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Phenomenon of free painting: Comparison of the artistic images of the modernism era and children's painting

Fenómeno de la pintura libre: Comparación de las imágenes artísticas de la época del modernismo y la pintura infantil

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Abstract

The relevance of the study is due to the significant changes in the content of education, in particular, art education; the need for a thorough study of modern methods of teaching and upbringing a child, analysis of the modern children's needs, taking into account the psycho-physiological features of their development and periodization of the children's painting development. The aim of the article is to analyze the artistic images of modernism era artists and artistic images created by preschool children in the process of painting, to identify the common features, find out the analogies, describe manifestations and characteristics. Objectives: to analyze and characterize the phenomenon of free painting; compare the artistic images created by the modernism era artists and preschool children; consider the means of expression used by both groups of recipients, compare them, identify the common things, draw an analogy. The following research methods are used: comparison, which is the basis of such logical method as an analogy; comparison as a comparative-historical method that reveals the general and special features of the phenomena, different stages of development of the same phenomenon or different coexisting phenomena; analysis which helps to identify and compare levels of the development of the phenomenon under study, explore changes, identify trends. The method of formalization is

also used, as it clarifies the content of thought by specifying its logical form.

Key words: art, education, aesthetic education, artistic and aesthetic development, phenomenon of free painting, means of expression, works of art.

Resumen

La relevancia del estudio se debe a los cambios significativos en el contenido de la educación, en particular, la educación artística; la necesidad de un estudio exhaustivo de los métodos modernos de enseñanza y crianza de un niño, el análisis de las necesidades de los niños modernos, teniendo en cuenta las características psicofisiológicas de su desarrollo y la periodización del desarrollo de la pintura de los niños. El objetivo del artículo es analizar las imágenes artísticas de los artistas de la época del modernismo y las imágenes artísticas creadas por niños en edad preescolar en el proceso de pintura, para identificar los rasgos comunes, descubrir las analogías, describir manifestaciones y características. Objetivos: analizar y caracterizar el fenómeno de la pintura libre; comparar las imágenes artísticas creadas por los artistas de la era del modernismo y los niños en edad preescolar; considerar los medios de expresión utilizados por ambos grupos de destinatarios, compararlos, identificar las cosas comunes, establecer una analogía. Se utilizan los siguientes métodos de investigación: comparación, que es la base de dicho método lógico como analogía; la comparación como método histórico-comparativo que revela las características generales y especiales de los fenómenos, diferentes etapas de desarrollo de un mismo fenómeno o diferentes fenómenos coexistentes; análisis que ayuda a identificar y comparar niveles de desarrollo del fenómeno en estudio, explorar cambios, identificar tendencias. También se utiliza el método de formalización, ya que aclara el contenido del pensamiento especificando su forma lógica.

Palabras clave: arte, educación, educación estética, desarrollo artístico y estético, fenómeno de la pintura libre, medios de expresión, obras de arte.

1. Introduction

The improvement of methods of aesthetic education is one of the most important tasks of modern education. The artistic and aesthetic development of the child in various activities is of particular importance. In the process of the research of the theoretical and methodological principles and analysis of the concepts of aesthetic education, we have noted the interrelated values of aesthetic development in ontogenesis. In the process of theoretical and methodological research of child's artistic and aesthetic development by means of fine arts we have come to the conclusion that it is vital to consider the phenomenon of free painting in more detail, characterize it, and draw an analogy with the art works of modernist era artists taking into account the main characteristics of this phenomenon. In the research article, we conduct a content analysis of the works of modernist artists and the drawings of older preschool children, namely: we will determine whether there are the main common characteristics of the specified groups of recipients; what exactly and what is their meaning and influence on the general impression of the perceived; we explore the differences and similarities of expressive means. In the conclusions, we determine the psychological components that explain the attraction of preschool children to the perception of works of art of the 20th century.

2. Research question

According to Georg Michael Kerschensteiner's biogenetic theory, a child goes through successive, interconnected stages of psychophysiological development. The changes that take place at each stage of this development occur simultaneously in the process of formation of child's abilities while doing the artistic activity. The interference with and influence on this natural process of creative development of the child can ruin his or her artistic freedom and the natural process of development in general. «Children's artistic activity in its development repeats the path of human culture development, the only difference is that the development of human culture is associated with certain historical and socio-economic conditions, while children's painting is not associated with them» (Kershensteiner, 1914).

