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## **Development of a System for Improving Future Teachers' Readiness for the Child's Spiritual and Moral Development in a Cross-Cultural Space**

**Ylia Shevchenko<sup>1</sup>, Luydmyla Moskalyova<sup>2</sup>, Olga Kanarova<sup>3</sup>, Olga Poznanska<sup>4</sup>**

### **Abstract**

Nowadays higher education is developing in accordance with new needs of modern school. The main task of this process is to provide necessary conditions for the spiritual and moral development of the child's personality. This task determines the emergence of new approaches and innovative pedagogical tools, which include information and communication technologies. In this regard, the issue of future teacher's competence in the field of new and creative performance of educational tasks is being actualized. The article describes a specially designed system, which is aimed at the improvement of future teacher's readiness for the child's spiritual and moral development by means of using traditional Ukrainian fairy tales – SMDC (spiritual and spiritual development of the child). SMDC requires the use of information and communication technologies. This is a pedagogical tool, which is designed for students of the Bachelor's degree program in Primary Education. The system requires: 1) development of a package of multimedia materials; 2) selection of educational materials, which contain tools for the child's spiritual and moral education; 3) creation of students' own materials, which are aimed at their personal and professional development.

**Keywords:** Information technologies, fairy tales, spiritual and moral values, teaching.

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<sup>1</sup> Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor, Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University, Melitopol, Ukraine. E-mail: [juliashevchenko9611@gmail.com](mailto:juliashevchenko9611@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor, Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University, Melitopol, Ukraine. ORCID: 0000-0002-3428-8685. E-mail: [moskalevalu1@gmail.com](mailto:moskalevalu1@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup> Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor, Bogdan Khmelnytsky Melitopol State Pedagogical University, Melitopol, Ukraine. ORCID: 0000-0001-6876-6326. E-mail: [olga\\_mdpu@ukr.net](mailto:olga_mdpu@ukr.net)

<sup>4</sup> Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Ministry of Education & Science of Ukraine, Kiev, Ukraine. E-mail: [spdo@ukr.net](mailto:spdo@ukr.net)

## Introduction

The ability to use information and communication technologies is one of the key skills of a modern teacher. In the era of the development of information society, future primary school teachers should master the skills of modeling pedagogical systems. They must learn to keep up to date with the following aspects: changes in the behavior of primary schoolchildren, emotional climate in a class, and awareness of the dynamics of the child's spiritual and moral development. Constantly increasing the importance of information and communication technologies leads to a variety of consequences, both positive and negative ones. Modern educational games and applications, used by the majority of learners, are provided at the disposal of a teacher. Many of them (for example, those concerning the study of foreign languages) act as a simulator, some of them (for example, psychological tests) are based on the system "question - choice of an answer - result". There are also systems that are virtually indistinguishable from traditional printed textbooks. In order to improve future teachers' readiness for the spiritual and moral development of the child, it is necessary to take into account a variety of unique opportunities of modern technologies, which allow us to see the prospects for personal development and ideas for shaping students' professional identity.

Hence, there exists a need for pedagogical tools, which can simultaneously provide teachers with practical materials, both for their own development and for the development of the child. It has to be emphasized that the socio-economic development of modern society depends on the level of spiritual and moral culture of every single personality correlates with his or her actions.

P. Ricoeur has described four areas of human abilities, which influence the transformation of society: ability to speak, to communicate with others; ability to influence the course of events by means of one's own actions and efforts; ability to shape one's own identity through the responsibility for one's own life; ability to consider themselves as the authors of their own actions (2008, p.5). We can see similar ideas in the works of other scientists. According to O. Fedorov, O. Zhuravleva, and T. Polyakova, the success of the country's economy depends on future teachers' readiness to work in the field of spiritual and moral education, on the need for their personal and professional growth (2018, p.72). R. Demchuk, a well-known Ukrainian culture expert, emphasizes that nowadays it is extremely important to understand spiritual and moral values, to see mental stereotypes and substitution of concepts, existing in the information field (2018, p.7).

