

## Spiritual and Moral Education of Preschoolers

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### Abstract

The relevance of the problem under study is conditioned by the fact that of children's spiritual and moral education becomes a priority for educational activity of many countries. One of the human development megatrends is shifting towards dualism "technological progress – peace of mind", when each new technology is accompanied by a compensatory humanitarian reaction. The education of preschoolers becomes a topical issue for scientists owing to the significance of this age with regard to the formation of an individual's spiritual and moral culture, ability to preserve peace of mind, dignity, tolerance to negative influences of modern life.

The paper is aimed at revealing the essence of the process of spiritual and moral education of preschoolers.

The leading approaches preferred in studying the outlined problem are humanist and self-development approaches, allowing to reveal peculiarities of the value and notional realm among young children aged 6-7. In addition, they enable the development of guidelines and patterns for cultural practices in the sphere of spiritual and moral education.

The main study results are as follows: for the first time, the concept "spiritual and moral human culture" has been formulated; the methodological grounds for spiritual and moral education of preschoolers have been determined; basic forms of educational activity, oriented towards the development of children's value and notional realm, have been discovered. It has been proven that at the age of 6-7, the child gradually becomes aware of basic values: beauty, kindness, love, health, truth, etc. The peculiarities of preschoolers' spiritual and moral education have been determined and scientifically grounded. The work provides a logical justification for the formation of spiritual and moral culture grounds among children: the ideas about values are transformed from immediate into mediated, from unconscious into conscious. The article also formulates the conditions of organizing the educational process as cultural and creative.

The research findings of the paper may be useful for practitioners and scientists, studying the education problems faced by preschoolers.

**Keywords:** *preschoolers, preschool education, spiritual and moral education, value and notional realm*

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### Introduction

One of the modern megatrends is shifting towards dualism "technological progress – peace of mind", when each new technology is accompanied by a compensatory humanist reaction. It is possible to observe close attention to spiritual and moral education and development of the rising generation given by the Russian government. It is hard to overestimate the significance of educating spiritual and moral culture to an individual, as it will allow one to preserve one's peace of mind, dignity, tolerance to negative influences of the modern life.

The objective of the research was formulated in the following way: revealing the essence of the process of preschoolers' spiritual and moral education.

The hypothesis of the study consists in the fact that spiritual and moral education of preschoolers can be effective provided that the individual's understanding of spiritual and moral culture represents a holistic related image based on the value and notional worldview. "Dignity", "responsibility", "tolerance", etc. are systemically important category values; and a play, a fairy-tale and a dialogue act as basic educational technologies.

The main scientific approaches are humanistic and self-developing. They allow revealing the peculiarities of the value and notional realm of children aged 6-7, as well as developing the guidelines and patterns of cultural practices in the sphere of spiritual and moral education.

The humanistic (humanist) approach explains the value of spiritual and moral culture of an individual, embodies the essence of human **spirituality** – one's intrinsic motivation, life goals, meanings and attitudes towards the world and oneself. The concept "**morality**" is interpreted as a set of behavior rules, in which spirituality may or may not become apparent. Spirituality retains strong links with individual value orientations, represents a human intention (conscious aspiration) for values of the Good, the Beauty, the Truth; determination, insatiability, anxiety, tension, energy, aimed at searching for verity. **Spiritual and moral culture of the modern human being reveals itself as a holistic, related image, a value and notional worldview, acting as a basis for self-determination in the world, as well as the determination of one's own rules of creative, safe, socially active behavior in the information society** [1].

The self-development approach was actualized in preschool pedagogy since the grounds for an individual's spiritual and moral culture form in their preschool childhood, when the child interacts with the surrounding world suggesting the natural need in feeling deeply, cognizing, assessing, comprehending. In one's representations, empirical, emotional-sensual, even intuitive data prevail. Children's curiosity, their questions about all aspects of life facilitate formation of a unique worldview, which can be characterized by both integrity and fragmentariness, depending on the quality of the information provided for them, its source, means of its presentation, availability, visualization, etc. Aspiration for the holistic understanding of objects and phenomena is expressed through a large quantity of questions, discovering the world from different viewpoints. A holistic view is generated owing to adults' answers, experiments, research, the

information from fairy-tales, stories, television programs, computer games. Dominance of aspiration for integrity, on the one hand, can cause some worldview aberrations, manifesting themselves in disruptions of cause-and-effect, external-internal interrelations. On the other hand, preschool childhood is characterized with creativity, inducing to make individual nonstandard decisions in complex situations, to devise and approve the behavior variants, basing on both externally established rules and on the norms that have been comprehended and consciously accepted by the child [2, 3, 4, 5].

