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Dyskursy o kulturze

Discourses on Culture

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The Project Activity of an Educator and Its Role in the Formation of Moral Culture of Young People

Abstract: In the present article the method of projects is described. The article introduces the analyses of the project activity of an educational establishment. The authors of the article analyze the work of the project "Moral Culture of Modern Youth and the Ways of Its Formation". The creative approach to the professional project activity is characterized. Such experience can be very helpful in the sphere of moral education, development of morality and spirituality of a young person. It also suggests the use of innovative educational technologies at the educational establishments, implementation of creative projects with the purpose of cultural revival. All these factors will be favourable to broad cooperation and the integration of Ukraine with the European Educational system

Key words: project, project activity, integration of science, culture and religion.

Today the development of society depends on the young people and their abilities to function in new non-standard conditions. The dominant position

in the global labor market is taken by those, who can withstand the most severe competition due to professional qualities and skills. The process of training new generation of professionals, adapted to the common economic area and large-scale integration processes, should take place at the world level by further improving the content of education, upgrading the teaching technologies, introducing innovative forms and methods of work. The first step in this direction was made by the creative project of teaching staff. That very problem was discussed on September at the Vinnytsia branch of the Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine", where the Third International Seminar on "Moral Culture of Modern Youth and the Ways of Its Formation" took place. The *subject* of the review is project activity of an educator and its role in the formation of moral culture of young people. The *object* of the review is the technologies of the project activity which foster moral development of young people by means of science, culture and religion integration.

The aim of the review is to provide the theoretical basis and share the experience of the project "Moral Culture of Modern Youth and the Ways of Its Formation", which was held at the Vinnytsia branch of the Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine".

Morality and the spiritual world of a personality are formed on the basis of national culture and ethnographic customs and traditions that exist in the mentality and define its character. Therefore, it is very important in the process of solving the problems of the development of each young person to combine the creative efforts of not only high-school teachers, scientists, historians, ethnographers, but also the representatives of the clergy, artists, and culture researchers [Stoliarenko 2010, p. 18].

In helping students understand tolerance and humanistic relationships issues, we have found it useful to approach the study using strategies to support Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Intelligences. We therefore, decided to focus on teaching approaches that strengthen these two intelligences. Typically, students who operate well in the Interpersonal Intelligence tend to un-

derstand other people well, can mediate conflicts, understand and recognize stereotypes and prejudice, enjoy cooperative learning strategies, group projects, give feedback, and display empathy.

While those who feel comfortable in the Intrapersonal Intelligence understand themselves, focus and concentrate well, know their strengths and weaknesses, are intuitive, and excel at emotional processing and metacognition techniques. Both of these Intelligences are critical to consider when exploring issues of humanistic relationships, diversity and multicultural perspectives (racism, gender bias, ageism etc.) [Stoliarenko 2014, p. 155].

Spiritual and moral education of an individual, preparation for independent professional activity, the development of future professionals, based on the latest projective techniques, synthesis of international and our country's experience in the professional development on the basis of spiritual, universal, humanistic values have become the objects of the researches, carried out and presented by the scientists – the participants of the seminar. The aims of the seminar are: the expansion of international cooperation and the development of constructive projects that influence the formation of common educational area on the way of joining the European educational system; preparation and publication of educational research and methodological issues, their implementation in educational activities, stimulation of the systematic research activities of teaching staff, the improvement of their professional level, that contributes to the quality of educational technology and cognitive motivation of students. The main objective of the meeting was a broad discussion of the problems in order to find the most effective ways, productive forms and methods of training the young professional and citizen, education of spiritual and moral culture of a personality.

Troubles in different spheres of life determine the problem of humanization of human relationships at all social levels, education of the generation, capable of arranging such an order that would guarantee decent social and economic conditions for development of each personality and both practical application of professional skills and also high spirituality, human values,

care about the future of our human civilization, which is supposed to live according to the laws of goodness, beauty and in harmony with nature.

The development of modern national concept of education and training in our country is based on cultural and historical experience of the Ukrainian and other peoples and is aimed at redefining and rethinking the topical problems of morality and spirituality. In the process of education the young generation an important role is played by humanization and liberalization of the educational process that involves mastering all the universal values, which are embodied in culture, education and religion. The participants of the meeting believe that spiritual education of young people today – is the basis of spirituality of the nation. Teaching of different personality-oriented courses, religious subjects should be based on impartial and fair data, adequate evaluation, respect for other believes, that contribute to understanding between different nations, faiths and believes and will ensure tolerance.