One of the principles of educational activities, as it is indicated in the Law of Ukraine "On Education" (2017), is the development of patriotism, respect for the cultural values of Ukrainian people, their historical and cultural heritage and traditions. Thus, it is extremely important that the enhancement of future teachers' readiness for the spiritual and moral development of the child should meet the aims of education and contribute to the preservation of the spiritual and moral culture of Ukrainian society.

Today's students are those people who, after a while, will realize the state tasks in the educational space. And teachers of higher education institutions are responsible for the development of students' readiness for the spiritual and moral education of the child, for their mastering the ways to create a favorable psychological atmosphere, in which the learner's personal qualities are formed. It should be mentioned that story telling is one of the ways for a child's

spiritual and moral development. These fairy tales demonstrate hard work, health, inner peace; these are important issues for the development of personality's character traits. The values, embodied in fairy tales, can eliminate the pressure of unfavorable children's environments and prevent asocial behavior. It has to be mentioned that there exist such unfavorable environments of childhood: adulthood with a depressed person, person who has mental illness, who is an alcoholic or uses drugs, an imprisoned person, divorced parents; experiencing violence and sexual trauma.

Taking into account that some children live in unfavorable environments and have bad examples to follow, we believe that one of the effective ways for the spiritual and moral development of the child is to demonstrate positive examples to which the children themselves can be directly related. Ukrainian folk tales contain examples of demonstration of personal values. For a child, living in Ukrainian society, such examples will become a role model and a stepping stone for further development.

Every nation creates fabulous characters, idealizing them and empowering them with both positive and negative moral qualities. The values, which are promoted by such characters, demonstrate different ways of thinking. Fairy tale characters fascinate children and at the same time teach them to experience various emotional states and acquire values (Kerbelite, 1989). Thus, negative heroes teach indignation and frustration, while positive ones – sympathy; they show how to get involved and take care of others.

Different behavioral strategies can serve as a starting point for discussing personal stories and shaping personalized values. Characters of folk tales, as valuable educational material, can effectively demonstrate both imaginary activity, indifference, and escape into illusion. Being a way of understanding different types of behavior in an unfavorable children's environment, fairy tales can become a valuable resource for overcoming fears, impatience, loneliness in case if a teacher can stimulate children's imagination and select a proper fairy tale, which will meet the needs of every single learner. This fairy tale should lay the foundation for further dialogue, in which the learner plays the leading part. Nowadays spiritual and moral values in the culture of Ukrainian people are of great importance. The ability to select values in accordance with child's needs is one of the key strategies in the teacher's work. Students have to be taught how to select fairy tales, practice storytelling and discuss the characters. Students of the Bachelor's degree program in Primary Education can undoubtedly use fairy tales for out-of-class reading, however, the purposeful work in this direction is not carried out properly. It has to be noted that traditional printed books are not as interesting for students as children's literature, which is compiled in a certain classification and provided on a computer, CDs, in mobile applications, available online (audio fairy tales, cartoons, children films, etc.).

The classification, compiled by means of use of different behavioral strategies, allows the teacher to properly select fairy tales and use them for the correction of children's personal qualities. Fairy tales facilitate the study of the material and, as a result, help to create teacher's own collections, which will demonstrate children positive models to follow. In order to develop a system to enhance future teachers' readiness for the child's spiritual and moral development in the cross-cultural space, we have selected Ukrainian folk tales, which demonstrate the ways how the characters react in dialogues, reveal their emotional experiences and show examples of empathy, types of cooperation, and positive values.

### **Problem setting**

Ukrainian folk tale differs greatly from the Iranian, Arabic, and Persian tales. The main types of characters are presented by peacemakers, evil beasts, and deprived ones, who build relationships with each other through dialogue. According to L. Dunaevskaya, Ukrainian folk tales, that have come down to us, are subtle, dramatic, and filled with action (Golden book, 1990, p.5).

In our opinion, Ukrainian folk tales contain educational strategies that can be successfully used in the primary schoolchildren's education. Thus, in this article, information and communication technologies are used as a criterion for the selection of positive examples, based on the research of moral deeds in the behavior of fairy tale characters.

