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Compliance with Cultural Rules of Children Having Different Level of Creativity

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Abstract

The objective of the research is to reveal 5-6-year-old children’s observation of rules generally accepted in culture. We assumed that children with a high level of creativity display less compliance with rules in comparison with children having a low level of creativity. The results of the research have confirmed this assumption: children with high creativity have less degree of compliance with cultural rules. The empirical research reveals creativity through studying of children's drawings when the child is offered to finish the drawing of the given figures. Child’s compliance with rules - cultural congruence - is found out by means of the technique based on parents’ expert evaluations. The revealed connection between creativity and cultural congruence is of practical value when it comes to the assessment of the child’s behavior with a high level of creativity. The obtained results can be used in the psychological follow-up of gifted children with a high level of creativity experiencing difficulties of non-compliance with typical cultural rules in the standard social interaction.

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1. Introduction

The development of the creative personality is one of the significant issues of upbringing. A number of researchers point to the circumstance that creativity is promoted not so much by intellectual abilities, but by the conditions of the personality development at the early stages of ontogenesis [1],[2],[3],[4],[5],[6],[7],[8]. The personality formation takes place in the social situation of development. The process of a 5-6-year-old child’s socialization is provided due to the interaction with adults. Adults are delegated by culture to transfer artificial means-signs worked out in this culture. L.S. Vygotsky’s thesis that a child’s psyche is developed under the influence of culture has become the basic position for studying the conditions of ontogenesis. This thesis has

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become fundamental for the Russian children's psychology methodology. Psychical functions – speech, thinking, consciousness according to Vygotsky are the product of cultural means assignment. The social environment is regarded as an indispensable condition of these functions development.

The interaction of a child with the social environment is a difficult process of the child’s appeal to the world of signs and symbols worked out in culture. The understanding and assignment by a child of signs artificially created by culture occurs in the conditions of communication with adults. The child’s development in culture is, according to L.S. Vygotsky, "integration into culture"; the following extract confirms this idea: "The child’s integration into culture is the development in the proper sense of this word, though it is the development of another type than the prenatal development of a human fetus" [9, p. 292]. The social situation of the development when the child communicates with an adult is a necessary condition of this child’s cultural (social) development.

Signs are the symbolized form of some sense. The world of signs is not only the names of subjects, qualities and actions, but rules and norms corresponding to this or that culture [10]. Any social situation is within the frameworks of culture, i.e. it is standard. The standards of culture regulate person’s behavior, cognition, and emotional experience.

The standard situation basically contains the rule which is considered as an accepted one in the culture norm addressed to a person [11], [12]. In fact, the norm of culture addressed to its each subject acquires the status of the rule. The preschool child enters not the dialogue with a cultural norm because of the underdevelopment of the reflection, but the rule addressed to him. The process when culture transfers its norms with their following symbolization leading to the transformation of the norm to the rule is a complicated process. The initial methodological thesis about the standard nature of culture is important in this process [10].

It should be noted that the rule as a cultural unit is not a primitive pattern of behavior assigned from the outside. The rule is the regulation of the person’s staying within cultural space, limiting their spontaneous activity at all levels of interaction from the simplest forms of psychic reflection to difficult forms of personal behavior. The child’s interaction with the cultural rule goes back to the philosophical problem of interaction of a person and the world where this interaction is considered as the overcoming of the world’s influence, opposition to cultural assimilation providing self-preservation in creativity. Such dialectics of difficult relations of a person and the world is reflected in the works of the Russian philosopher M. M. Rubenstein [20]. The scientist emphasizes, that not cognition but transformation leads to the presentation of a person as the personality. This philosophical sense should become the source of understanding of the child’s socialization in culture. The personality is preserved due to their creative activity, therefore creativity is the manifestation of a person as the personality overcoming conformism of the rules required, the rules which are directed to the depersonalization. So, on the one hand, socialization demands typification of the behavior according to standard cultural rules (cultural congruence), on the other hand, the personality is always aspiring for self-expression, individualization which is manifested in the ability to create a unique creative product. The way these two tendencies – typification going from culture, and individualization going from a personality, are interconnected in preschool children’s psyche has become the subject of our empirical research.