Externally established moral rules, required of the child in the ready-made form, are the basis of traditional education. A preschooler is taught to differentiate between kindness and evil, good and bad. They are instilled with socially acceptable behavior and wean from the acts that are disapproved by the society. The reason why the child must behave in accordance with these rules and norms is their acceptance and approval by significant people – an educator, relatives, other significant adults. The individual meaning of a child's actions is determined by their assessment and is, thus, beyond the act, which is performed to obtain reward and to avoid punishment. Such education is similar to training, consolidating the correct reaction to certain stimuli. However, when the external control is relinquished, children find themselves in the situation of choosing either the adopted behavior or some other behavior that differs from the rules. The experimental proofs of the fact that the absence of control leads to breaking the rules, which the child has not adopted as values of their life activity and behavior, are widely known. There are situations when at an infant school certain rules of life activity are taught to the child, but in real life he or she faces others (leadership, achieving a goal by any means, success). For example, at the infant school, children are taught to avoid contacts with strangers, explaining it by the necessity to protect their lives. At that, such education is realized through trainings, forming the skill. In practice, the conviction in danger of the

surrounding world, strangers, fear of socialization and communication are instilled in children. But in reality, spiritual and moral culture of a human being reveals itself the other way – through the ability to be benevolent, worthy, free in communication with both known and unknown people. Thus, in the child's consciousness, a conflict may arise, the causes of which are concealed in the education system itself. Therefore, despite the fact that modern children possess a large volume of elementary knowledge about moral rules and norms of behavior, they follow them under proper control, without manifesting mental activity, an independent stance when nonstandard situations arise.

### **Methodological Framework**

The research methodology is based on considering the cultureaxiological sphere, setting reference points of spiritual and moral education of the rising generations. In today's unstable world, there exists a reassessment of values, a change of their hierarchy in the axiological sphere of the culture, which represents not just a set of certain values in human life, but an integral system of value relations and attitudes towards the Universe. The axiological sphere is a foundation of a nation's culture and social life as a whole. It constitutes a core basis of the society, owing to which it preserves stability despite the inherent conflicts in economic, socio-cultural, political, spiritual and moral spheres. In essence, the culture axiological sphere represents a spiritual atmosphere of children's life, determining one's creation and comprehension of values that are reference points in behavior.

Humanistic values, which include moral and ethical (kindness, justice, dignity, honor), are of particular importance in spiritual and moral education of a child. In preschool childhood, ideals that must be a concentrated expression of lofty spiritual values evolve. Such ideals are presented in images of positive heroes of fairy-tales, cartoons, computer games. An ideal as a perfection representation serves for the child as a vector, allowing determining the choice of goal, ways of behavior, values and life meanings. The hero's image, to which the

preschooler orients oneself, spiritualizes their life as a human being, attaches sense to it. The specifics of the age consist in the fact that in the course of only few years, the child's ideals may change. One "tries on" images, preserving certain hero's traits in oneself, and then passes on to the next one.

The world of children's values reflects the area of life-meaning reference points, determining one's behavior pattern. By the late preschool age, aspiration for being as an adult, for establishing positive relationships with adult peers, self-esteem and self-assertion motives and cognitive motives become typical behavior motives. Gradually, the motive system evolves, i.e. main motives and subordinate motives are identified, and the motives of a higher order – socially mediated – are brought to the forefront. A value and notional worldview starts to evolve in the child. Emotions, feelings, evolving self-assessment are of great importance in this process. Comprehension of the value system allows not just understanding the world order, but also generating the rules of one's own life. The result of this process, which is concealed from direct observation, is the child's attitudes, their wishes, needs, etc. At the same time, the child's own rules can differ significantly from those that are generally accepted. Therefore, when working with children of this age, it is necessary to determine a priority connected with the development of their spiritual and moral culture grounds.

The value and notional worldview as a ground for spiritual and moral culture of a human being is filled with conceived, infelt, clearly determined values and individualized meanings of behavior and life activity. Various information sources structure the child's worldview, in which a value and notional core evolves. Namely, values, life meanings create uniqueness, originality of each person, characterizing one's spiritual and moral culture.

In the author's opinion, the leading categorical values, which are systemically important in the preschooler's value and notional worldview, are "dignity", "responsibility", "tolerance". The dignity category characterizes a human

being from the standpoint of worthiness for their family, peer group, society. "Dignity" is interpreted as "up-to-worthiness", that is a definition of value, significance of the individual. Any human being always takes certain stance (is worth); hence, dignity follows. "Up-to-" as a prefix, reflects a tendency, an approach to something. The word "worthiness" attaches special importance to an individual and his/her social position in the world. The individual position, in contrast to a stance, represents an integral, meaningful expression of openness and readiness to bear responsibility.