It should be said that there aren't so many designed systems, based on Ukrainian folk tales, and oriented for native Ukrainian language speakers. For example, there are some popular applications that use well-known fairy tales, such as Kolobok, Repka, the Cat, the Rooster and the Fox (Russian folk tales), Wolf and Seven Baby Goats (fairy tale by Grimm Brothers). These fairy tales are usually given to the children for reading and listening in their first year of study in primary school. As a result, our schoolchildren and students are more acquainted with foreign fairy tales than with Ukrainian ones, despite the rich heritage of Ukrainian people.

In our opinion, children's positive moral qualities can be developed, relying, first of all, on positive examples of the national heroes of their country, but not on those characters, which were borrowed from the culture of other countries. It has to be noted that in most primary schools in Ukraine the lessons are conducted in Ukrainian language. In higher education institutions (colleges, institutes, academies, universities), where future primary school teachers are trained, the teaching is also conducted in Ukrainian language. And this is why it is necessary to have a software, which would at a qualitative level enhance the readiness of future teachers for the spiritual and moral development of the child. It should be emphasized that modern primary schoolchildren can choose those fairy tales, which, on the one hand, are interesting for them, and on the other hand, are told and interpreted in the way, which is comprehensible for the children of this age group. Parents of primary schoolchildren don't tell their children so many fairy tales as they used to. Moreover, parents do not select those fairy tales, which are aimed at the formation of moral qualities of a child.

We believe that Ukrainian folk tale, being the wealth of Ukrainian nation, will be preserved on the condition that it becomes available to many children. In our opinion comprehensible reading for a child's self-development is very important, as it takes into account his or her individual characteristic features, including the use of information and communication technologies. This type of reading is one of the conditions for the realization of a child's right for a qualitative education, which is declared in the framework program of actions "Education 2030" (Education for Sustainable Development Goals, 2017).

### **Methodology**

The system under discussion is conceptualized by means of implementing current educational trends, which are gradually being strengthened in the pedagogical society – development of a future teacher's personal identity, attention, paid to personal and professional growth, construction of new educational environments by means of information and communication technologies use, emphasis on updating the cross-cultural space in the context of globalization, interest for traditional spiritual and moral values. This helped us to focus attention on the global

problem, which exists in many countries, and at the same time we took into account local resources and opportunities. We've collected data, which is directly related to the spiritual and moral values of the Ukrainian people, moreover, the attention has been drawn to the universal life values (security, tradition, self-esteem). We also took into account the idea of universality in the professional training of future teachers. The fact that not all Ukrainian folk tales can be properly comprehended by primary schoolchildren in different regions of the country, made us think about the criterion of the ethnoregional origin of these fairytales and their correspondence to the life values of this or that region. In order to design this system we also took into account that students themselves can contribute to their own systems, make them authorial, create strategies of behavior of fairy tale characters while interacting with children at the first stage of their school experience. In this article, we emphasize the idea that not only positive fairy tale characters should be taken into account, but also negative ones, since many children are in contact or live in unfavorable environments. In this regard, the emphasis was put directly on understanding of the fairy tale characters' behavior, its comparison with the child's own behavior, the possibility to correct children's spiritual and moral development.

In order to design this system, it was important to carry out an extensive theoretical study, to get acquainted with scientific sources, publicistic pieces of writing, ethnographic materials and, of course, with Ukrainian folk tales, their axiological content.

Designing SMDC, aimed at the enhancement of this kind of readiness, we took into account various methodological approaches – transdisciplinary, learner-centered, cultural, praxeological, etc. We also based the system on the need to develop a motivational profile in the professional development of teachers (Guzmán, 2019), data of the impact of moral actions on the intensification of moral growth (Yao, 2018), and theories of adult education, which are appropriate for students aged 18-21. We assimilated the ideas of modern scholars about the importance of consolidating identity between parents and children (Sugimura, 2018), significance of parental influence in order to prevent negative behavior (Nqweni et al., 2010).

