

Ivan Franko Drohobych State Pedagogical University, Ukraine

VIOLETA GORODYSKA

vgorodiskaya@mail.ru

*Role of Cartoons in Moral Education  
of Senior Preschoolers*

---

Rola filmów animowanych w moralnym wychowaniu starszych przedszkolaków

SUMMARY

The author describes the main approaches to defining the essence of the concept of “moral education” in the scientific literature, highlights its essential characteristics, proves the importance of forming moral behaviour of senior preschool children by means of animation, analyses the use of cartoons in contemporary preschool educational institutions and grounds their influence on moral education of senior preschool children.

**Keywords:** moral education; moral norms and standards of behaviour; cartoons; cartoons-tales; senior preschoolers

INTRODUCTION

The problem of moral education of preschool children has always been relevant. Today the matter lies in choosing programs and forms of work which teachers and parents have to rely on in order to instill moral norms and standards of behaviour in preschoolers.

Moral skills of a personality have to be formed in early years and later at school one should just improve them. That’s actually why teachers have no right for mistake in moral education of preschool children, which is extremely important in a modern society engaged in information.

Attention to this problem has increased because of growing loss of moral values and orientations of both adults and children in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In recent decades the personality formation has been implemented in the atmosphere of propagandising purely sordid materialistic views on life, relationships, human behaviour. This process is unanimously promoted by a variety of means of mass media and television.

It is known that childhood is a period of human life when the foundation of personal activity and core values which define the qualities of a person in the future, the period of mastering moral and ethical standards of an adult future life are formed. Therefore, the formation of morality in children of preschool age is extremely important.

Scientists have been studying various aspects of the problem. First of all, the formation of socio-moral competence of preschool children is the object of scientific research by the scholars (Artemova 1974; Beh 2004; Bogush 2009; Kononko 1997; Ladivir 2014; Ponimanska 1993; and others). Many Ukrainian scientists are interested in the ethical context of animation and its impact on senior preschool children (Gavrish, Klokova 2013; Genzur 2013; Kindrat 2013; Malay 2014; Teplyuk 2013; Halamay 2014; and others).

Gavrish and Klokova disputes the necessity of social control of the content value of animated films, and accentuates the fact that a regular contemplation of the cartoon negative characters forms destructive social attitudes and values of the child (Gavrish, Klokova 2013). Genzur focuses on the process of watching domestic cartoons, through which the moral standards of children of preschool age are formed due to realities of life, but he dispraises cartoons of foreign production (Genzur 2013). Kindrat appeals to the main source of cartoons – fairy-tales – as they help to create cartoons with preservation of basic moral principles (Kindrat 2013). Malay suggests watching cartoons, followed by role playing the characters seen on the screen, learning to transform and using verbal and nonverbal communication means of preschool children (Malay 2014).

However, despite ongoing research of the given problem the most significant and controversial questions at the modern stage of science development are those about the use of animated films in the modern preschool educational institution and their influence on formation of moral consciousness, moral feelings, norms, moral behaviour, moral education of preschool children in general.

#### ESSENCE OF THE CONCEPT OF “MORAL EDUCATION”

The analysis of scientific literature gives reason to confirm that there are different approaches to the definition of “moral education”. In pedagogical literature the term “moral education” is construed as one of the most important types of education, which lies in the formation of moral consciousness, development of

moral senses and the formation of skills and habits of moral behaviour of a person according to a certain ideology (Goncharenko 1997, p. 216). Mosiyaschenko had the same assertion claiming that moral education emerges from the folk pedagogy, which determines the observance of the triad in education: forming the moral consciousness, moral feelings and moral behaviour (Mosiyaschenko 2005, p. 63). Even Suhomlinskiy repeatedly stressed that “moral education begins from the first steps of a child’s conscious life and involves mastering universal norms of morality by a young man [...]” (Suhomlinskiy 1978, p. 17), learning the moral ideal which absorbed the best features of mentality of the Ukrainian people.

Suhomlinskiy considered upbringing in the spirit of truthfulness, chivalry, honour to be one of the priority components of moral education of an individual. In his work *How to Educate a Real Human* the scholar delivers the kind of moral alphabet of moral culture: “No ten”, “Ten unworthy things”, “Fourteen laws of friendship”, etc. linking moral education with the methodology of civil and patriotic upbringing.

Researcher Bogush notes: “Today more than ever we need to instill in young citizens of Ukraine the ideals of Goodness and Beauty, Dignity and Mercy, Justice, Compassion and non-Violence” (Bogush 2009, p. 5).