Dignity is expressed through the value an individual's self-perception and other people's attitude towards him/her. It is a form of manifesting self-consciousness and self-control, on which exactingness towards oneself is based. Dignity is closely connected with such individual traits as conscience, honor, responsibility to oneself and other people. Namely these traits in children facilitate their success in study and in communication with peers. Even I. Kant stated that human dignity is determined not by one's ancestry, wealth, education or social status, but by the freedom inherent in one as an individual and a citizen. In his opinion, dignity as a ground of volition opposes any other practical impulses [6]. The self-value of dignity is conditioned by the fact that it, in contrast to the cost, does not have an equivalent and as an "intrinsic value" is related not to such notions as "inclination" and "need", but to "taste". Dignity manifests itself in the readiness to resist spiritual and physical violence, pressure, neglect of oneself, impertinence and impudence, which will be especially important at elementary school, when intrinsic dignity will allow a child to display will-power, self-control and nonviolent means of self-assertion.

The child's freedom is a spiritual and moral ground of educating dignity. The theory of free education proposed by K. Ventselya, J.J. Rousseau, L.N. Tolstoy considers a child to be the center of the pedagogical Universe, determines the main approaches to educating one's dignity, which evolves and exists only in case if the human "I" is identified with deep

traditions of ethno-cultural memory [7, 8, 9]. In their opinion, natural, free education, consistent with nature, allows the child's inner potential and dignity to unfold themselves. Each moral lesson may be taught only when deemed necessary, when the child claims for it. At the preschool age, the development of unschooled talents, preservation of harmony between the child and the world are of particular significance.

Children's spiritual and moral education becomes a priority in connection with its significance for individual dignity maturation, its stable, successful and free habitation. K.D. Ushinsky wrote that any individual possesses a striving for being and a striving for living [10]. These are needs, the full-fledged development of which provides evolvment of individual dignity. The striving for being is a need in self-preservation, safety, self-identification, self-respect, in preservation of a positive idea about oneself. Namely this need forms the core, around which an individual's behavior and self-development are built. The striving for life is a need in development, self-realization and a need in favourable conditions for self-development. The more opportunities are provided for children, the better their talents are developed, the more self-reliant and the more independent of peers and other people they become. Having satisfied the children's need to be, having liberated the child from the struggle for safety, it becomes possible to give him or her a free scope for actions driven by the need in life, in growing up to be a worthy person.

The problem of educating a child's dignity is a problem of evolvment of social by origin and moral by content motives of behavior. This is also provided by development of thinking, which J. Piaget called "preoperational", that is children's awareness is not so much of rational as of sensual (intuitive) nature. Therefore, a child's worldview is imaginative, holistic, harmonious. Nevertheless, the intellectual support of self-development determines comprehension of the mechanisms of dignity evolvment, its cognitive aspects from the viewpoint of unlocking the child's potential [11].



V.E. Chudnovsky emphasizes that the path to self-esteem is conditioned by revelation of the child's potencies, by development of one's capabilities, so that one's "I" has come into harmony with the level of aspirations and self-appraisal [12]. The dignity of a child aged 6-7 becomes the core of an evolved "intrinsic stance", objectively representing an already stable enough integrative system and indicating awareness of one's social "I", one's role of an apprentice. This is central individual education, characterizing the preschooler individual, determining behavior and activity, further development and the whole system of one's attitudes towards reality, to oneself and the surrounding people.

One of the main conditions of involvement of individual dignity is a serious treatment of oneself, but this is impossible without a serious and respectful treatment of the child by significant adults as of a creative and potentially promising individual. As a result, the grounds for adequate acceptance of oneself evolve in the child. "Genuine spiritual development", I.I. Sikorsky emphasized, "implies a harmonious growth and perfection of main aspects of the soul [13]". The result of the proper education is a synthesis of mind, feelings, willpower, allowing for the individual's dignity and moral integrity. Such harmony implies deliberate systematic supervision, which is provided only in case it is based on deep parents' knowledge of the child's natural development, and uses means, adequate for the child's mental life.

G.S. Batishchev stated that such relationship with a child as co-rejoicing, considering a deep respect for his/her subjective world, is an obligatory principle of new pedagogical thinking independently of results, merits, maturity, status and other things [14]. Such premonitory respect is concretized by anticipative expectation of unexpected changes on each path of one's involvement, that is by expectation of unexpected, paradoxically different. Each child receives adequate initial treatment from their parents and other adults, when their individual world is taken in its correlation with the entire unlimited being, but not within some predetermined frameworks.

