Nothing but pragmatism and the lack of consideration for the spiritual and creative side of education in our country predetermined the author's reference to the problem of formation of creativity person.

The goal of this article. Is to describe the possibilities of formation creativity person through visual art and arts education. Arts are viewed as a methodological principle for creative competence development. The author believes the visual art – based esthetic education may be examined as a strategic direction in the development creative potential. Arts supports education aimed at the cultivation of creativity competence. Visual art education becomes a procedure leading to the development creative resources.

Materials and Methods. Author's his research was based on general philosophical positions, thus demonstrating the methodological opportunities of building creativity person through art education.

Art and the formation of a creative personality. The first distinctive feature of visual art teaching in general education schools in Latvia is that art lessons are always different from each other, whereas other school subjects have more common traits than differences irrespective of the personality of a teacher. It should be noted that the multitude of lessons includes both interesting and boring ones. What makes some visual art lessons significant and thrilling or useless and boring for children?

The answer to this question is quite simple. An individual reaction of pupils towards both masterpieces of famous painters and their own creations

Philosophy

should be the starting point of any visual art teaching method. The interest and emotional response of children is indeed a valid argument in the assessment of the quality of the subject taught. This argument should not be disputed under the existing skepticism with regard to the emotional culture of modern children. It is commonly believed that children have a poor individual view of art nowadays, and that they generally enjoy watching cartoons and playing videogames. It might be so. Yet, who is the author of the above products? Hence, what should we say about the emotional culture level of the creators of these products?

Yet, we should pay our attention to another issue. Namely, why some teachers manage to rouse children's interest in art lessons, whereas some others fail to do so. Why do children eagerly paint with some pedagogues and are bored with some others and even fail to complete even the simplest tasks? Moreover, some art lessons cause the idiosyncrasy with children far greater than math or language lessons. This fact is the most surprising. This is because art lessons do not presume cramming, operating on abstract formulas or boring laws of science. Yet, children may feel uncomfortable and consider them tedious and useless despite the very atmosphere of such lessons, which should be auspicious for creativity.

Definitely, a talented teacher is able to involve even the most ungifted child. However, it is not always that a teacher is endowed with both the pedagogic and artistic talent. As a matter of fact, it is a rare case. Consequently, the problem is not to anticipate the appearance of talented mentors but rather to provide every teacher of art with the correct methodology, which would facilitate and stimulate the interest of children to art irrespective of concrete teachers and their talent.

In order realize what should be done to make art lessons more important, interesting and filled with creativity, one should first understand what place art occupies in the modern world and in the child's soul. How can art influence the formation of the child's artistic personality?

The theoretical role of art in the development of an individual is wellknown. Art performs an irreplaceable function in the formation of essential human mechanisms. To reformulate the classical statement, only visual art evokes a visual response on the part of a human being. For those, who are undeveloped in the visual sense, eyesight, spectacular scenes and painting do not bear any meaning. Strictly speaking, art education is not a luxury or caprice but rather a vital need that should be satisfied for the child to progress in his/her development. The spiritual life of the child is limited, one-sided and generally poor without close connection with art.

Currently, once we are faced with the problem of spiritual rebirth in all spheres of social life in Latvia, art is able to solve the burning problem of humanistic education, which accompanies economic reforms. Actually, esthetic education should become a priority in the development of the child's personality. However utopian the statement might seem, yet, the recognition of this fact may finally start solving the problem of comprehensive education of children. Only that school, which reconsiders the status of the humanities, namely, art subjects, will be able to achieve progress in the development of the artistic personality of the child. The school should become a place, where artistic potencies of the child are revealed, instead of a mere database. Art due to its nature is intended to activate the imagination and creativity of pupils. Art is advantageous for the child's synthetic and communicative skills. Art develops the child's ability to compare various materials, harmonize the world and perceive the world as a whole. Finally, communication between art and children should result in the development of the artistic skills of the latter as well as the ability to create beauty around.

