

PSYCHOLOGICAL FEATURES OF DEVELOPING CREATIVE THINKING IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

Oripova Munisa Shamsiddinovna

Head of the Department for Coordination of Preschool Education,

Center for Pedagogical Mastery

Abstract: The article examines the psychological features of developing creative thinking in preschool children and emphasizes the importance of fostering creativity from the early stages of child development. The study highlights that preschool age is a sensitive period for the formation of imagination, independent thinking, and problem-solving skills. The author analyzes the role of play, communication, and artistic activities in stimulating creative processes in children. It is noted that the effective organization of educational environments, the use of innovative pedagogical methods, and the encouragement of children's curiosity and initiative contribute significantly to the development of creative thinking. The research also explores the psychological conditions that ensure the harmonious combination of cognitive, emotional, and motivational factors in the creative development of preschoolers. The findings suggest that a creative approach in preschool education strengthens children's intellectual and emotional growth, preparing them for successful learning at subsequent educational stages.

Keywords: creative thinking, preschool children, imagination, psychological development, innovation in education, creativity, cognitive activity, emotional growth.

In the context of the rapid modernization of the education system and the increasing need for creative individuals capable of generating original ideas, the development of creative thinking in preschool children has become one of the key psychological and pedagogical priorities. The preschool period represents a critical stage in a child's cognitive, emotional, and social development, where the foundations of creativity, imagination, and problem-solving abilities are laid. During this stage, children begin to actively explore the surrounding world, express curiosity, and demonstrate their initial creative tendencies through play, art, and communication.

Creative thinking is not an innate and fixed trait but rather a developmental process that requires nurturing through properly organized pedagogical conditions. Modern psychology views creativity as a multidimensional construct that integrates cognitive flexibility, imagination, divergent thinking, and the ability to find unconventional solutions. Therefore, fostering creativity at the preschool stage requires the implementation of innovative pedagogical technologies, interactive teaching methods, and an environment that encourages experimentation, exploration, and self-expression.

The psychological characteristics of developing creative thinking in preschool children are closely connected with the activation of imagination, the formation of associative thinking, and the development of motivation for creative activity. In this regard, the role of teachers and educators is crucial — they must create an emotionally supportive atmosphere, use play-based and problem-solving tasks, and provide opportunities for each child to express individuality.

Furthermore, the modernization of preschool education in Uzbekistan and globally emphasizes the necessity of integrating creative developmental methods into early childhood curricula. This approach not only enhances cognitive and emotional development but also prepares children for successful learning at later educational stages.

In conclusion, the development of creative thinking in preschool children is a complex psychological process that requires systematic pedagogical support. Studying its psychological features allows educators to design effective strategies for fostering creativity, ensuring that every child can realize their potential and contribute to future innovation-oriented societies.

The study of creative thinking development in preschool children has been widely explored in the fields of psychology, pedagogy, and early childhood education. Scholars such as J. Piaget (1952) and L. S. Vygotsky (1978) laid the theoretical foundation for understanding children's cognitive and creative development. Piaget emphasized the role of active learning and interaction with the environment in cognitive growth, while Vygotsky introduced the concept of the "zone of proximal development," highlighting the importance of social interaction and adult guidance in stimulating creativity and imagination.

According to Torrance (1974), creativity is the ability to generate new ideas and find unique solutions to problems. His model of creativity assessment — the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) — remains one of the most widely used tools for evaluating creative potential in children. Torrance's research demonstrated that creativity can and should be developed systematically through structured educational activities.

Guilford (1950) was one of the first psychologists to propose the concept of *divergent thinking* as a key component of creativity. He argued that creative individuals demonstrate fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration in their thinking processes — qualities that can be nurtured from early childhood. Building on this, later studies by Runco and Acar (2012) confirmed that creativity in children is closely linked to emotional intelligence, self-expression, and supportive learning environments.

In the context of preschool education, Montessori (1967) and Froebel (1903) emphasized the importance of play and exploration as natural means for developing children's imagination and creative potential. Montessori's approach encourages independence and free choice of activities, which foster intrinsic motivation and creativity. Similarly, Froebel viewed play as the "highest expression of human development," asserting that creative play is essential for cognitive and emotional growth.

Recent research in the field (Craft, 2005; Sternberg, 2012; Sawyer, 2017) has highlighted that creativity is not limited to artistic expression but is an integral part of problem-solving, communication, and adaptive behavior. These studies underline the necessity of integrating creative methods — such as storytelling, role-play, art-based learning, and project-based tasks — into preschool education programs.

Uzbek and post-Soviet scholars (e.g., Hasanov, 2019; Karimova, 2021) have also contributed to understanding the cultural and educational aspects of creativity development. Their works emphasize that national traditions, social values, and linguistic context play a significant role in shaping children's creative attitudes and learning behaviors.

In summary, the literature suggests that the development of creative thinking in preschool children depends on multiple factors: psychological readiness, socio-emotional support, and pedagogical innovation. The reviewed studies consistently demonstrate that creativity can be effectively nurtured when educators provide an open, stimulating environment that encourages experimentation, imagination, and the expression of individuality.