Ponimanska, the modern researcher, has also a usual understanding of the notion “moral education” and considers it to be a purposeful interaction of the adult and the child for the purpose of forming moral feelings and qualities, learning moral norms and rules, developing moral motives and behaviour (Ponimanska 2004, p. 211). The scientist merely clarifies that during childhood at preschool age children develop such inner moral qualities as self-respect, a sense of shame and duty:

- self-respect occurs when a child feels proud of a well done job, a decent thing to do, behaviour in general,
- sense of shame appears in awkwardness from a failed act of the child, their own guilt,
- sense of duty manifests itself in the form of emotional states, is developed in the range from satisfaction at the approval of their behaviour by the adult, to joy for doing a good deed, helping a friend, running the errand (Ponimanska 2004, p. 214).

It should be noted that despite the fact that in all studies we say that moral education is treated differently, it has the same context in most cases, affects the formation of moral consciousness, feelings, involves a preschooler’s keeping to behavioural and ethical norms.

I am convinced that moral education from the first years of a child’s life is aimed at forming a system of norms and principles of conduct, values, interests and needs. Because at this stage their attitude to other people, to a variety of moral concepts, feelings and habits that guide their further improvement is established.

Particularly significant changes occur in the motivational sphere of preschool children, which are manifested in the development of moral motives of behaviour, and at the stage of preschool age, they acquire subordination – subordination to a higher purpose. Therefore, the neglect of moral education in the preschool years cannot be compensated later. Ushinskiy emphasized that the priority task of the teacher is to motivate pupils to aspire to high spiritual and moral ideals: “Arouse a man’s sincere interest in useful and moral things – and you can be sure that they will always preserve human dignity” (Ushinskiy 1955, p. 387).

Thus, I come to the conclusion that moral education is an important component of the integrated pedagogical process in preschool educational institutions. The essence of this aspect of education lies in close interaction of the tutor and the child for the purpose of introducing the latter to eternal spiritual values of the society, of forming their moral experience and educating high moral and volitional personality traits and behavioural motives.

#### FORMATION OF MORAL BEHAVIOUR OF SENIOR PRESCHOOLERS BY MEANS OF CARTOONS

It is known, the dominant interest of children of preschool age is watching cartoons with the help of which modern educators can practically implement an important task of moral education. The process of formation and development of moral consciousness of preschoolers is exposed to many techniques and factors.

Today there are many means of moral education, but, in my opinion, the least used method in preschool institutions is the one of display and explanation, in particular while watching cartoons, when a teacher can clearly interpret the situations of children’s moral choice (truth – lies, good – evil, beauty – ugliness). Moreover, none of the existing teaching programs and methods do not analyse such type of activity as watching and discussion of the content of the cartoons (national or foreign).

In modern preschool institutions the method of display and explanation is mainly used in raising behaviour standards and joint relations skills of pupils. Children are systematically and in different situations trained to moral ways of behaviour: saying “hello” and “goodbye”, polite asking for a favour, saying “thank you”, careful treatment of toys and didactic material, respecting staff work in preschools.

Unfortunately, modern educators have only recently begun realising and thinking that preschoolers’ favourite animated films particularly affect the formation of their morality. It is therefore necessary to consider in detail their selection, time and place of the show, a way of clearing up their deep moral content with further explanation and discussion.

Today TV offers a huge number of animated films with different and not always positive moral contents and without considering their huge impact on moral consciousness, moral feelings and qualities of the child. Families rarely practise joint watching cartoons, discussion, condemnation of evil and approval of kindness. However, it is the contents of cartoons from which the child often draws the entire spectrum of rules, norms and standards of behaviour which affect his psyche, consciousness and form a personality in the future.

At the same time, the results of numerous scientific studies prove that not all teachers use the method of watching cartoons like means of education in preschool institutions, not to mention so called “filtering” of their contents with the purpose of influencing the moral growth of a preschool child. All teachers must thoroughly analyse the contents of the cartoons offered to children, choosing the ones of educational character among media products. Such a responsible attitude of teachers to the selection of animated films is because, unfortunately, not every animated film in the modern media can positively influence cultural socialisation and moral consciousness of a child. However, not modern culture, but a number of elements of so-called pseudo-culture too early introduce a preschooler to things which are ill-timed and harmful to a childish consciousness and which cannot adequately be perceived and objectively assessed yet. Latest scientific studies prove that the use of animation is not just a waste of time for teachers, but one of the most important means of a personality development of the pupil in preschool institutions (Gavrish, Klokovala 2013; Genzur 2013; Karpenko 2013; Kindrat 2013; Malay 2014; Teplyuk 2013; Halamaya 2014). Contents and plots are extremely important for children of preschool age.