This is anticipative respect – including forgiveness – towards others: it creatively anticipates the possible future. Mental and spiritual connection with a child allows influencing the ideas of the latter about one's "I" as of a worthy human being, which are a determining factor of one's behavior. In this case, developing education becomes a guidance of the child's inner, spiritual improvement, forming one's ability to search oneself, to reveal one's potential in cognizing the surrounding world. In this case, the educational process simultaneously proceeds at all or many radically different levels, satisfying the principle of encountering and evoking similar by similar: formation – by formation, creativity – by creativity, unconditional axiological devotion – by the corresponding devotion, incorruptibility and fearlessness in children – only by incorruptibility and fearlessness in an educator, etc.

Educating the child's responsibility as a spiritual and moral human trait bases on one of the most crucial newly formations of preschool childhood – emergence of arbitrary behavior. The child's impulsive and spontaneous behavior becomes mediated by behavior norms and rules. In this case, for the first time, a question as to how to behave arises; that is, a preliminary image of one's behavior, serving as a regulator, is created. The child starts to master and manage his/her behavior, comparing it with an independently chosen sample, ideal. This comparison with a sample involves awareness of one's behavior and its treatment from the viewpoint of this sample. Awareness of one's behavior and the beginning of individual self-consciousness is one of the main achievements of the preschool age. An elder preschooler starts to understand things that they can or cannot do. Children know their limited place in the system of relationships with other people and comprehend not only their actions, but also their inner experiences – wishes, preferences, moods, etc. One passes the path from "I myself", from separating oneself from the closer adults to revealing one's inner life, which constitutes the essence of individual self-consciousness. Responsibility as an ability

to be charged with committed acts, to control one's activity in accordance with norms and rules, accepted by the human being or group, begins to form in a child. Responsibility implies that a child is able to understand consistency or inconsistency between results of his/her actions and the set goals.

A child's freedom is directly influenced by responsibility, which can be perceived by one as a right, responsibility to act in a certain way in the existing circumstances. Responsibility as an inner feeling and/or a principle of thinking and activity of an individual does not emerge spontaneously. It forms in the course of developing education, aimed at helping the child to come up with an independent definition values and meanings of his/her life, rules and norms of behavior. Responsibility, as well as freedom, is holistic: it may either exist or not. At that, in the pedagogical aspect, it is possible to understand that the wider the child determines the scope of freedom, the more significant his/her responsibility becomes. And, on the contrary, along with limitations of individual and social freedom, responsibility narrows as well. And since traditional education practically does not provide freedom of self-expression for children, the responsibility is taken by educators, thus relieving those children of responsibility who do not learn to regulate their acts. "People are afraid of freedom" is the diagnosis given by E. Fromm [15]. Escape from freedom occurs in childhood, when parents, educators, society take the entire responsibility for the child, and the latter only obediently follows the set norms and rules. Therefore, the individual gets used to getting rid of responsibility and freedom, having relegated his/her own destiny and individual freedom to other or others. But freedom, as an internal spring of discipline and self-discipline, does not imply permissiveness. Freedom demands the understanding of the situation, planning of the individual activity, control over it, etc. That is what is reflected in the standards of preschool education – requirement to develop the planning and regulating functions of children's speech, their responsibility for committed acts. Let us emphasize once again: responsibility as a

spiritual and moral individual quality evolves at the preschool age during developing education.

Spiritual and moral education of a child implies development of his/her value and notional worldview, which will be developed in their future adult life. In this process, the rational approach, which does not affect the child's emotions, will never lead to the desired outcome. Education, skills, knack can be obtained later, but the best in a human being is grounded namely at the preschool age, the age of intensive development of feelings and interpersonal relationships.

### Results

Based on the selected methodology of the study, the technologies of spiritual and moral education, such as a play, a fairy-tale and a dialogue, have been developed. It was proven that at the turn of 6-7 years old, a child starts to become aware of and form basic values: beauty, kindness, love, health, truth, etc. Peculiarities of spiritual and moral education of preschoolers were determined and scientifically substantiated. The logic of forming the grounds of children's spiritual and moral culture was revealed: ideas about values transform from immediate into mediated, from involuntary into voluntary, from unconscious into conscious. The conditions of organizing the educational process as a cultural and creative one were developed.

