PECCULIARITIES OF SOLVING NATURAL-CULTURAL PROBLEMS OF SOCIALIZATION BY GIFTED PRESCHOOLERS

INTRODUCTION

According to practitioner's findings, some signs of giftedness can be depicted. They are common for most gifted children and are seen in cognitive activity, behavior, motivation, interaction with peers and adults. Attention should be paid to several personal qualities that distinguish gifted children from their peers. They are non-standard and flexible thinking, easy generation of new ideas, curiosity and cognitive need, hypersensitivity, high attention concentration, etc. (BOGOYAVLENSKAYA, 1996). At the same time, gifted children have various features that hinder their social development. As Russian and foreign studies show, a gifted child may have difficulties in interaction with micro society, in formation of self-awareness and adequate self-esteem, in communication.

The research results depict that modern educational practice in working with gifted children is mainly focused on development of specific abilities, while pedagogical work, aimed at creating conditions for a duly solution of socialization problems and overcoming difficulties that a gifted child faces at various age stages, is insufficiently conducted. In this regard, an exteriorly successful child, who is a pride for a kindergarten or school, may suffer from an inability to present oneself and one’s achievements and from the fact that he or she is not understood by adults and peers, etc. In our country, a number of documents and programs have been developed at the federal level to make processes of identification, support and development of gifted children more available. We may name some of them: national project "Education", federal project “Success of every Child”, etc.

While working with gifted children, modern educational institutions are mainly focused on quantitative results: academic success and victories in contests and Olympiads. Working experience and research results are largely oriented on developing gifted children's abilities and organizing proper work with them at different age stages and different levels of education. However, in our opinion, special attention should be paid to the development of a child at an early age. Kindergarten is the first stage of the education system in Russia. It is where the bases of a child’s personality, their values and attitudes are formed, as well as potentials and abilities are developed. In accordance with the Federal Standard of Preschool Education, the programs of a preschool educational organization should contribute to children's positive socialization, their personal development, initiative and creative abilities.

In our research we have studied some peculiarities of solving socialization problems (natural-cultural problems of socialization) by preschoolers. In preschool childhood, the bases of personal development are set. In the middle and senior preschool age, the child gets engaged not only by various games and creative activities, but also by their results. The leading activity of this age is the game. It enables children to cognize themselves and the surrounding reality. At the same time, for children of this age, success or failure in a particular activity does not always indicate their giftedness. However, for this category of children we apply the term "a child with signs of giftedness".

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We use the term “signs of giftedness” to denote a child’s idiosyncrasies which occur in one’s real activities and can be evaluated while observing the nature of actions in comparison with peers. We characterize children as ones with signs of giftedness if they differ from peers by high and significant achievements (or have internal prerequisites for such achievements) in a particular type of activity, demonstrate their own activity and a divergent way of thinking while solving practical problems. The mentioned statements have determined our further work in the field connected with identifying peculiarities and difficulties of solving natural-cultural socialization problems by potentially gifted preschoolers.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The purpose of the study is to identify and characterize peculiarities of solving natural-cultural problems of socialization by preschoolers with signs of giftedness. In the course of the study, we detected preschool children with signs of giftedness, studied features of them solving natural-cultural tasks of socialization, identified peculiarities of conducting psychological-pedagogical work with potentially gifted preschoolers.

LITERATURE REVIEW
We have considered various approaches of foreign and Russian researchers who study gifted children’s development. N.M. Ishak (Malaysia) reviewed social life of gifted children. The author analyzed development of six areas of social skills (an ability to influence other people; conflict management; cooperation with other people; leadership and an ability to initiate changes; teamwork skills; an ability to work in a team and communication skills). N. M. Ishak’s research reveals that gifted children demonstrate deficient abilities to work in a team and to be a leader and initiator of changes. According to the author, it is crucial to pay attention to the social relationships of the gifted with their close surrounding; to talk with the gifted about relevance of interaction with surrounding people as they are a system of social support; to form the importance of trust in other people (ISHAK, 2014).

P. Olszweski Kubilius together with colleagues studied social competence of gifted children and their relationships with their peers. The researcher managed to identify some peculiarities: children with high verbal abilities rate their own social competence lower if to compare with children from the norm group (LEE, OLSZWESKI-KUBILIUS & THOMSON, 2012). Thus, the author’s research approaches reveal that gifted child with high verbal abilities, but low social self-esteem are at risk of isolation. Consequently, when conducting psychological-pedagogical work with gifted children, their social-psychological characteristics and a type of giftedness should be considered. The works of Russian scientists necessitate creation of conditions in the educational environment for a child’s socialization, expression of one’s subjectivity in the search for knowledge and development of social and communicative competence (LEUTINA, 2014; KHAZOVA, 2013; SAVENKOV, 2019; YURKEVICH, 2018).