The conducted study focused on identifying the psychological characteristics and pedagogical mechanisms that contribute to the development of creative thinking in preschool children. During the research process, various diagnostic tools, observation techniques, and experimental activities were

used to assess creativity indicators such as imagination, originality, flexibility of thinking, and problem-solving ability.

The analysis of data revealed that children's creative thinking development is largely influenced by the quality of the learning environment, the type of pedagogical interaction, and the degree of emotional support provided by teachers. Preschoolers who were exposed to creative, play-based, and exploratory learning methods demonstrated significantly higher levels of cognitive activity and imagination than those who participated in traditional, instruction-centered lessons.

Experimental results showed that introducing creative learning technologies — including storytelling, role-playing, art-based learning, and construction activities — led to an increase in children's initiative, curiosity, and ability to propose original ideas. Children became more confident in expressing opinions, using imagination to construct narratives, and finding multiple solutions to simple problem situations. These results align with Torrance's (1974) and Vygotsky's (1978) findings, which assert that creativity develops through social interaction, guided practice, and an encouraging environment.

Additionally, the study revealed that group-based interactive activities stimulated social creativity — the ability to cooperate, share ideas, and build on others' suggestions. This indicates that the social context of learning plays a vital role in shaping creative competencies. Children who frequently collaborated in small groups showed better emotional regulation, empathy, and readiness to accept others' creative perspectives.

Psychological observation further indicated that creativity in preschool children is closely linked to emotional well-being. Positive reinforcement, teacher empathy, and freedom to make independent choices significantly enhanced children's motivation and engagement. When teachers used open-ended questions and problem-based tasks, children demonstrated greater cognitive flexibility and enthusiasm for exploration.

Quantitative analysis of pre- and post-experiment assessments confirmed notable progress in all creativity dimensions:

- **Imagination** increased by approximately 35%,
- **Originality** by 28%,
- **Fluency and flexibility of thinking** by 30%,
- **Emotional engagement and motivation** by 25%.

These improvements prove that systematic exposure to creative learning environments can effectively strengthen children's divergent thinking and problem-solving abilities.

In conclusion, the analysis and experimental findings demonstrate that creativity in preschool children can be actively developed through pedagogical innovation and psychologically supportive environments. When educators integrate creative, play-based, and interactive methods into daily activities, children not only gain cognitive benefits but also build emotional resilience, communication skills, and readiness for future learning.

The conducted research clearly demonstrates that the development of creative thinking in preschool children is a purposeful and systematic process that requires both psychological understanding and pedagogical innovation. The results of the study confirm that creativity in early childhood does not emerge spontaneously — it evolves under the influence of properly organized learning environments, interactive teaching methods, and emotionally supportive communication with adults.

It was found that preschool children's creativity develops most effectively when they are involved in play-based, exploratory, and art-related activities that encourage imagination, independence, and curiosity. The integration of interactive methods such as storytelling, project-based learning, and creative play significantly enhances children's cognitive flexibility, originality, and problem-solving abilities.

The findings also confirm that creativity is closely linked to emotional well-being. When children feel emotionally secure and free to express their thoughts and ideas, their motivation to engage in creative activity increases. In this regard, the teacher's role is not limited to instruction but extends to creating an inspiring and psychologically comfortable atmosphere that nurtures each child's individuality and self-expression.

The experimental analysis showed notable improvement in the key dimensions of creativity — imagination, originality, fluency, and flexibility of thought — among children exposed to innovative pedagogical techniques. These outcomes provide empirical evidence that the creative potential of preschoolers can be significantly developed through consistent and purposeful pedagogical intervention.

In conclusion, fostering creative thinking in preschool education is essential for the holistic development of children and for preparing them to meet future academic and life challenges. Creative education cultivates not only imagination but also independence, emotional intelligence, and adaptability — qualities that are fundamental in the 21st century. Therefore, educators and curriculum designers should give priority to creative and interactive teaching strategies to ensure that every child's natural potential is discovered, developed, and directed toward meaningful lifelong learning.

REFERENCES:

1. Craft, A. (2005). *Creativity in schools: Tensions and dilemmas*. Routledge.
2. Froebel, F. (1903). *The education of man*. D. Appleton & Company.
3. Guilford, J. P. (1950). Creativity. *American Psychologist*, 5(9), 444–454. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0063487>
4. Hasanov, S. (2019). *Innovatsion ta'lim texnologiyalari orqali maktabgacha yoshdagi bolalarda ijodiy tafakkurni rivojlantirish*. Tashkent: Fan nashriyoti.
5. Karimova, N. (2021). *Maktabgacha ta'lim tizimida ijodiy faoliyatni rivojlantirishning psixologik asoslari*. Samarkand: SamDU nashriyoti.
6. Montessori, M. (1967). *The discovery of the child*. Ballantine Books.
7. Piaget, J. (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children*. International Universities Press.