### Discussions

The educational process efficiency, in correspondence with the hypothesis of the study, depends on realization of such patterns as a play, a fairy-tale and a dialogue. Play is a symbolic activity, in which social relationships among people are recreated. Its space is the world of signs and symbols. It develops by the laws of mythopoetics and the logic of imagination. In plays, a child symbolically simulates a certain reality, takes on a role, attempts to experience different human passions and feelings, values and life meanings. In children's plays, their spiritual and moral culture is revealed; therefore, it is possible to trace the origin and evolution of the

value and notional worldview in role-plays, didactic and sport games, games-dramatizations, etc. The child's preferences, attitudes, interests, which will become the reference points in his/her real life, are approved in game situations. J. Huizinga calls human play a cultural and creative activity, since it is deeply related to the most important culture phenomena [16]. This is the reason why this pattern is chosen by the author as a means of educating the grounds of spiritual and moral culture in children.

Children's playing attitude includes truths, ideals, rules, norms. N.V. Savenko writes: "Plays teach children the philosophy of comprehending difficulties, contradictions, tragedies of life; teach, without surrendering to them, to see bright and joyous, to rise over squabbling, to live purposefully and festively, "effortlessly" [17]. The author has proven that the children's play is a way for a child to determine his/her place in the world of people, a specifically human form of their development. This pattern creates a cultural space, in which the child independently determines the values that manifest themselves in real life. But before entering social and cultural relationships, the child plays out different situations in imagination, in the playing space, providing him/her with maximum possible freedom.

The creative, holistic worldview induces the child to master it by any means possible that modernity offers. Children are able to use a computer, a mobile phone and other engineering devices; they are ready for mastering new technologies, new sources of information. Computer games for preschoolers are among them. These games correspond to a leading activity of the child; therefore, to a certain degree, they solve the problem of one's curiosity and building the grounds of spiritual and moral culture. Imagery of information perception is a characteristic trait of the child, to which modern information technologies correspond, including primary channels of perception through graphic (both statistical and dynamic) images, color, sound. Apart from performing the function of acquainting the child with information, they also allow

reaching emotional involvement, holistic experience of the computer game content. In this situation, children's spirituality actively develops. It is possible to observe broadening and replenishment of notional realms for those concepts that have been introduced in the game since definite links. Dependences are established among concepts and their new properties are considered. The computer becomes a means of training and education, which suggests the ways of problem solution, fixes mistakes, but does not express negative appraisals concerning child's actions. Society informatization causes the necessity of taking into account the fact of consciousness transformation, i.e. how modern children comprehend problems, how they obtain, use, sum up information and how they treat it.

A huge potential is laid in the play; it evokes plenty of emotions, pleasure, fervor; allows eliminating complexes; facilitates emergence of spontaneity and creates unlimited creative environment. One's ability to orient oneself in the text of the play and, therefore in the "text of life" depends on the fact what play experience the child possesses. The world reveals itself to a child in the course of the play as "the world seen for the first time" (V.S. Bibler). The image of an adult, who commits certain acts, is assigned and becomes a reference point in the behavior of a child. Thus, the play projects the past into the future, actualizing the function of a forestalling transfer, of a certain future situation, anticipated in the present. This entails doubling the reality, superposition of the existing and imaginary realities, that is, the creation of "the parallel world" takes place.

The author has found that by the age of five, child is able to differentiate between the good and the evil, the beauty and the ugly; one has particularly developed emotionality, trustfulness, openness, outgoingness. Elder preschoolers enter rapidly into proposed playing roles, which are, to some extent, a form of restoring inner harmony, a "sample" of different behavior patterns, leading to a certain outcome. The conventional symbolic world of the role-playing game is a space, in which the child learns how to love, to understand, to

overcome difficulties, to show dignity, responsibility, etc. In addition, this learning in the play has a real directionality, forming individual traits of high demand in both game and life situations. Children “play out” the situations, in which their value and notional worldview, spiritual essence, moral reference points evolve. So that the play could take place, one needs a playing space, which represents a culture phenomenon, in which a play acting, a plot, a role, as well as a creator – author – are presented. Such space can take different forms: rectilinear (from the purpose – to the result, as in the fairy-tale “Kolobok”), circular (the plot is repeated practically without changes), spiral-wise (starting from one point, the plot unfolds in a new direction and leads to new outcomes), etc. The spiritual and moral content of the playing space creates a basis for the real worthy life.