As the participants of the seminar admit, the most effective in this regard is the method of projects that can not be considered entirely new in the pedagogical practice, but at the same time it is recognized as the project technology of the XXI century [Sazonenko 2009, p. 63]. Although it is based on the conceptual basis of pragmatism, it influences the ability of young people to adapt in the world that is rapidly changing, in post-industrial society, and indirectly contributes to global humanistic thinking, which occurs on the basis of concern for the future survival of humanity. "Slung forward – is an exact translation of the word project" [Romanovskaia 2007, p. 4]. It is based on the ideas of humanistic education, on the philosophy of John Dewey and his pupil V. Kilpatryk, who was the first to introduce the concept of "the method of projects". This American scholar defined the main task of "education of free citizens", which implied «a system of targeted projects» and suggested free educational humanistic ideas in the form of a structured learning system [Kilpatryk 1925]. An American researcher in the sphere of education E. Collins experimentally proved the ideas of the project technology [Yangul 1925, p. 92]. The program of his experimental work included various forms

of activities: play projects – a game, a fest, a theater, a dance; story projects – a word, a picture, a song, a phonograph, musical instruments; excursion projects – environmental studies, discovery of folk traditions and customs; hand projects – cooking, repair etc. [Yangul 1925, p. 25]. The growth of popularity and distribution of the experience of the "method of projects" has recently increased the number of different approaches to its interpretation. Therefore, together we have identified a number of main criteria requirements for a modern interpretation of this phenomenon: the existence of educational problem, the complexity and urgency of which complies with the demands and life needs of young people; research nature of searching for solutions to problems; making the structure of the activities according to the classic stages of a project; modeling the conditions to identify the problem (its introduction, research, searching for solutions, examination and testing its versions, making the final project (or its variants), its dependence, correction and implementation); amateur nature of the creative activity of students, practical or theoretical (but anyway applied) value of the activity (project) results and willingness to use (implement) them; pedagogical value of the activities (the way the knowledge and personality qualities are acquired, the necessary ways of thinking and action are developed) [Sazonenko 2009, p. 69]. Analyzing the different approaches to the classification of projects in the literature on education, researchers distinguish them by a number of parameters: forms of the participation in the project (individual, group/pair, group); nature of partner interactions between the members of the project (cooperative, contest, competition); to the extent of implementation the inter-subjective relations (mono-subjective, inter-subjective, beyond-subjective, above-subjective); the nature of project coordination (direct, rigid or flexible/hidden); the length (short, long, considerably long); the purpose and character of the project (informative, acquantative, adventurous, artistic, scientific, etc). Thanks to modern researches of M. Pavlova and J. Pitt, I. Sasova, Ie. Polat, M. Romanovskaia the algorithm for a project is well done [Pavlova, Pitt, Sasova 2004, Polat 1995, Romanovskaia 2007]. This method

seems attractive to us because it is based on creativity and the ability to navigate in the field of information and construct our own knowledge. Today, there has been developed a detailed methodology and have been identified the basic conditions for application the method of projects, which include: the existence of significant problems that require solution through creative research and application of integrated knowledge, theoretical, cognitive and practical significance of the expected results, the use of research (creative) methods in the design, the structuring of stages of the work and individual activity of the participants in a situation of choice. The most important in the implementation of this method is to use different sources of information, self-study through Internet technologies (participation in international Internet projects – namely, Internet conferences, Internet discussions). As a result of the application of the method of projects, its didactic nature is revealed. The guidelines of its use include the following tasks: to create an educational environment and provide conditions for motivation; determine what we need to learn in the result of work and the possible ways to present the situations for understanding the problem of research; organize the work (in small groups or individually); decide how to master the ways of group discussion of research methods, hypothesis, reasoning the conclusions, counseling; develop the criteria of objective evaluation [Romanovskaia 2007, p. 29].