This theory is confirmed by the research done by Fedir Schmit. The scientist draws a parallel between different epochs and styles in art and compares different stages of depicting a child's painting. According to him, there is a relationship between the development of children's painting and the development of world art, which is manifested in certain common features and characteristics (Schmit, 1921).

Scientist Schmit F. states that the peculiarity of children's painting is the child's psychophysiological characteristics. Namely, when a child portrays another person, he or she relies on the psychology of effective thinking and reproduces what he or she knows about the object of the image in a primitive individual way. Despite the exact optical-visual copy, the child is not interested in the resemblance to the original. The child is interested in the process of creative activity. The perceived and preserved image of the object is sensually and originally reproduced during the creation of the artistic image (Schmit, 1919).

In order to understand the common features and characteristics of the artistic images of the modernism era artists and preschool children, we will identify analogues and analyze the paintings of both groups.

Research aim: to analyze of the artistic images of the modernism era artists and preschool children's artistic images, identify common features, find out the analogy, describe the features and characteristics.

3. Methodology

Research methodology is based on the works of G. Kershensteiner (biogenetic theory) (Kershensteiner, 1914). The scientists state that the changes that occur at each stage of child's development, occur simultaneously in the process of developing his or her abilities during art activities. We also took into account the works of other scientists. Thus, F. Schmit's (Schmit, 1919; 1921) study (phylogeny) draws a parallel between epochs and styles in art and the individual stages of depicting children's paintings; art works of O. Musyka (Muzyka et al., 2021), which are devoted to the issues of modern art education and aesthetic development of personality; the art works of L. Moon (Moon, 2008), whose research works focus on the synthesis of various types of arts, their interpretive nature, as a process that gives rise to new things in art, education and science.

The phenomenon of free painting is a phenomenon that includes the following: the creation of an

artistic image through the world of artist's own experiences and emotions. Means of expression: color, composition, form, line, etc. It should be mentioned that their manner, style, technique, motive for creating the image are too sensual-personal ones. The period of modernism, as an art movement, with its manner, style of performance, sensuality and non-standard creation of artistic images, corresponds to the characteristics of this phenomenon. The peculiarity of a child's painting is that the child depicts the world in a primitive individual way, a child shows the only things he or she knows about the object. The main thing for a child is the transfer of emotions and reproduction of feelings, the use of abstract figures to convey the perceived things through the use of bright colors, dynamics of the plot, despite the laws of perspective and dimension of the image. The research was conducted with the aim of establishing the effectiveness of using works of art of the modernist era, as the most effective for the perception of a child of older preschool age.

Attention is focused on the study of expressive means of artists of the modernism era and preschool children, the study of the psychological component of the works of both groups of recipients, which contributed to the optimal understanding of the motive for creating artistic images of artists of the modernism era and preschool children. In this regard, an experiment was conducted in a research group consisting of 230 children aged 5-6 years. During the research, 156 works of fine art of the first half of the 20th century were used.

4. Results

Opposition of the person's individuality to the society and rejection of the surrounding reality, denial of rationalism, dissatisfaction with the outdated and conformist events stimulated the formation of such directions of modernism as avant-garde, fauvism, expressionism, futurism, dadaism, cubism, surrealism, abstractionism. Earlier modern style had different names: in the United States – Tiffany, in France – Art Nouveau (in French «art nouveau», which means new art), in England – Modern style («modern style»), in Italy – Liberty style, in Spain – modernism, in Switzerland – spruce style (style sapin), in Germany – Jugendstil (in German «Jugendstil», which means young style), in Austria – Secession style («Secessionsstil»).

Style of Modernism (in French «Moderne» – modern) is an artistic direction in art, the main idea of which is the desire to contrast new ideas to the eclecticism of the past, something that is outdated. Distinctive features of the style are the rejection of academicism, standards and stereotypes. The Modernism period has clear chronological boundaries (from late 1880s to 1914). This short period became an intermediate art phenomenon of the transition of painting to the next stage of its development, and the ideas of modernism could not help but be reflected in the educational space. Naturalness, creative intuition, inspiration become a pedagogical and methodological basis for art education, which promotes «experimentation» and sensitivity of the personality.