The importance of children’s spiritual and moral education in the playing space is determined by the play value, developing the child’s individual culture, his/her sign and symbolical activity, worldview and world attitude. The playing symbolism is expressed through the presence of fiction “as if”, application of the mastered patterns to new objects. In this case, a symbol is not simply materialization of the identified thing image, but, first of all, a functional playing substituent that enables the performance of the play acting. Development of the symbolic function at the preschool age proceeds from the use of external real substituents towards implementation of substitution in the inner plan. Transition towards the use of inner imagery substituents allows children’s mind to cognize notions about things and phenomena of reality, about values and meanings, about behavior rules and then to apply them in real life activity. Development of the symbolic function enriches the play; playing meaning becomes increasingly generalized. The play will allow the child to grasp the whole earlier than the parts, to transfer the properties of one image onto another, to express generalized links and regularities of the objective world, spiritual and moral principles in a symbolic form. They are as follows: a donation principle

(giving more to others, one obtains more for oneself); a principle of positive thoughts (at a certain time space, it is possible to think about one thing – either good or bad; choosing the good means choosing a harmonious life; thoughts about trouble create problems in life); a motion principle (all things are in a flux, night follows day, etc.); an echo principle (as the call, so the echo; the evil will come back as evil, and the love – as love (as you sow, you shall mow; sow the wind and reap the whirlwind; if you want good – do good yourself; let your bread flow down the river, and it will return to you with butter).

Creation of a playing space filled with values of culture and life meanings is based on psychological regularities of preschoolers’ development. Consideration of the substitution function, when a child, imagining the play environment and introducing the expression “as if”, informs the peer, with whom one is interacting, about its (space) peculiarities, about the structure and introduction of new elements of the space, its narrowing and widening, is of particular importance in the creation of a playing space. An adult, being outside the play, is not always able to assess the limits, the space boundaries. This happens owing to the fact that frequently the playing space of an elder preschooler is not presented by any objects of material medium. It can be much broader than it was indicated externally and can include rules, based on spiritual and moral principles. Therefore, the child will follow the independently formulated rules with a particular satisfaction. The play becomes a form of realizing a life scenario, unfolding in the life plan. Freedom and creativity, as essential characteristics of the play space, are also conditions of changing the rules, their correction in correspondence with the developing spiritual and moral realm of a child. Namely in the play a child learns to responsibly regulate one’s own behavior, submitting it to values and meanings of the role, the scenario, the rule. And since the correlation between the play and the reality is of interpenetrational and interreflectional nature, all manners of life, which the child adopted in the play, become one’s reference



points in real relationships with the world of people, objects, culture, nature.

Along with the play, let us consider the *fairy-tale*, which is a powerful reserve of acquainting a child with the spiritual and moral culture of humankind. Art, as well as the play, creates some space, which resists the lack of spirituality of mass media that create a myth about the capabilities of a child, exclusively as a consumer of products of other person's activity. The illusion of prompt obtainment of goods and immediate satisfaction of one's material needs evolves in the modern preschooler. The child's value and notional worldview is filled with the significance of consumption, making profit and deriving various pleasures. These values in principle cannot be called negative, but they turn out to be exaggerated, hypertrophied. And it is necessary to complement them with love, beauty, truth, which are brightly and vividly presented in fairy-tales.

The fairy-tale as a space of the culture values and meanings develops and alters with time. During interpretation, its multilayer and metaphorical text is capable of revealing a quite different content compared to that which lies on the surface. Traditional folktales are a real treasure for a researcher of cultural symbols. The record of exotic fairy-tales invented by nations, not having written language, has discovered great riches with regard to motives with the symbolical ground. The world order, prevailing in them, is a world order of other reality.

The world of signs and typical images bears the meanings of space and time in itself. Some fairy-tale themes have survived almost unchanged since ancient times – more than 25 thousand years AD, embodying an already forgotten method of interaction of consciousness and the world, but being unique for a child, who for the first time reveals the world secrets. The world “communicates” with children in the language of stars, plants and animals, rivers and mountains, seasons and days. Children respond it with their dreams, fantasies, dances, transformations in plays. For a child, the world seems comprehensible and penetrable because one feels that the world

“looks” at one and understands one. In fairy-tales, heroes, as well as children, resort to the help of the world powers (the Sun, the Wind, the Earth, the Sea) and communicate with them. Children and heroes tend to be confident in their support, sympathy and advice. Thus, a unique cultural language of communication with the world evolves, and children draw the nuances of this language from fairy-tales. The fairy-tale images of space and time are presented for one in signs, symbols and main notional units of the worldview. The sign and symbolic codes, created by the fairy-tale, generate a system of common cultural and ethno-cultural images, influencing children's subsequent perception of literature, theater, painting, life realities, oneself, etc. Images, signs, and symbols tend to complement each other since any image is reflected in the sign, and the sign has an “aura” of the imaginative context.