Art plays a special, major role in the formation and development of creativity. Art performs this creative function by means of its many-sided influence on the child. Understanding a work of art requires both emotion and reason on the part of the child. The formation and development of emotional and intellectual skills of the child is the basis for the development of his/her creativity. It should be noted that the formation of a creative personality should be viewed as complex process. It is implied herein that the musical and literary education types accompany visual education of the child. The complex effect of art subjects is aimed at the formation of 'a polyphonic mind' with the child, which results in the formation of a polyphonic, i.e. creative personality.

However, modern pedagogy does not provide an unambiguous definition to the notion of esthetic education of pupils in general education schools [*Rostovtsev, 2000, p. 13-50*]. On the one part, the importance of esthetic education in the formation of the inner world of pupils is stipulated. On the other part, despite the significance attributed to art and its ability to facilitate the formation of the child's inner world, the ability of its modern forms to positively affect spirituality is criticized.

To prove the fact that the educational function of art is diminishing in modern world, one should turn to a number of surveys indicating that the artistic needs are now receding into the background in the hierarchy of the child's values. The reasons for such a neglectful attitude to artistic values are found in pragmatism, rationality and depreciation of moral values. Entertainment and consumption are emphasized everywhere. The study of works of art, if any at all, occurs as a fragmentary phenomenon. If one should consider the quality and artistic performance of those products presented to the child, the situation might seem very gloomy. Real events, the contents of videogames and motion pictures, television products and commercials implant the concepts of forceful superiority, success and victory at all costs [*Zinchenko, 1995*].

Nevertheless, all these facts prove that the educational function of art and visual art, in particular, is increasingly important nowadays. Thus, it is so important to realize the role of visual art lessons in the esthetic education of pupils. Art has always been a miraculous and fine tool to form the feeling of beauty, compassion and humanity.

Philosophy

Accordingly, one may infer from the aforementioned statements that the main task for a teacher of visual art in elementary school should be to create an atmosphere of freedom, spontaneity and creativity. Teachers must remember about it whenever starting a new visual art lesson. It should be their guiding beacon showing the way to achieve the goal.

Regretfully, many teachers forget about this obvious and simple task. They become technocrats in accordance with the spirit of modernity. A number of teachers of visual art focus on instructing the children in the formal principles of drawing. Teachers demand to observe the proportions, composition, light and shade, warm and cold colors, etc. from the children [Nemensky, 2000: p. 123]. They forget that it is not the most important factor at this level of study of art. This professionalized approach results in a reclusive attitude on the part of children, which may lead to hostility and epatage. Children are bored and uninterested. They do not see any further use of such lessons or how it could be possibly applied in their further life. Children acutely feel the conflict between the nature of art and its teaching at school. The situation becomes even worse when children try to avoid doing the tasks given by a pedagogue under any pretext. This results in a more intensive pressure on the part of a teacher and enhanced formal requirements. A teacher, who constantly demands the formal fulfillment of a task and who ignores the mission of such tasks, soon turns into a dogmatist. As a result, a conflict and misunderstanding are inevitable because children despise dogmatism most of all. They tend to freedom and spontaneity by their nature.

Should parents and teachers find a connection between the subjects studied and a wider cultural context and reveal it to the child; the critical attitude of the latter is greatly reduced. Yet, adults are frequently unable to comprehend the logic of the syllabus taught to their children as well as reveal its interrelation with the modern conditions. Therefore, they often give a vague answer the question asked by their children, 'Why do it need this?' The answers like 'it is necessary,' 'you'll need it,' or 'every educated person should know this' are ineffective, and they do not stimulate children's enthusiasm with respect to the knowledge they are gaining.

It is utterly important to avoid a professionalized approach to visual art with children in elementary school. Otherwise, children soon lose their interest to art; moreover, they may form a steady negative attitude to any forms of creativity in their mind. A pedagogue should evoke an interest to the world of beauty in the child's soul as well as reveal its depth and significance for human self-expression and world cognition. The mission of a teacher of art coincides with the idea of pedagogy as such (*paidagõgos* is the Greek for 'a guide of children:' *paidos* – 'a child,' *ago* – 'to guide, educate'), i.e. to guide a child to an independent adult life. Only then the world of art and visual art, in particular, does not become alien and incomprehensible to the child.