### **Development of future teacher's cross-cultural competence**

Cross-cultural competence of the personality is a necessary component of future teacher's professional culture. It is important for a teacher of future, as a representative of the urbanized post-industrial society, to be ready to develop different types of thinking, understand and accept feelings of another person, who has different attitudes, beliefs, and values. At the same time, the teacher of the future must be able to skillfully present the cultural heritage of his or her nation, which was passed on from generation to generation in the form of folk tales. It has to be mentioned that the national identity of the personality is revealed in the Ukrainian folk tale. In contrast to the fairy tales, written by Ukrainian authors, in folk tales such identity is not personalized, it is social and has a huge potential for the spiritual and moral development of the child. The future teacher should be familiar with the basic concepts regarding spiritual and moral development of the child in a line with local and global traditions. The teacher should also get acquainted with the diversity of characters' behavioral patterns that are widespread throughout Ukraine. It goes without saying that future teacher should be aware of the factors that threaten the existing diversity of behavioral strategies, in particular, such as conventionality, stereotypeness, massive involvement, loss of individuality, distribution and imposing of mass hysterical reactions to the absence of certain material benefits instead of introducing sound behavioral strategies. All these factors threaten both

the development of the personality and sustainable development of the whole society. The future teacher should have the developed skill to classify various impacts on the spiritual and moral development of children, living in different regions of our country. Along with it he or she should pay attention to such values that are common for the entire population of Ukraine, namely, safety, tradition, self-esteem (Magun, 2007).

The future teacher should master new tools and methods, namely, the use of express-diagnostics of the level of spiritual and moral development. Student-teacher should be able to create animations for children of primary school age, select and design strategies of the behavior of fairy tale characters in accordance with the child's own behavioral strategy.

With the advent of information and communication technologies, future teachers should learn to use them in order to share their feelings, knowledge, and acquired experience. The implementation of Ukrainian folk tales into the information space by means of comparing their own behavioral strategy with that of fairy tale character demands a higher level of cross-cultural competence. In this case the enhancement of cross-cultural competence will lead to the dissemination of specific characteristics of the collective subject – Ukrainian people. It will also lead to the strengthening of symbolism of national identity, making it deeper and more unique. To achieve these objectives we offer the following:

1. Design of a personal presentation in a separate block, which is called "Values in a Ukrainian fairy tale". The future teacher should take into account the life values of that region of the country, where the particular fairy tale came from in order to make this fairy tale easier for the comprehension. When the presentation of the positive values of a fairy tale goes in line with the values of a particular region, the future teacher may offer the children to read it while having school experience.

2. Filling personal portfolio with a number of selected tests, questionnaires, projective techniques in a separate block under the title "Diagnostic materials". In this very block, the future teacher will be able to note which particular values have aroused children's interest, and what impact a particular fairy tale character has on children.

3. Sharing the first educational experience. The gained experience can be discussed in groups and broadcast through various media (Internet, CD-ROM, mobile applications). First teaching experience can be also discussed directly with practicing teachers. According to the research, conducted by A. Midgette, R. Ilten-Gee, D. Powers, A. Murata, L. Nucci, conducting pedagogical experiments enriches teachers' knowledge about the moral education of children (Midgette, 2018).

4. Communication should be aimed at the construction of positive examples in individual behavior. Fairy tales provide psychological comfort that allows teachers to disclose the behavioral strategies of characters in the past, present and future period of time. This allows teachers to establish feedback with learners and their parents, who usually demonstrate an active position in shaping their child's behavior. Using the ideas of children, the future teacher can create a new story with various characters, correct their actions, create an individual program of spiritual and moral development of both the character and his antipode. It is also important to engage parents in this process, since they are the very people who have an influence on their child.

5. Children's involvement in their own inner world. Thanks to computer animation fairy tale characters can be updated and modified. Each character can be updated with the help of

photographs, audio and video accompaniment. All these factors attract children, help learners to acknowledge themselves, and realize their potential for further development.

6. Stimulating the interest of future teachers to new educational technologies. The dynamism of computer technologies and mobile applications use in the process of future teachers' training creates a proper atmosphere for gaining practical knowledge, enhancing educational activities in higher education, developing pedagogical creativity.

Thus, on the one hand, the design of this system can have a favorable impact on the enhancement of future teachers' readiness for the spiritual and moral development of the child, and on the other hand, it can serve as a resource basis for the development of students' cross-cultural competence.