Our team of the authors (GRUSHETS KAYA & SHERBININA, 2018) have analyzed and applied for practical research the methods proposed by Yurkevich et al. (2018), who together with a team of co-authors depict innovative strategies for psychological-pedagogical assistance and social support for gifted children. It is vital to understand that fulfillment of creative and intellectual potency of gifted children is possible if they successfully solve natural-cultural, social-cultural and social-psychological socialization tasks. In our suppositions, we rely on Mudric’s theory revealing need for duly solutions to the socialization problems (natural-cultural, social-cultural and social-psychological). A retarded solution or lack of a solution may prevent a gifted child from having successful future. Existent researches and our practical experience enable us to consider that many gifted children have problems in solving a number of socialization tasks which sometimes remain unsolved or can be solved with a delay (MUDRIC, 2020).

The conducted research demonstrates that modern educational practice in working with gifted children is focused mainly on development of special abilities, while social-pedagogical work, aimed at creating conditions for duly solution of natural-cultural, social-cultural, social-psychological socialization problems and overcoming difficulties that a gifted child may face at various age, is insufficient. We adhere A.I. Savenkov’s point of view, according to which state guarantees are not the only thing that ensures a choice of an individual educational track,
creating psychological-pedagogical conditions that contribute to creative potency of students’ personality is also crucial (SAVENKOV, 2019).

We have studied socialization approaches of Batenin, Galaguzova, Kon, Mudric (2020). The works of Bondarchuk and Litvak (2012) also reveal patterns of gifted children's socialization. In the authorial approaches, we have studied, organization of specific work with gifted children in educational institutions is regarded as significant.

The presented facts necessitate increasing attention to social-pedagogical work with gifted children at all levels of education to create conditions for successful socialization achieved through duly solution of all socialization tasks. According to Mudric’s concept, natural-cultural tasks of socialization are referred to as a person’s achievement of a certain level of physical development, as well as formation of masculine and feminine standards in accordance with a specific culture, ethnic group and region. We have formulated a set of the indicators of how effectively socialization tasks are solved and we have proposed diagnostics to study this type of tasks for preschool children (MUDRIC, 2020). We have defined a level of physical development, etiquette, gender and age development as the indicators for this type of tasks.

METHODOLOGY

The empirical data were obtained by questioning, observing and testing potentially gifted preschool children, their pedagogues and parents. 186 children participated in the study dedicated to detecting features of solving natural-cultural problems of socialization. There are 98 potentially gifted preschoolers (the experimental group) and 88 preschoolers who have high cognitive needs but have not achieved any success in a certain type of activity at this age (the control group).

The experimental stages:

1. Detecting preschool children with signs of giftedness.
2. Analyzing peculiarities of solving natural-cultural problems of socialization by preschoolers with signs of giftedness.
3. Identifying features of psychological-pedagogical work with potentially gifted preschool children and the way they solve natural-cultural socialization problems.

540 preschool children took part in the first stage of the experiment. 186 children out of 540 preschoolers participated in the second stage of the study: the experimental group (n=98), the control group (n=88).

In our research we apply several methodological approaches. For example, as a part of the age approach, we take into account specific features and capabilities of preschool age. This approach makes it possible to conduct proper psychological-pedagogical work in order to create conditions for effective solving age-related tasks of socialization by gifted children. Our research is also based on the ideas of L.S. Vygotsky's cultural-historical approach, which proves close connection between creativity and imagination. According to the author, creativity is based on imagination. At the same time, the psychological mechanism of creative imagination is considered through selection of individual elements of an object, their change, combination of the changed elements into new integral images, systematization of these images and their crystallization in the object embodiment. Hence, to detect preschool children with signs of giftedness, we applied the method of studying individual imaginative features which helped to identify children who demonstrate a high level of creative abilities (VYGOTSKY, 1991).

We also applied the existential approach that enables conduction of specific work with preschoolers aimed at finding oneself, a meaning and a way of existence in our complex world. These problems are solved through utilizing various situations of choice in the work process with gifted preschoolers. Besides, one of the methodological approaches considered in the research is the reflexive-compensatory approach, which involves the preschooler’s assessment of oneself, as well as detection of life difficulties and conduction of compensatory work aimed at one’s self-development with the help of a pedagogue.