The organization of visual education is effective only when children are aimed at visual activity being important to them as a result of a purposeful pedagogic process [*Uznadze, 2001*]. Based on this aim, a teacher may lead the child to the thought that visual human activity forms are socially important. This union between the efforts of a teacher and pupil gives one grounds to qualify it as another type of intercultural communication between children and adults characterized by mutual 'fulfillment' of individuals at the given stage of pedagogical activity. It is obvious that herein a new pedagogical paradigm is implied, which needs the interest of entire society instead of a group of enthusiasts in order to be successfully implemented.

This view of the mission of a teacher of art renders the opinions that a certain art teaching method is superior to another unfounded. The question whether children should be taught the rules and laws of visual art, or they should be given unlimited freedom to express themselves, is essentially incorrect. As a matter of fact, the task of a pedagogue is to combine the visual techniques with a creative potential within the child.

To overcome the barrier when a child refuses to do any tasks is a major objective for a teacher of art in elementary school. In order to avert such an attitude on the part of children, a teacher of art should know the psychophysiological qualities of each pupil, be able to captivate a child with his/her subject and be good at visual education methods. In other words, a teacher of art should become an agent of the formation of the child's visual world instead of being a strategist or instructor. The contribution of a pedagogue into a creative atmosphere at his/her lessons is that of planning and preparation, provision of the necessary materials for lessons. A pedagogue must be able to raise the child's interest in doing tasks. An adult is always present; yet, this presence should be considered as indirect. The grown-up only affects children through his/her words, intonation, facial expression, advice or personal example.

The combination of artistic creativity management and creative freedom of the child is utterly important in the process of art teaching. Creative freedom lies primarily in a personal choice of a creativity type. Secondly, it is found in the discovery of the real potential of materials and tools. The child reveals material qualities, essence and potentials when discussing it with the teacher. Thus, a pedagogue is rather an inspirer than an instructor or advisor. The position an adult occupies is that of an interested agent of creative development.

A good teacher of art constantly educates children by means of personal attitude to the subject and art. A teacher does not merely teach to understand the subject, he/she also teaches something that stands beyond a work of art, i.e. humanity and spirituality. Spiritual communication between art and junior pupils, which is inspired by a teacher of art, facilitates a steady interest to art on the part of children and develops their ability to analyze and emotionally respond to art.

Frankly speaking, children should be also taught formal skills and professional art. However, children having artistic talents may fulfill themselves

in art schools. Most children do not need formal techniques; they strive for inspiration, creativity and creative activity. Under the circumstances, a teacher should provide the opportunity for learning instead of teaching him-/herself. He/she should lead a pupil forward at the speed acceptable for that child. A teacher should create an environment that helps both parties cooperate in the fulfillment of their mutual goals.

It is quite problematic to implement a cooperative education model. Nonetheless, efforts contributed to do so are compensated by the energy of pupils, who direct it into the right way, and a smaller number of social problems in the future.

Unfortunately, this education model is practically absent in our schools. Many teachers are formal in their work. They do not question themselves about the reasons why they teach visual art to children. They do not give children what they really need. They often follow the established order. I teach as I was taught in the past. However, they do forget that they were taught in art schools, academia, which have different tasks from those solved in general education schools. A teacher of art in general education school does not prepare future painters. His/her mission is more complicated, namely, to form a creative personality. Furthermore, this is the matter of culture in contrast to mechanical arts.

At the same time, one should admit that there is no purposeful and systematic activity at school to develop individual creative abilities. The creative thinking of children, if any, is rather a spontaneous and uncontrollable phenomenon based on the cut-and-try method. It is understandable, while there is no special discipline that would be aimed exclusively on the formation and development the creative thinking of an individual at school. The absence of such disciplines is explained by several objective reasons. There is no one disciple, one formula or algorithm for creative activity. The development of creative abilities occurs in the case of personal acquisition of the surrounding world and human values only. Art lessons play an important role in the formation and development of a creative potential of the child. Art performs this creative function by means of its many-sided influence on the child. The child needs to combine emotion and reason in order to comprehend artifacts of culture. The formation and development of emotional and intellectual skills of the child is the basis for the development of his/her creativity.