### **The orientation of future teachers for the development of their own identity**

The design of this system is carried out with the help of programmers, primary school teachers, teachers of higher education institutions. In this system, in addition to the materials of Ukrainian folk tales and diagnostic tools, modern strategies of the development of future teacher's own identity, based on the cultural and civilization context, have been also introduced.

We believe that the most serious difficulties arise when future teacher, coming to the first lesson, fails to see and trace basic characteristics that make up the personal-professional portrait. It is difficult for such a teacher to keep discipline in the classroom, he or she is not ready for school realities, does not have such a set of personal characteristics and achievements, which he could share with parents or a child while having an individual conversation, he has no valid information to report at the teachers meeting. A successful teacher is equipped with this set of personal characteristics and achievements, and it is one of the criteria of professionalism both for children and their parents. The future teachers, having their first school experience, should make up their minds how they will perform on both an individual and a collective level. Thus, the future teacher must answer the questions, asked in different time perspectives: "Who was I?", "Who am I now?", "Who do I want to be?"; "What moral values were close to my heart before?", "What moral values are important for me now?", "What moral values need to be developed in Ukrainian children?", etc.

Thus, the system helps to understand moral values, taking into account the existing realities of the Ukrainian nation. The Ukrainian folk tale is selected, compared with modern mythological images and plots. So, future teachers are given the opportunity to reflect on the need to perform moral deeds in interaction with other people. The future teachers are also provided with opportunity to study historical myths and modern media myths in order to practice their influence on children's moral decisions.

In addition to all mentioned above, it is important to add that with the help of Ukrainian folk tales future teachers can develop their praxeological culture, since such tales follow the unspoken rules, which have been developed by local population (Ionesov, 2013, p. 243).

While working with fairy tales, the future teacher has to be able to see behavioral strategies and compare them with those strategies, which reflect local traditions. For example, if in the well-known fairy tale "Cinderella" a young woman does not solve the problem, but prefers the "avoidance" position as a kind of moral decision, then in Ukrainian folk tale "Olianka, or Tree Miracles", the young woman's behavioral strategy reflects the vital values of Ukrainian people (love for children, struggle for survival).

Thus, this system is based on the use of behavioral strategies in the context of Ukrainian people's significant experience that has been developed over centuries. These strategies are aimed at the humanization of a person. At the same time, the orientation of system for the values of Ukrainian people, as well as for the distinctive traits of fairy tale characters, helps to make allowances into the process of development of future teachers' own identity.

### **Learner-centered approach for spiritual and moral development of the child**

The designed system, which is based on the use of Ukrainian folk tales, has an impact on the spiritual and moral development of the child. It consists of the following components:

1. Package of multimedia materials, which includes classified texts of Ukrainian folk tales with illustrations and animations (text for reading, for listening) in accordance with positive values that influence the emotional-aesthetic, cognitive, social aspects of the spiritual and moral development of primary schoolchild.

Multimedia package can also include the tables of correspondence of fairy tales to those positive values, which are necessary to development. We provide an example of such table.

Table 1. Examples of fairy tales, which can be used for the spiritual and moral development of the child

The value, which should be developed	Examples of Ukrainian folk tales for primary schoolchildren
Health	Sun, Frost, and Wind
Safety	Tale of Healer and White Snake
Diligence	Golden Boot
Self-esteem	How the Fox Deceived a Prince Ivan Bashtannik
Love	Poor Gardener and Princess
Truth	Truth and False, Truthful Ivanko
Wisdom	About the Wise Boy

The table should be accompanied by criteria, which were used for the selection of fairy tales. Among these criteria, we emphasize the following: the attractiveness of the fairy tale character's traits, positive attitude and motivation of a character in achieving goals, effectiveness and fairness of his actions, his impact on others, and examples of dialogues, in which positive values are described.

2. Educational materials on philosophical, psychological and pedagogical disciplines, business ethics, dictionaries, and publications, which reveal the content, forms, methods, and techniques of spiritual and moral development of the child's personality.