Impressionism is also one of the trends of the 20th century (from French word «impression»). It influenced the art schools in many different ways, namely: methodology of teaching was based on the stimulation of the reflection of the real world, the dynamics of the subject's characteristics and fixation of instant impressions. The method of constructing the image excluded the real form; the academic drawing lost its primary importance. Analyzing the works of art of Oscar-Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro and Alfred Sisley, we have noted the presence of realistic irony in depicting fragmentary real situations, unexpected plots, personal views of the world and its reproduction. The art works are full of complex colors, they are characterized by the individuality

in strokes, and reflexes that become interesting for their expressiveness. Neo-Impressionists (Georges- Pierre Seurat, Paul Signac) in their art works decomposed tones into pure colors, using large colored spots to create decorative compositions. Techniques that reproduce optical and spatial effects with the help of a mosaic style of performance are also used by preschool children. But for a child this technique is not a conscious one; a child uses it unconsciously, naturally and sensually.

The trend that emerged in the 80's of the 19th century, which was characterized by the reproduction of a long state through impressions is called post-impressionism. The idea of artists who worked in this style is to depict objects as truthfully as it is possible, not what the artist sees, but how he or she sees it.

One of the representatives of post-impressionism is Van Gogh. Characterizing the artist's works («Artist's Bedroom in Arles», 1888, «Mulberry Tree», 1889) (Figs. 1, 2) we have noted the following features: the content of the paintings is filled with emotional component, the use of color symbolism, individual art style and composition solutions for the transmission of subjective perception of the reality. Van Gogh is an artist who used pure red, blue and yellow colors in his masterpieces.



Figure 1. Artist's Bedroom in Arles, 1888



Figure 2. Mulberry tree, 1889

When analyzing the art works, we can see the emotions and associations which the artist wanted to convey in the form of composition, visual simplification of objects and a special color scheme.

There are also some symbols in the art works, wide strokes are used. The compositions are mostly static. The color scheme is juicy, but it isn't striking for the eyes, it even soothes. It differs the arts works from the paintings of expressionists.

Let's pay attention to the children's paintings. Here are Dasha K's art works «Fox and the Crane», «Winter composition» (Figs. 3, 4).



Figure 3. Fox and the Crane



Figure 4. Winter composition

There is one more similarity between the art works done by impressionist artists and preschool children. It is non-compliance with the linear perspective. Older preschool children, when creating a composition, do not apply the rules of perspective and multifaceted composition. «The child depicts objects in a plane, which is due to the mental and intellectual characteristics of children's intelligence. Currently, the painting of a child of older preschool age is a composition that is developing in parallel to the picture plane, without penetrating into its depth. Its graphic language corresponds to the methods of orthogonal projections, i.e. there is no horizon line in the painting, the deployment of the image is based on a combination of different perspectives, and there is a variety of image objects (based on the principles of pantheism, symbolism) and other features which are characteristic for this age. At the same time, if you carefully analyze the children's painting, you can find an attempt to organize a conditional space based on the principle of «overlapping». The principle of «overlapping» of one subject with another one is the progenitor of subsequent, more developed systems of perspective» (Sukhenko & Zasipkin, 2011).

An important achievement of the Impressionists is the developed style of painting, characterized by the desire to diversify the texture. The impasto technique was not new, but the brushstroke

was much clearer and more energetic, which contributed to greater expression the paintings made on the people. Preschool age is characterized by its special natural need to paint in pure colors, in addition, the hyperbole of color, which is characteristic feature of the Impressionists, is present in the artistic images made by preschoolers. They write about this in the article P. Granö, S. Turunen: «A child as a talented artist will have no trouble receiving appreciation and respect; their work will be admired and copied or plagiarised, or they themselves will be the subject of others' art.» (Granö & Turunen, 2022).

Artistic style and direction in the development of culture, in which the artist seeks to depict not objective reality, but subjective emotions and reactions is expressionism (from Latin «expression», reflection). The main idea of the expressionists is to convey emotions and reproduce the feelings, use abstract figures in order to convey the perceived events through the use of bright colors, dynamics of the plot, despite the laws of perspective of the image. «The ability to empathize is closely related to the understanding of other people's emotional states and is a prerequisite for functional peer relationships» (Siekkinen et al., 2013.).