Moreover, pedagogues should realize and understand the non-specific functions of art lessons, which become increasingly important under the conditions of mass production. It is implied herein that visual art lessons are utterly stimulating for handicraft. People have forgotten the value of personal production in the modern world. They are used to having everything readymade. The gap between production and its results becomes bigger in the course of time. It has already become so dramatic that some individuals are unable to cook a lunch. They can only warm over previously bought meals. To sew on a button, mend torn up clothes, to nail something, etc. has become a job 'for professionals.' Therefore, modern life is arranged so that the psychology of consumption and passivity is reproduced. The situation in Latvia used to be different a dozen years ago. In this context, handmade products gain an additional value for both children and their parents and pedagogues. Children's drawings are the fruit of their creativity. Children's drawings are the representation of their exteriorized inner world. One should not ignore the fruit of children's creativity despite their naivety or simplicity. Furthermore, a child should be inspired and praised irrespective of the quality of his/her pieces of art. Both parents and pedagogues should realize that the creative process is much more important in this case than any particular results. It is important to understand that it is all the formation process of a child's visual experience despite his/her artistic achievement [*Vygodsky*, *1967*, *p. 328-329*].

The above proves that a teacher of art should be as free from any instructions, schedules and ministry regulations as possible. Unfortunately, officials from the Ministry of Education are not interested in the development of children's creativity. They are more concerned with the problem of assessment and testing. It is time we understood that the absence of regulations in the realm of visual art is not a drawback. It is its advantage over the sciences or theoretical disciplines in general. Once a pedagogue is released of limitations, one could expect the indications of freedom and spontaneity with children. When a teacher of art is deprived of initiative, freedom and improvisation, only some pupils are able to complete his/her task for the purpose of a better grade. Yet, the development of imagination being one of the major objectives of a lesson is absent in this case. Moreover, once thoughts and feelings of the child are subject to evaluation, this little person is prevented from frank self-expression; any attempts for moral and esthetic communication and artistic creativity are eliminated.

Quite a few children come to school from single-parent families, some others do not communicate with their parents or lack communication in their own circle. This again leads one to the conclusion that lessons of art promote dialogue and communication best of all, they make this communication meaningful and advantageous for self-expression and comprehension. Art lessons help children reveal their potentials and understand their feelings and relations with the surrounding world, at least, at the emotional level.

One should not disregard the fact that children representing different cultures are sometimes present in the same classroom. The situation when they speak one language does not imply their cultural homogeneity. Every individual, every nation may have various modes of self-expression. The standard leads to unification and deprives them from the opportunity to demonstrate their ethnic identity. It is the teacher, who can individually select materials for a particular child to express his/her vision and ethnic tradition. Thus, art facilitates better understanding of the fundamental principles of other cultures among children, who represent different ethnic groups, without political intervention or pressure.

Philosophy

The process of studying visual art artifacts undeniably plays an important role in the development of visual abilities. The nature and contents of visual culture does not depend on art only but rather on a number of human activities, including architecture, clothes, furniture, interior design, graphic art, mass media, landscape design, etc. Art and visual art, in particular, together with sculpture give one the most complete view of the peculiarities of visual thought at every stage of social development. Works of visual art and sculpture are marked with the spirit of the age, thus, they embody the values and mores widespread at the moment a creative personality has made them. Works of visual art perform the function of storages of visual experience. They are not only illustrative cultural and historical evidence of the author's viewpoint but also products of visual thought. However, one should be cautious in this sphere. Herein the balance between practical artistic sessions and theory is implied. It is dangerous to teach children how to decode symbolic art beyond practical activities. The danger is explained by the possibility of degradation and depreciation of art due to its scientific analysis. In the above case, art becomes a background for reason.

Conclusion. Thus, the increasing complexity and scale of problems society has to face lead it to the problem of forming a creative personality instead of an educated individual. This is because dynamically escalating and altering crises have interfered with practically all sphere of public life: politics, economy, science, education, ecology, etc. It is not enough to mechanically accumulate an ever-growing knowledge database to solve these problems. Above all, one should reconsider knowledge creatively and apply it in practical life. Art is the best means to activate the creative potential with pupils and train their fancy and imagination. Art is a fine and effective tool to develop the sense of beauty, kindness and creativity.

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