2. Materials and methods

The degree of the child’s behaviour compliance with the cultural standards (cultural congruence) has been determined by means of the technique based on the parents’ expert evaluations [21]. There have been studied five parameters corresponding to the sphere of rules in culture ("hygiene", "safety", "self-control", "compliance to expectations of adults", "obedience"). Creativity was investigated by the technique worked out by O. M. Dyachenko [3]. The technique represents the set of figures which the child has to complete to have a finished image. The drawing that is unique in the group is regarded as creative. In this case it gets the score for originality. The results of two measurements in accordance with the goals of the work are compared for the purpose of their interrelation by Pearson correlation coefficient.

3. Results
In the course of the research of the sample of 5-6-year-old children, there have been obtained the results according to the indicator of creativity and five parameters characterizing child’s compliance with cultural standards. There have been found out negative relations between creativity and indicators that determine the child’s compliance with cultural rules. Thus, the correlation between creativity and the indicator of «obedience, correspondence to adults’ expectations» is equal to the value of 0.455, at p=0.05. As for other indicators, the connections with creativity have also negative values: “creativity - self-control” (-0.498, at p= 0.05), “creativity – safety” (-0.571, at p= 0.01). The interrelation between creativity and correspondence to the rules of hygiene has turned out to have the negative indicator but statistically insignificant (-0.341 at p= 0.01). The general indicator of correlation coefficient of creativity and cultural congruence (-0.605, at p=0.01) shows negative inverse dependence between the specified parameters.

4. Discussion

According to the assumption that children with high creativity display less degree of compliance with cultural rules in their behaviour, there has been expected the negative correlation coefficient between creativity and cultural congruence. The hypothesis has been confirmed. Actually, creativity is inverse dependent on the degree of the child’s compliance with cultural rules. The negative correlation coefficient is most obviously noticeable between creativity and the degree of the child’s compliance with safety rules. This interesting fact shows that a child with high creativity has a low level of self-preservation expressiveness in the behavior. The safety factor used to determine the cultural congruence reflects the following behavioural reactions of the child: "does not run far away from adults", "does not jump on the sofa", "does not play with matches", "does not sit long hours at computer/ TV-set", "does not open the door to strangers", "does not talk to strangers", "does not run after having meals", "does not play ball at home". Therefore, inverse dependence between creativity and the degree of safe conduct shows that children with a high creative potential can contact with strangers ignoring health hazard, can sit long hours at the computer, can play outdoor games indoors that can cause some danger.

The interrelation between creativity and self-control has the negative value as well. For example, if we consider this factor according to the technique aimed to determine the cultural congruence, then we will find that it is connected with the following positions which evaluate the child’s ability to control his own behavior: "rides a bicycle carefully", "takes prohibitions and restrictions adequately", "performs tasks correctly ", "eats accurately", "is attentive". Watching children’s behaviour in natural situations, it is possible to observe that children having high creative potential can be inattentive, inaccurate and they do not take prohibitions and restrictions adequately at once.

The correlation coefficient of creativity and the degree of obedience has the negative value; it is observed in real behavior: creative children can be disobedient. In our research we do not reveal reasons of such behavior, but only state the fact testifying to the tendencies of creative children’s nonconforming behavior.

One indicator defining the child’s compliance with hygiene rules out of four indicators defining the child’s cultural congruence is not connected with creativity. Therefore, creative children do not differ from children with low creativity as they observe a daily routine, brush their teeth, wash hands before meal, etc.

On the whole, the conducted empirical research allowed to obtain results having practical significance when the behavior of children with high creativity is assessed. There is the tendency which creative and gifted children experience while socializing. Pointing to these tendencies, their specific manifestations are not spoken about as a rule. The research conducted by us accurately specifies that creative children’s behaviour is characterized by non-compliance with safety rules, low self-control, disobedience. Thus, the general result of inverse dependence between children’s creativity and their cultural congruence is the reason for a special analysis of psychology of creative child in the context of their socialization and personal development.
References