One of the greatest difficulties that occur when using the method of projects is that the idea of education, moral and intellectual development through project activities can not become clear at once. Some researchers think that one must first master the theoretical material, and only then he can be engaged into the project activities. Usually, the time for the project is not always allocated, but certain amount of material for self-study is strictly determined. The participants are searching for the information on the issues, proposed by the consultant, gradually acquiring the necessary material and mastering all the necessary topics. It takes place under the informal circumstances, without undue excitement and tension in the process of common practical work on the project, often in the process of spontaneous

communication. To omit the gaps in the theoretical knowledge, additional time is allocated for synthesis and control of the used material. Original creative work differs from the project activity. It is a more flexible type of learning activity than project and requires strict adherence to the algorithm, must be carried out in accordance with a certain system. However, project managers sometimes miss the first step, i.e. defining the problem and the specific goals that must have been reached at the end. If the main problem of the project is not clearly defined, but only the task to find some information is given, this time we deal with an example of original creative work. It should not be mixed with project activities. Performing the project task must be combined with the original problem solving activities and making the well-founded choice of possible alternative variants followed by reflection. This is the basic difference between the project and the original work. Upon completion of the work the results are summed up and a written summary is prepared. It should be noted that a project differs from an essay (abstract). When we speak about informative projects it doesn't mean that material is just downloaded from the Internet. It misleads the idea of this method. If an essay (abstract) – is a summary of the contents of books, articles etc. or a report with such form of presentation, by an informative project is implied the work in accordance with the model of research with the obligatory definition of the problem and it's object, keeping to certain stages and showing intermediate results. It also includes analytical work with the collected facts, conclusions, correction of the preliminary results (if it is needed), followed by the search of additional information in the field of research, analysis of new facts; generalization (up to the time when the results, which help to solve the problem of the research have been obtained), the processing of results (in a form of discussion, presentation (defense), and impartial evaluation, reflection). A written summary of the project must not be turned into the so-called "pseudoproject", i.e. it should not be overloaded with paperwork, that can substitute other important stages of the project activities. An explanatory note should be concise, laconic but expressive. Short written summary

teaches us to formulate grammatically correctly the chosen variant of solution of the problem or issue. The project folder must contain all details concerning the stages of the project: drafts, sketches, study of advertisements and so on. On the basis of its content each phase of the task (project) is evaluated separately. In our opinion, the successful completion of the project activities is very important. To the final step belong reflection, analysis of the work that has been done, comparing of what was planned and eventually achieved. According to M. Romanovskaia [Romanovskaia 2007, p. 57] the algorithm of a project activity is similar to "a loop". By connecting the beginning of the project with its end by means of reflexive analysis, we close the circle of our common activities; provide the process with integrity by matching the goal and results. Before the defendence of the project, a certain scenario is developed that includes: a) the problem and its urgency; b) the hypothesis and its arguments; c) the main part, the stages of the project, results, their brief analysis, d) conclusions, the results of the project reflective evaluation, and e) answers to the questions of other groups (discussion). Reflective evaluation of one's own project activity is characterized by the following two aspects: a) how successfully has the problem been solved, depending on the type of the project; how well anything has been done; if the project is of the informative type, then how fully has the information been collected and whether it satisfies the needs, defined during the stage of setting the problem, and in what way can the project solutions be improved; b) how do the participants treat themselves in the process of a project (whether they were successful at each stage of the project, or was the problem clearly defined, or was the hypotheses well reasoned; how successfully were creative project methods used (if project is of a creative type); the wide range of original ideas etc.). But we must take into account the difficulties in assessing creativity. According to P.S. Lerner, it is always dramatic and controversial. In any case one should not emphasize the accuracy of evaluation [Lerner 2005]. First, it must be of integrated nature and should reflect the assessment of all stages of the project (from the formulation of the problem till the independent work

results), up to the quality of the project defendence. The main criteria for success – are good results shown by the participants. But a five-point grading system proved to be not fair and impartial. So we use the approach suggested by P.S. Lerner, which includes the following criteria of results assessment: *available information* – acquaintance, imagination, thesaurus, comprehension; *functional literacy* – perception of the material, explanations and texts; the ability to ask constructive questions, function in different kinds of activities and deal with various objects; *technological skills* – the ability to perform various operations, using standard programs; the ability to manipulate with different objects and tools, the ability to reach the required quality, mastering various operations; understanding the properties of objects and processes; rational organization of working time etc. *Intellectual awareness* – the ability to verbalize actions; reflection over one's own activities; understanding of theoretical and practical tasks; adequacy of memory; the ability to compare different notions; active perception of new information; the skills to use different literature to be able to perform rational planning; communicative skills. *Volitional preparedness* – the desire to solve educational tasks, respect for the language; support of office culture and communication, social interaction with others; willingness to do tasks (work) on a high professional level; tolerance to the comments, advice; individual rate of doing the task; successful overcoming the psychological and cognitive barriers; the ability to ask for help and get assistance. Ofcourse, these criteria are sufficiently general and they must be complemented or improved according to the type of a project. There are three levels within each criterion: high, medium, low. The conclusions about the success of educational processes of the project activities are made on the basis of dynamic changes of the levels of these data indicators. These criteria are correlated with a number of specific data indicators, according to which their division into 4 levels is made: 0, 5, 10, 20 points. The final score is derived as the average rating by the formula: rating score = (average collective score + self-score + score of the project manager). The main element of the project educational

