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Comprehension of the Animated Films Culture as a Factor of Development of Capacity for Symbolic Mediation by a Senior Preschool-Age Child

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Abstract

The article highlights the features of a child's capacity for symbolic mediation in connection with the animated film involvement in the culture. We have analyzed characteristics of a child's immersion in the process of consuming animated production, possible means of its comprehension and the features of children's higher mental functions operation in connection with the quality of the child's comprehension. We have identified the connection between the factor of a quality analysis of the content of animation viewed by the child and a high level of development of a child's capacity for symbolic mediation and a high level of arbitrary behavior.

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Introduction: Watching animation has become the most popular occupation for children from an early age. According to sociologists [1] [2] [3], pre-schoolers spend roughly 40% of all their free time in front of a TV screen or a computer watching cartoons. It has been established that ready-made visual images have a tendency to block creation of younger children's own visual images [4]. At the same time, a cartoon could be an excellent material for developing game activity, imagination, cognitive motivation given that the child produces a qualitative analysis of the viewed (a discussion of meanings and ideas of the cartoon, a discussion of the characters and their relationships, the use of the plot in a game and in productive activity) [5] [6] [7].

Hypothesis: there is a relationship between the degree of the child's involvement in the culture of animated cinema and a) the level of the child's capacity for symbolic mediation and b) the level of arbitrary behavior.

Purpose of the research: identify the value of the factor of the child's involvement in the culture of animation cinema in relation to the characteristics of some of the higher mental functions in younger children.

Research object: characteristics of higher mental functions in younger children.

Research subject: the connection between the characteristics of the symbolic mediation development and arbitrary behavior on the one hand and the degree of involvement and children's comprehension of animation on the other.

Sample: the study involved 50 children aged 6 to 7 years.

Theoretical value of the research: the present work contributes to the development of scientific notions of the features of younger children's higher mental functions and their development.

Practical value of the research: conclusions and recommendations may be useful in the process of developing theoretical framework of psycho-pedagogical interaction with a preschooler, projects of information technology use in pre-school education, as well as methodology guidelines for organizing the process of the child's comprehension of the cartoon. The activity theory was chosen as the methodological basis of the research.

Main body: The research was held in the Moscow kindergarten. The study involved 50 children of a preparatory group aged 6 to 7 years. According to the results of the monitoring held in order to assess socio-demographic characteristics, the examinees were established to be equal. Each child tested underwent the diagnosis procedure for determining the level of general mental development and some neuropsychiatric characteristics. Diagnostic tools were selected in a manner that it would enable to assess properly the value of all the factors required for the study. The methods correspond to the age peculiarities of the examinees, as well as to the research goals, objectives and hypothesis. The following diagnostic methods were carried out:

1. «Colored Progressive Matrices. Sets A, Ab, B») [8];
2. «10 words to remember» (A.R. Luria)[9];
3. «Knock and tap» (from the series of neuropsychological tests NEPSY)[10][11];
4. «Inhibition» (from the series of neuropsychological tests NEPSY)[10][11];
5. «Pick a picture» (A.N. Veraksa)[7];
6. A questionnaire on the child's involvement in the animated film culture (M.N. Martynenko, 2014) (Annex 1);
7. What is the cartoon about? (M.N. Martynenko);

Original methodologies, the developed by Martynenko M.N. "Questionnaire on the child's involvement in the the animated film culture" and "What is the cartoon about?" were prepared in accordance with the standard guidelines for the development of psychometric techniques. The procedure for this method is the following: the children watch a short animated film unfamiliar to them. Then the examinees are requested to examine the pictures (appendix 2) and to choose among them the picture that best describes what this cartoon meant to teach the viewer. The child is also asked to explain his or her choice.

By the child's involvement in the animated cinema culture we understand the quality of representation of the animated film in the child's mind. In other words, the degree of the child's familiarity with modern animated films, their content, characters as well as ways of comprehension, using the content of the cartoons in life.

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