These materials may include modern scientific literature, journalistic articles that have an impact on future teacher's personal development. As a sample list of the literary sources, we recommend the following (Bee, 2004; Belinskaya, 2008; Berezina, 2015; Fedorov, 2017; Friedman, 1991; Steiner, 1996; Vashchenko, 1952; Vashchenko, 1957, etc.)

These and other materials should be linked to each other in such a way that students will be able to look them through and analyze them, create brief annotations, and make personalized notes.

3. Authorial materials, texts, drawings, photographs, audio, video, created by students in collaboration with the children and their parents while having first teaching experience in school. It's up to the students to monitor the content of this component, and at seminars in high school such creative issues can be discussed.

In this study, the accumulation of educational materials, used in pedagogical practice, plays a significant role in enhancing future teachers' readiness, taking into account the following spiritual and moral values: 1) pedagogical love; 2) respect for the child's personality; 3) care for the spiritual and moral climate, in which the child is developing. Based on these areas, the future teacher builds his educational trajectory, and can also identify which pedagogical tools he will need in his future professional activity.

### **Discussion**

Is it possible to design various systems to improve future teachers' readiness for the spiritual and moral development of the child? What should this system be based on? How to motivate students and draw their attention to values in education?

Taking into account current tasks of future teachers' training in higher education institutions and a lack of their readiness for the spiritual and moral development of the child, in this article we formulated and proposed one of the alternatives of a system, which has a positive impact on both personal and professional development of students. In this study, we took into consideration that folk fairy tales are an integral part of personal development in a cross-cultural space. Many generations were brought up on these tales, national characters were formed. And what characters are formed in the folk tales of other countries? Which fairy tale characters can you use to develop children's spiritual and moral values?

We believe that this system is a didactic tool, which can be used by high school teachers. This system is an interesting one and it helps to achieve the goals of teaching students of the specialty "Primary Education". This system is currently at the stage of software development.

We can't help mentioning the important principles for further improvement of the system, they are: humanity, personalization, personal identification, lifelong learning, cross-cultural competence. Moreover, this system, which is based on values, depicted in Ukrainian folk tales, can become one of the ways of future teacher's self-realization and can enhance pedagogical education in accordance with local and global challenges and, thereby, enrich the spiritual and moral development of primary schoolchildren.

### **Conclusion**

In this article, we emphasize that in order to design a system for improving future teachers' readiness for the spiritual and moral development of the child in a cross-cultural space, a new understanding of the role of Ukrainian folk tale can be offered. Influenced by traditional fairy tales, we used approaches, which broaden our understanding of the didactic tools and have a motivating impact on the training of future teachers. The article shows how SMDC can be implemented into the educational process of higher education institutions, how it can influence the cross-cultural competence of future teachers' personalities. This article states that the development of children, based on the use of spiritual and moral values, dominating the region, is appropriate in the conditions of aggressive impact of unfavorable childhood environments. Today we can ask questions – which exact Ukrainian folk tales can have the most profound influence on the unfavorable childhood environments, dominating in a particular region? How can future teacher, who is not interested in the spiritual and moral development of the child, be successful both on an individual and team level of his or her professional activity? Such questions, which cover the importance of the issue, contribute to a better understanding of the need to build an educational trajectory for the development of students, starting from the first years of high school education. This system meets the needs of the teaching community and influences the partnership, which is realized in the interaction of all educational subjects (a high school student-teacher – a primary school teacher – a learner – parents). Students, being the main participants of this process and using such a tool, can gain their first pedagogical experience, construct their own identity, and develop pedagogical creativity.

The constant development of new information and communication technologies gives us a chance to open up new ways to improve future teachers' readiness. Based on the theoretical issues, raised in this article, it is possible to generate more complex systems, conduct comprehensive studies that will take into account both the spiritual and moral values of Ukrainian people and the values of other nations. In this case, the diverse understanding of values by different generations and different cultures must be taken into account. As emphasized in this article, it is necessary to take into account the unspoken rules of solving educational tasks, which have been developed by local traditions, because these rules were important for the life of society in a particular region. Indeed, this approach can help us to see different behavioral strategies and design them differently, in different contexts, taking into account constantly changing cross-cultural space.

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