Let us dwell on some art works of expressionists in more detail and carefully analyze their characteristic features. We admire such art works as «Summer Landscape» (1909) and «Weilheim-Marienplatz» (1909) (Figs. 5, 6) created by V. Kandinsky who is one of the representatives of expressionism. Thus, we see too sensual, colorful, bright art works, which reflect not only what the artist saw while creating the image, but also «internal subjective emotional perception».



Figure 5. Summer Landscape, 1909



Figure 6. Weilheim-Marienplatz, 1909

As you can see, the colors are very intense, their combination and contrast create a special, emotional and colorful condensed atmosphere.

The technique, manner and style of the children's paintings (Milana O. «Winter Landscape», Yaroslav R. «Red Mountains» (Figs. 7, 8) resonate with the artistic style of expressionism.

Expressionists, as well as preschoolers, use exaggeration, primitivism, and fantasy in their art works through bright colors and expressive strokes.



Figure 7. Winter Landscape (6 years old)



Figure 8. Red Mountains (6 years old)

In order to express their feelings, emotions, inner state, expressionists, as well as children, use either bright colors, or, conversely, gloomy, gray, dirty tones, sharp and simplified forms, their conscious distortion or simplification.

5. Discussion

The art of the 20th century, like other styles in art and art in general, actualizes aesthetic, art and cultural knowledge acquired during the acquaintance with works of art, develops child's emotional and intellectual sphere. Artists of the 20th century searched for the emancipation of the artist's talent, paved the way for experimentation in the selection and mastery of new formal and technical means that would enrich the artistic palette of the artist.

Through the creation of an artistic image the artists make the world of their own experiences and emotions, their own «Me» a perfect one, and paid special attention to self-expression and creative individualization. Therefore, it is absolutely logical that artistic images created in the period of

modernism, in their manner, style, sensuality and non-standard pattern, are similar to the artistic images created by a preschool child. This period in the art history, called modernism, can be compared with the preschool period of child's development (phylogeny / ontogenesis).

Both periods, on the one hand – historical and cultural, and on the other – preschool age period, are characterized by increased interest for the new things, and sensitivity when precepting the world, objects, and states. The other characteristic features are individuality and active imagination, non-standard and emotional attitude when creating an artistic image in the process of artistic activity. It is characteristic feature that the means of expression are the same: color, composition, shape, line, etc., but their manner, style, technique, motive for creating the image are too sensual-personal.

It should be noted that such a sensitive-personal inner motive of the artist completely coincides with the mood of the country as a whole (economic, cultural, spiritual, ethical, etc.). These art works are understandable to the observers and embody the historical stage of the world development in a global sense. The inner motive of the child coincides with and clearly and accurately reproduces the moods and states that occur in the family (micro-country for the child). Children's art works and artistic images created by them will be understood by other children of this age. In the process of perception of the picture the artistic level of its performance is not considered. The content, methods of expression, color, shape, composition, size, specific features, emotionality and sensitivity of the image are analyzed (Ushakova, 2010, p. 109).

6. Conclusions

The main point and the main basis of this research is the objective duality of the art, where on the one hand, there is a special individual form of self-expression, a unique attitude to the environment, and on the other hand – person develops his or her own aesthetic taste, individual artistic image as a result of acquaintance with works of art and their sensory perception. «Worldview positions of any child are closely intertwined with mythological worldviews, which can become the basis for building a scheme of the value system» (Zdanevych et al., 2020). A work of art always remains a part of the artistic culture, a special individual form of personal attitude to the world. Through this attitude the artist expresses his or her own feelings, thoughts, ideas that arise in the mind of a certain person with unique intellectual and psychological experience. The artist also reproduces his or her personal experiences and understanding of reality.

Analyzing and comparing the works of artists of the modernism era and artistic images created by preschool children, we have identified certain analogies and common characteristic features, namely: modernists, as well as preschool children, proclaiming irrationalism, went beyond the traditions of painting and promoted unique individuality and love for freedom. Similar features of both groups' art works are the following: direct complex asymmetric waves, a lack of clear contour lines and monochrome planes of lines and angles in favor of more natural lines, elements of applied art. The compositions are full of floral ornaments. Blue, red, green, yellow colors are among the dominant ones. Children's painting is a part of artistic culture, and the child is an effective figure in the cultural process. Children's painting in the historical aspect, as a phenomenon of artistic culture, is characterized by certain features: emotional, personal, artistic expression, which is manifested in free and decorative painting.

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