technology is not a project itself, but the process of doing the scientific research – from simulation of the training conditions in order to define the problem and its research till the construction and defendence of the most appropriate ways of its solution in the structural form of the project. So, the implementation of any creative project (idea) in order to obtain the desired product in any sphere begins with the design of a project. Thus, in order to achieve a positive final result we should follow the classic principle of "synergy": idea > aims and objectives > intelectual and material resourses > constructive-technological project > didactic educational technologies >design and motivation results of the implementation of the idea.

The International seminar, mentioned above, was primarily aimed at the development of young scientists' creativity. Masters, post-graduate students in their reports shared their experience in the sphere of research activities, presented their results of experimental creative projects. In turn, the leading scientists with the diplomas of doctoral and candidate degree, who have rich scientific experience, their students, well-developed didactic systems in certain spheres of professional activity, gathered to share experiences and new academic achievements, to pass the baton to young scientists. This seminar was a sort of an analytical review and analysis of the 12 previous international scientific-methodological conferences and three international seminars, conducted from 2004 till 2016 at the Vinnytsia branch of the Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine". As we are limited in time and space, in this article we are not going to bring a detailed analysis of the quite troublesome and hard work, carried out during eight years. Let's mention just some facts: in the work of the conferences and seminars participated 1301 people, including 171 Ph.D., 364 candidates of sciences from distant geographical places: Arkhangelsk, St.-Petersburg, Chita, Orsk, Iekaterinburg, Khabarovsk, Novochuivynsk, Minsk, Serednouralsk, Smolensk, Kolomna, Surgut, Lipetsk, Warsaw, Vilnius, Lviv, Symferopil, Lugansk, Donetsk, Ternopil and Kyiv, Zhytomyr. The materials of the research papers have been published in VAK journals in 20 volumes with the total amount of 5306 pages.

The figures, listed above, show how many people met each other in the process of spiritual communication in scientific and educational activities, and how the seminars promote the growth of motivation to intellectual development and enrich the interest for research culture in the sphere of pedagogy. The significance of these numbers is obvious: thus is that very number of scientific and educational services, received by masters, postgraduates, Ph. Ds and prominent scholars in the personal participation and later in the printed form shared their scientific achievements in order to raise their professional and educational level – these are the conditions for intellectual educational culture development, as a result of the work of the Presidium AICCP and Editorial Board of the journal "Creative Pedagogy". But let's go back to the review of the contents of the Third International Seminar on "Moral Culture of Modern Youth and the Ways of Its Formation". According to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of Ukraine, the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine and the reviews of the participants and guests this educational event, as well as the previous ones, has been important and successful. So, it requires from its organizers and managers further improvements in the work, what has already become traditional for AICCP. We do not comment on the excellent and informative reports presented at the Third International Seminar – they are published on 430 pages in two volumes of the magazine "New Learning Technologies" № 67, but stop on that touching spiritual feeling, which was given by the folk ensemble of Humanitarian-Pedagogical College named after M. Hrushevskyi from the town Bar.