Works of art for children, especially fairy-tales, are materialization of the collective folk art, of the experience in getting acquainted with the surrounding world in its integrity and various interrelations. Cognizing the human image and life by means of signs and symbols, a child acquires not only social samples, but also creates independently his/her own worldview, finds the ways of its broadening in a free act, including imagination. The concepts “development”, “culture acquisition” and “creativity” are inseparable in the education system; they attach a creatively developing directionality to it. This unity provides an opportunity for children to enter the world of human culture owing to productive imagination, which is a driving mechanism of culture acquisition. Integration of a cognitive and artistically aesthetic image determines formation of the value and notional worldview and grounds of spiritual and moral culture of the child.

Dialogical relationships with the world, represented in fairy-tales, determine the fact that objects or phenomena in the folklore consciousness are endowed with meaning. In a certain situation, they become signs: the well as a reservoir of pure water (as rivers, seas, oceans, etc.) can be represented as a place,

where cleansing procedures take place. In other situation, the concept “well” is included into the complex “transition to another world” and is understood as a place of meeting and beginning a dialogue with otherworldly powers, similar to such concepts as “mountain”, “crossroad”, etc. In fairy-tales, the witch's hut is at the crossroad of our and other worlds, whereto not everyone can get. To enter the fairy-tale world, it is necessary to pass through definite stages, trials, purgation. Folklore signs and symbols perform the function of generalization of individual and collective experience, human sensual and emotional attitude to the world. Preschoolers' comprehension of the meaning of folklore signs and symbols is determined by the level of development of their cognitive processes, worldview peculiarities, attitude towards the world, the world transformation and the value and notional, spiritual and moral attitude to the world.

Using fairy-tales, the adult personifies the hero image, which influences the child at the emotional and notional level, allows the latter to complete the worldview and broaden the scope of the worldview. Fairy-tales, as bearers of mentality, allow the child to identify oneself with an adult and adopt basic values of love, benevolence, courage, etc. The semiotic space of the fairy-tale is significant in creation of one's own value and notional worldview. According to Yu.M.Lotman, archaic signs and symbols allow identifying the microcosm of the human inner world and the microcosm of the universe surrounding one. The mechanism of conditionally adequate translation of signs and symbols of the fairy-tales into the child's language is a condition of developing his/her spiritual and moral realm.

Fairy-tales create a certain subculture, represented by a set of values, traditions, stereotypes and rules of behavior, expressed through a special language, representing a treasure of great popular wisdom that reached us through the centuries. This type of culture is seamlessly embedded in the childhood subculture, giving children an opportunity to independently encounter and identify the good and the evil, the beauty and the ugly, the truth

and the lie. When comprehending the culture, a child in collaboration, communication, co-joyfulness and empathy, in the dialogue with the culture bearers – adults – owing to one's activity, freedom, creativity overcomes some limitations, established by adults' rules and norms. One formulates one's own life rules, which one observes with pleasure. And if one's life rules correlate with the rules dictated by the culture, it is possible to state that the process of spiritual and moral development is organized educationally correctly and efficiently.

The author has chosen a *dialogue* as a technology of children's spiritual and moral education in connection with the fact that the dialogue represents not only a question-answer form of thinking, but the real existence of culture itself and its essence. Revelations, sincere, heartfelt, value-oriented thoughts, ideas, grounds and life rules are revealed in the dialogue. The dialogue is characterized by presence, involvement, sincere, genuine and frank communication, recognition, confirmation. During a dialogue, there is an interchange with activity outcomes, feelings, ideas, which allows the subject to coordinate one's behavior in the social medium. The more conversational ideas and thoughts are, the more multilaterally and holistically the problem is considered. As M.M. Bakhtin noted: “An idea starts to live, that is, it starts to form, to develop, to find and to renew its verbal expression, to generate new ideas only when it enters essential dialogic relationships with other *foreign* ideas. A human thought becomes a genuine thought, that is, an idea that rises only under conditions of live contact with a foreign thought embodied in a foreign voice, that is, in a foreign and expressed through the word consciousness. An idea arises and exists namely at the point of this contact of voices and consciousness [18]. The dialogue becomes a specific trait of an individual's culture, providing a mechanism of self-development and an ability to perceive foreign arguments and foreign experience, to observe a balance, compromise in communication. The processes of culture interaction are more complex than once it was fondly believed; they believed that

there is a simple “transfer” of achievements of a highly developed culture to less developed, which in its turn led logically to conclusions about interrelations of cultures as a source of the progress. According to N.Ya.Danilevsky, cultures develop apart and they are initially hostile to each other [19]. At the heart of these differences, he saw the “national spirit”. He understands the dialogue as communication with a culture, as realization and reproduction of its achievements. This is detection and comprehension of other cultures’ values, a way of acquiring the latter, an opportunity to lift political tension among states and ethnic groups. Interaction of cultures and civilizations implies some common cultural values as well. The dialogue of cultures can act as a reconciling factor, warning about an outbreak of wars and conflicts, as well as a means of spiritual and moral education and development, aimed at formation of the value and notional worldview of the child.

