



SOUTH-WEST
UNIVERSITY
·NEOFIT RILSKY·
BLAGOEVGRAD, BULGARIA

VOLUME 1
2001

SCIENTIFIC *Research*

ELECTRONIC
ISSUE

THE CHILDREN`S KNOWLEDGE AS A PROCESS OF DISCOVERI - A CHANGE OF THE PARADIGM

Doctor Anastasia Pashova
South - West University
“Neophit Rilski”

The challenge of the time in which we live (the transition from totalitarianism to democracy) is obliging us to look deep into the children we educate and to try to understand their childhood nature. With respect to both of them we are debtors as educationalists.

The children are unique in their individual development, they possess different gifts and capacities, they have their own individual perception of the world and react to everything they encounter in it. They are curious, asking questions, examining and active.

At the same time, how shall we preserve the uniqueness of every child with out controlling them, suppressing and restricting them? How shall we encourage them to think and examine, without stifling their individuality and creativeness?

In order to get closer to the required pedagogical interaction, may be it is expedient to define the common traits in their early years, to look for similarities in the way the children establish their relationships with the world and to connect these similarities with the educational and breeding content. It is only by concentrating on the children, on their way of thinking and perception, that we would be able to erect an effective and meaningful program for the nursery school.

This supposes a defeat of the utility - functional and the educational - disciplinary approach to the children and their childhood problems.

In that sense the educationalists (theoreticians and practicing), which are dealing with the pre - school aged children, face the conceptual problem WHAT must be done and HOW it must be done in the nursery school to have as a result a complete childhood. In a theoretical and practical plan the nursery school face also the dilemma of choosing the path: GAME and ASSIMILATION or EDUCATION and EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY. It is high time to raise openly the questions, originated from these two alternatives and to find out their answers.

At this stage a theoretical model of the executed education is still missing for the nursery school. The subjective model of education borrowed from the school is used widely and from the masses (knowledge domains detached one from another and shaped as

educational disciplines). Although other terms are used lately to indicate the classes:” educational units”, “planned situations “,” activities “ and others, the problem is not solved, but only glossed over. It is not the form of execution, but the content (a subjective rupture) that determines the characteristics of the educational process and the activity itself.

In connection with all mentioned above, we erect a new paradigm for the place and the role of the education in the nursery school. The new paradigm is a new principle, a new perspective, a new way of thinking about the already familiar in the nursery school problems of the education. At the same time it includes the already familiar as one possible aspect, but it does also admit other existential forms.

What are the basic differences between the two paradigms?

<i>Characteristics of the old paradigm of the education in the nursery school</i>	<i>Characteristics of the new paradigm of the education in the nursery school</i>
- the childhood as a dogma – educational-disciplinary approach to the children and the childhood;	-the childhood as a joyful experience, a new context, an orderliness, a harmony in the relationship educationalist - child;
- the educationalist is an authority;	-the educationalist is a partner;
- the educationalist is teaching;	- the educationalist is also student – he is learning from the children;
- the educationalist and the child are considered as roles;	- the educationalist and the child are considered mutually as persons, as equal;
- the communication between the child and the educationalist is imperative;	- the communication is based on the relationships of collaboration, mutual help and common impetus to desired aims;
- the program and the educationalist determine what the child must assimilate and in what limits;	- some actual child’s interests and needs are laid out as a foreground;
- a stereotype of the program and restriction of the creativeness possibilities during its application;	- the children play an active role in their education and learning. They determine what they will assimilate and how they will do it;
- the total typization, standardization and starchiness of the content;	- an intensity of the content with creativeness - discovery, acknowledge and examination of

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | the world; |
| - a dominant model of a passive instruction; | - a model of spontaneous instruction; |
| - instruction and educational activity; | - game and assimilation; |
| - an accent on the instruction as a result; | - an accent on the assimilation as a process through which the individual reproduces and individualizes a public-historical formed abilities; |
| - a subject model of instruction – disintegration of the world through an instruction on different divisions; | - an integral cognitive development, summarized actions for an orientation in the surrounding world; |
| - a compulsory formation of educational activity; | - an optional inclusion in an own subjective activity, based on the personal need and meaning; |
| - a domination of the educational tasks over the breeding tasks; | - a priority for the breeding tasks; |
| - a through direction to a defined field of knowledge, skills and qualities; | - a development of the cognitive activity and the cognitive processes; |
| - an erection of an exact and clear scientific picture of the world; | - an erection of a conception of the world as united, entire, non-permanent and changeable; |
| - obligatory activities - ignorance of the child's individuality and uniqueness; | - an encouragement and creation of conditions for a spontaneous infant examination of the world and manifestation of creativeness; |
| - a purposefully effect on the children and formation; | - enrichment of the interaction of the children and assimilation; |
| - an ignorance of actual interests, needs and activity of the subject; | - a volunteer inclusion in an own personally worthy activity for the subject. The activity character itself determines the infant activity; |
| - a limitation of the development of the infant initiative and self-sufficiency; | - a humanization of the training environment; |
| - an indoctrination of a submission of the public laws; | - an erection of personalities who don't need to broke these laws even when they couldn't be punished; |

The new paradigm changes even the instruction towards the infant thinking. His development shouldn't be considered just as tuition in logic but especially as tuition in perceptions (De Bono, 1982). According to De Bono, the thinking has two basic stages: A STAGE OF PERCEPTION and A STAGE OF REVISION OF THE INFORMATION. Traditionally, we pay attention only to the second stage, but it itself can't assure an effective result. In its base this result depends on the manner of the original perception of the situation or of the problem. Exactly the compass and the characteristics of the perception define the thinking direction. Upon an incorrect or limited point of view even the most perfect set of thought operations won't lead up to a correct, and even less to a creative decision. That's why De Bono pays a special attention to the development of SKILLS FOR A WIDE AND VERSATILE PERCEPTION OF THE SITUATION. He calls this method "METHOD OF THE GLASSES". Through it the attention could be steered to different directions of seeing the reality, to different INSTRUMENTS of thinking, which are perceived as separate skills. Through the usage of these instruments as a method for analysis of a given situation, the infant knowledge could be characterized as a constant process of discovery and examination - not amassing of information, but knowledge through the senses and the personal experience. The thinking is used to examine the situation. The achievement of true decisions occurs not based on the inner logic of the thought process but through expansion of the perception and the personal exploring experience of the child.

This larger paradigm, which we offer, is directed rather to the nature of the knowledge itself than to the methods for management of the cognitive process. Eventually the knowledge is not a school, teachers, literacy, levels, achievements. This is a process which accompanies us since we were born. The knowledge is a light in the mind, a process , a journey through the personal survival, the attempt and the experience to new ideas and worlds.