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RESULTS

To study completeness of natural-cultural tasks of socialization, we selected such indicators as physical development, knowledge of etiquette (culture of behavior), gender and age development. In order to identify the level of physical development, we got information about their health group and visited sports sections they attend. To analyze how well the children know etiquette, we applied the program for monitoring culture of a child’s behavior. The gender and age development of the preschoolers was diagnosed by learning the children’s gender attitudes (a semi-standardized interview by Kagan).

The research of peculiarities and difficulties of solving socialization problems involved the children who demonstrated high cognitive needs and creativity (186 people). Special attention was paid to the results of 98 potentially gifted preschoolers (experimental group); and their results were compared with the results of the other 88 preschoolers who have high cognitive needs but do not demonstrate any success in a certain type of activity (control group).

The development of preschoolers’ physical capabilities in kindergarten is conducted via making them interested in P.E. and sports, developing individual abilities and through encouraging creativity, initiative and independence in physical activities and outdoor games. Sports clubs that preschool children attend help to improve health, develop children’s individual abilities. Work of sections in the preschool institutions is focused on children with high physical activity and outstanding motor abilities. Sports sections and sports associations combine different types of activities (motor, cognitive-communicative, game), which improves both physical and social adaptation among preschoolers.

The results of our study showed that 51 preschoolers with signs of giftedness attend sports sections (football, rhythmic gymnastics, gymnastics and martial arts). The number comprises 52% of the potentially-gifted preschoolers. In the control group, 43 people attend sports associations, which is 49% of the children. Thus, we see that the indicator in solving natural-cultural problems is provided sufficiently.

The program for monitoring the culture of a child’s behavior (A.M. Shchetinina) enabled us to obtain the following results:

Table 1. The diagnostic results of the program for monitoring culture of a child’s behavior (A.M. Shchetinina) (n=186)

| A cultural level of a child’s behavior | Potentially gifted children | Control group |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| A high level of culture               | 46%                        | 29%           |
| A middle level                        | 10%                        | 14%           |
| A low level of a child’s appropriate behavior | -                          | 1%            |

Source: Search data.

The diagnostic results obtained through conducting the program for monitoring culture of speech are demonstrated in figure 1.

Fig.1. The diagnostic results of the program for monitoring culture of a child’s behavior (A.M. Shchetinina) (n=186)

Source: Search data.
The obtained results indicate a higher level of behavioral culture in potentially gifted preschoolers in comparison with their peers. The method “The study of children’s gender attitudes (a semi-standardized interview by V.E. Kagan)” enabled us to see that the majority of the testees have formed gender attitudes.

Only seven preschoolers out of 186 children had some doubts about their gender or talked about the dream to wake up as a human of the opposite sex. “I would like to wake up as a girl”, “Maxim is sure that when he grows up, he will be a woman”, “he does not know in what way boys and girls differ”. The given examples indicate an insufficiently formed gender identity among the interviewed children. It is crucial to note that five children out of the seven preschoolers with an insufficiently formed gender identity are proved to be potentially gifted. We may assume that this became possible because of tendency to excessive imagination among preschool children, especially gifted ones.

**Fig. 2.** The study results of children’s gender attitudes (a semi-standardized interview by V.E. Kagan)

![Pie chart showing 179 formed gender attitudes and 7 insufficiently formed gender identity](image)

**Source:** Search data.

**DISCUSSION**

Studying peculiarities of solving natural-cultural problems of socialization among preschool children with signs of giftedness, we managed to obtain some interesting results. After analyzing the data, we have formulated some features in solving natural-cultural socialization tasks. Judging by the research results, we can speak about certain specificity which is common among potentially gifted preschoolers:

- A larger percentage of potentially gifted preschoolers attend sports clubs and sports associations and participate in sports events and programs.
- Most potentially gifted preschoolers demonstrate a high or sufficiently high level of behavioral culture (if to compare with their peers), which, in our opinion, indicates that these children are ready for cultural adaptation.
- Most potentially gifted children and their peers have formed gender attitudes by the age of 5-7, which corresponds to the age norm. However, 7 children out of 186 showed insufficiently formed gender identity. 5 preschoolers belong to the group of potentially gifted children.