Summarizing the previously mentioned information, let us emphasize the fact that the fairy-tale reflects the world through symbolism, and the play is a certain path leading to comprehension of these symbols and to formation of spiritual and moral reference points in the dialogue with oneself, other people and the world. The play creates a realm of values and allows adopting the relationship system, reflected in the fairy-tale. The fairy-tale, the play, the fantasy and the dialogue create some realm of psychological reality, into which the child immerses. In the course of the world perception and the world understanding, secret spiritual threads of “co-participation” and empathy evolve, which forms a holistic worldview, creates the culture of perception of this world and the behavior culture in it [20]. The child cognizes the world through feelings, and in the childhood the sensory perception of culture forms penetrates into the child’s inner life, one’s inner world, and it “works” throughout the entire human life, forming cognitive and spiritual capabilities, moral concepts and one’s own unique norms of behavior, based on life values and meanings. All this creates a certain creative environment, in which the child

creates oneself [21, 22, 23].

## Conclusion

Such patterns as play, fairy-tale and dialogue form a certain cultural tradition creating the value and notional background, which determines priorities of the future life activity. In the author’s opinion, this cultural tradition must represent a unique line and interrelation, since the set priorities and mentioned patterns define man’s place in the world, his beliefs and knowledge, life purpose and ways of existence. They awake the archetypes of the child, facilitate the development of his/her cultural identity. They contain information about the past, the present, and the future, where the values of justice, norms of relationships with oneself, with other people, with nature and culture are shaped in a certain manner.

The development of children’s subculture is a way of preserving their childhood, discovery and evolvement of their value and notional worldview. The child is to be helped to preserve emotional sensitivity and the world perception integrity in oneself throughout his/her entire life. The education system faces the challenge to develop sociocultural programs and technologies of effective involvement of children in the world of culture, development of their creative potential based on the play, the dialogue, and to support the development of their spiritual and moral culture. Fairy-tales and children’s folklore, reflecting peculiarities of behavior and consciousness, archetypes of collective unconscious, elements of children’s behavior, children’s language and thinking, help a child to fix cultural, moral norms and ways of relationships in children’s and adults’ communities. A socio-cultural model of the world and universal, stable ways of constructive and destructive behavior are reflected in these communities. This model can be distinguished without edifications and admonitions, using the means of, for example, the play, the fairy-tale and the dialogue.

In the study, the author proved that using the play, the fairy-tale and the dialogue, as patterns for the children’s spiritual and moral

education, as well as their value and notional worldview development, allow him/her to absorb the best meanings and values, objectivized in the human nature and embody them in his/her personality. One learns to display one's dignity, responsibility and tolerance in the diverse space of individual, social and cultural life. The possibility of cognizing the world by these means, reflecting the myth symbols, is determined by interpreting the phenomenon of Childhood as a symbolical, mythopoetical, holistic, intuitive comprehension of being. The result of spiritual and moral development of a child during childhood is formation of his/her value and notional worldview. The following factors can be considered as theoretical grounds of children's spiritual and moral education: education of one's dignity, freedom, responsibility, tolerance. Organizing the educational process on the basis of the play, the fairy-tale, the dialogue creates conditions for the child's immersion into life whirlwind, based on values and meanings.

At the turn of 6-7 years old, the child starts to become aware of and evolve such basic values as beauty, kindness, love, health, truth, etc. Formation of the grounds for the child's spiritual and moral culture is a consecutive and lengthy process. During this process, the elements of spirituality undergo and pass through certain conditions: from immediate – to mediated, from involuntary – to voluntary, from unconscious – to conscious, which, in its turn, makes specific demands on not only the content, technologies, methods, but also on the logic of the educational process as cultural and creative. Children are sensible to the world of culture and the surrounding adults' mission is to preserve this emotional responsiveness and trustfulness of the children towards us, to introduce them in the adult world painlessly and fearlessly by means of understandable, secret signs and symbols of culture, its values and meanings, laws of life.

### Recommendations

The research findings are of interest to practitioners and scientists studying the problems of educating preschoolers.

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