The concert served as a vivid and bright conclusion of the seminar. Bright clothes, Ukrainian embroidery helped the listeners to understand the world of original music and song culture of Podillia. The national system of education uses traditions and customs in order to develop ethnic identity, creative attitude to reality within modern youth. High historical mission of teachers is to influence young people in such a way that students would protect and enrich the ideological and moral, emotional and aesthetic potential of traditions, customs and rites; develop new historical circumstances. Folklore describes

and reflects the soul of the nation, its spiritual wealth. In songs, proverbs and sayings, tongue twisters and other folk pearls is lyrically and deeply reflected the cultural and historical, artistic development of the Ukrainian people. Ukrainian people – one of the most singing nations in the world. Plunging into aesthetically pleasing wealth of a folk song, every pupil realizes that it is a constant companion of each Ukrainian. Song education is education of feelings – it involves human brotherhood, the sense of beauty of our world and the understanding of how easily is to penetrate into the beauty of sounds, images, colors. Folklore education awakens the love of life, energy to create, warmth and tenderness of heart, soul. Falling lips to folk sources, gathering participants filled desire to brilliant aspirations, desires to assert in good life, truth, beauty. Folk remedies encourage the formation of comprehensiveness and depth of the Ukrainian soul its lyricism. Folklore education is one of the fundamental principles of national pedagogy. Lullabies, fairy tales, proverbs and sayings, songs help children to develop emotional and moral, aesthetic values, as in folklore the cultural and historical experience of people are represented. Artistic culture is the main factor of spiritual growth of younger generations, so it has been the topic of discussions at the seminar.

The results achieved during conferences and seminars on "Technologization of Educational Process Based on Spiritual and Moral Values" have stimulated the participants to create the coordinative center – the Academy of International Cooperation on Creative Pedagogy. The Academy of International Cooperation on Creative Pedagogy (AICCP) was founded as a non-profit organization established on the basis of the Vinnytsia branch of the Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine". Its co-founders are: Zhytomyr State University named after Ivan Franko and the Vinnytsia branch of the University of Modern Knowledge. The founder and research director of the AICCP is a Ph.D, professor, academician of International Academy of Informatization (1998), International Academy of Pedagogical Education (2008), the author of 300 scientific works, with more than 1000 printed pages, including: 9 books, 13 textbooks, 43 manuals, 43 me-

thodological work-outs, programs, scientific reports, an invention, more than 100 articles in scientific journals and magazines – Dmytro Chernilevskyi. The AICCP is a unique research educational project and research platform for creative scientists and educational intellectuals. The AICCP has founded the magazine "Creative Pedagogy", which has an experienced editorial board including 15 Ph. Ds. In the sample copies of the magazine the articles of the President of the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences of Ukraine, academicians and leading scientists, doctors, graduate students and masters have been published. The content of the magazine, founded by the Academy covers the following conceptual areas:

- Spiritual and moral culture of youth and its deep historical relations with the development of education and pedagogical knowledge, traditional national and world culture, science and thought;
- The global context of education and the development of pedagogical thought in mutual interference and enrichment national and international teaching culture;
- Spatial and temporal dialogue between pedagogical ideas, trends, systems and cultures in the long process of education and pedagogical thought, that eventually turns to be a dialogue between the history of pedagogic and modern pedagogic;
- Modern innovative activities in education;
- Spiritual and moral potential as a basis for patriotic education;
- Socio-economic conditions of the educational system modernization in Ukraine;
- Competence and professionalism of teacher in the process of implementation the creative psychological and educational technologies. The AICCP has one methodological characteristic: the revival of spiritual and cultural heritage should be based on a synthesis of science, education, religion and culture. According to a well-known academician D. Likhachev the word "culture" is defined as a huge and complex phenomenon which makes people from one particular area,

not just "people", but – the people, a nation. The notion of "culture" should include and actually always included *religion, science, education, ethics* and moral standards of social behavior. Thus, the AICCP closely and creatively collaborates predominantly with the Christian moral culture. According to the Charter, Doctors (academicians), Ph.Ds (Corresponding Members), leading teachers and managers of different educational establishments, schools, church and public organizations (collective members) can be the members of the Academy. The members of the AICCP have a higher priority to publish their own and their students' articles in the journal "Creative Pedagogy". The AICCP membership status is attested by a diploma. The AICCP is open to cooperation with all interested educational intellectuals. The Academy promotes international cooperation and development of design projects in order to create a common educational environment on the way to European educational system.

The article described the creative activity of the teaching staff of the Open International University of Human Development "Ukraine", Vinnytsia. The creative approach to the professional project activity is characterized. Such experience can be very helpful in the sphere of moral education, development of morality and spirituality of a young person. It also suggests the use of innovative educational technologies at the educational establishments, implementation of creative projects with the purpose of cultural revival. All these factors will be favourable to broad cooperation and the integration of Ukraine with the European Educational system.

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