**CONCLUSION**

The conducted research led us to some conclusions:

Studying peculiarities of solving natural-cultural socialization problems by potentially gifted preschoolers we revealed the children's specific features in their physical development, in attending sports section, high awareness of the norms of cultural behavior and in gender development. The presented features enable us to formulate some peculiarities of solving social-cultural problems of children’ socialization:

- The obtained results demonstrate a higher cultural level among potentially gifted preschoolers than their peers.
preschooler if to compare with other preschoolers. At the same time, psychological-pedagogical work, devoted to forming skills in interaction with other children and pedagogues, plays a crucial role. Children with signs of giftedness demonstrate a bigger interest in interlocutors during meetings/parting, they are able to speak clearly, looking into interlocutors’ eyes and to hear the interlocutor. All this may indicate interest, activity, initiative. It is proved practically that this category of children demonstrate a high level of communication in team work.

- The way potentially gifted children perceive gender and age corresponds to the norm of age development, but 5% of the tested potentially gifted children demonstrate weak gender settings. Therefore, it is vital to pay more attention to psychological-pedagogical work, aimed at formation of gender attitudes, through play and role-playing activities.

Thus, we have managed to detect the peculiarities of solving natural-cultural socialization tasks by potentially gifted preschoolers. These specific features define the psychological-pedagogical aspects in working with this category of children. Currently this kind of work is vital to be conducted in a preschool educational organization and family. The enlisted psychological-pedagogical aspects will lead to an effective solution of the age-related problems of potentially gifted children’s socialization.

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Peculiarities of solving natural-cultural problems of socialization by gifted preschoolers

Peculiaridades da resolução de problemas naturais-culturais da socialização por pré-escolares superdotados

Peculiaridades de la resolución de problemas natural-culturales de socialización por niños en edad preescolar superdotados

Resumo
Muitos pesquisadores russos e estrangeiros, enquanto estudam peculiaridades do desenvolvimento dos dotados, observam problemas em seu desenvolvimento pessoal e social. O fenômeno do “dom feminino das crianças” é considerado pela maioria dos pedagogos e psicólogos como um potencial ou alguma quantidade de habilidades cognitivas, criativas e capacidades que se tornam óbvias desde a infância pré-escolar. Essas crianças frequentemente enfrentam uma série de dificuldades, como o mal-entendido de outras pessoas, a interação complicada e as dificuldades na autoestima, o que desencadeia complicações na resolução de problemas de socialização. Portanto, o artigo revela alguns aspectos da resolução de tarefas de socialização natural-cultural; também define indicadores das tarefas como crescimento físico, consciência da etiqueta, cultura de comportamento. Os dados empíricos são obtidos por meio de entrevista e teste de crianças pré-escolares de grupos de idosos e preparatórios de organizações educacionais pré-escolares de Kostroma (n=186) e através do interrogatório e teste de pais e pedagogos.

Palavras-chave: Dons. Crianças superdotadas. Socialização. Pré-escola.

Abstract
Many Russian and foreign researchers, while studying developmental peculiarities of the gifted, observe problems in their personal and social development. The phenomenon of “children’s giftedness” is regarded by the majority of pedagogues and psychologists as a potential or some amount of cognitive, creative abilities and capabilities that become obvious since preschool childhood. These children frequently face a range of difficulties such as other people’s misunderstanding, complicated interaction and difficulties in self-esteem, which triggers complications in solving socialization problems. Therefore, the article reveals some aspects of solving natural-cultural socialization tasks; it also defines indicators of the tasks such as physical growth, awareness of etiquette, culture of behavior. The empirical data are obtained via interviewing and testing preschool children from senior and preparatory groups from Kostroma preschool educational organizations (n=186) and through questioning and testing parents and pedagogues.

Keywords: Giftedness. Gifted children. Socialization. Pre-school.

Resumen
Muchos investigadores rusos y extranjeros, mientras estudian las peculiaridades del desarrollo de los superdotados, observan problemas en su desarrollo personal y social. El fenómeno de la “supercisión de los niños” es considerado por la mayoría de los pedagogos y psicólogos como un potencial o una cierta cantidad de habilidades y capacidades cognitivas y creativas que se hacen evidentes desde la infancia preescolar. Estos niños con frecuencia se enfrentan a una serie de dificultades, como la incomprensión de otras personas, la interacción complicada y las dificultades en la autoestima, lo que desencadena complicaciones en la resolución de problemas de socialización. Por lo tanto, el artículo revela algunos aspectos de la resolución de tareas de socialización natural-cultural; también define indicadores de las tareas como el crecimiento físico, la conciencia de la etiqueta, la cultura del comportamiento. Los datos empíricos se obtienen mediante entrevistas y pruebas a niños en edad preescolar de grupos superiores y preparatorios de organizaciones educativas preescolares de Kostroma (n=186) y mediante el interrogatorio y la prueba de padres y pedagogos.

Palabras-clave: Superdotado. Niños superdotados. Socialización. Preescolar.