Cartoons plots provide standard situations, in which the children get in everyday life in the process of communication with other people; they demonstrate social norms, rules, gender roles, values and conduct models, etc. Usually preschoolers reproduce the plots of viewed films, consolidating ways to act in certain real situations. It is known that any animated story contains elements of fabulosity, fantasy, fiction, mystery and enigma. The most famous fairy tales, the plot of which is used for making cartoons, promote eternal and immutable moral principles.

#### USING CARTOONS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON MORAL EDUCATION OF SENIOR PRESCHOOLERS IN MODERN PRESCHOOL INSTITUTIONS

The use of cartoons is one of the most important ways of integrating literature, in particular, embodied in the animation, with the educational process of a preschool institution.

Such cartoons-tales as *Kolobok (Gingerbread Man)*, *Teremok (Little Tower)*, etc., solve any everyday emotional problem very effectively. Their psychological

meaning and benefit to the child consist in preparing him for the perception of more complicated works. The pupil learns to consistently perceive what is happening, and it develops his memory and attention. No wonder there are many repetitions in folk fairy tales. Cartoons-tales are practical in bringing up senior pupils who are hyperactive, unable to focus, not purposeful, impulsive (Kindrat 2013, p. 98).

To overcome emotional problems which children have, one needs a more complicated animation (filmed literary fairy tales about Buratino, i.e. Pinocchio, Cipollino, Carlson, folk tales about Baba Yaga and Zmiy Horynovych, i.e. Slavic Dragon and many others). However, it is simply not enough for children to read or review them – they must necessarily be performed. A child has to try out different roles: to be Ivanko and Baba Yaga. Mentally playing the role of Baba Yaga, the child will not be so scared of the latter because this character will be clear for him.

You can ask children to draw fairy tale characters in different situations, in the meantime they should describe their facial expression, posture – in short, comment on everything that happens on the screen.

One can choose cartoons-tales for display during a concert program. It is important that adults while selecting cartoons should care about views of morality and about emotions a child has when the cartoon is watched.

An extremely valuable thing for innovative teachers is the experience of using therapeutic fairy tales to overcome fears in children of preschool age: *The Knight and his Armour Bearer*, *The Treehouse*, *The Spirit of the Mole*, *The Ball*, *About the Doll which was a Clown*, *Carolina in the Country of Fairy Tales*, *Quarrelling Seasons*, *The Wolf Cub and His Friend Rabbit*, *The Rock and the Boat*, *About the Brave Girl and the Evil Wizard* (Molitska 2011). In these fairy tales there are a variety of conflicting feelings of inferiority, fear and anxiety, aggression, leadership and discipline, greed, difficulties in communicating. These works need not only be read but also watched in cartoon films in order to calm down fragile neural system and sensitive childish psyche.

Modern researcher Vasylieva says that the use of appropriate cartoons and educational films is extremely effective in both moral and intellectual development of children (Vasylieva 2013, p. 1–7). She proves that regular classes in preschool institutions are unfortunately ineffective; the element of novelty has disappeared long before. Such traditional classes in preschool institutions are not able to give children a proper amount of mental work. To make an educational process interesting children need to have lessons of a new type – these are classes which model a creative process and make a proper microclimate, providing opportunities for developing a creative side of intelligence. The use of educational films and cartoons belongs to them. Watching appropriate programs should contribute to a child's intellectual development because his fantasy, heroes of books and fairy

tales, surrounding subjects, numbers and letters come alive on the screen. This is one of the most important tasks of preschool education – an educational one.

Such classes concerning watching cartoons in preschool institutions provide a great variability and variety of combination means of pedagogical influence:

- each class represents a set of tasks which children are to perform while watching a film,
- the child is given tasks in different forms, in different activities, using toys, visual aids, didactic material, etc. – and thus the child is introduced to different ways of transmitting information,
- tasks can contain a different range of difficulties, that's why they can maintain the interest of the child for a long time,
- tasks appear before the child not in an abstract form, but in the form of the game and helping fairy-tale heroes, that is, in the form of real, tangible actions which are based on emotions of a child,
- most of the cartoons and movies are not limited to the proposed tasks, and allow children, teachers and parents to be creative writing new versions of the tasks and development of the plot (Artemova 1974, p. 1–7).

Under the influence of some cartoons children develop misconceptions about safety rules, standards of conduct, peaceful coexistence and mercy, because under all adverse circumstances nothing terrible happens to the heroes. In this sense, even the popular cartoon *Tom and Jerry* is not safe enough in the context of socialisation of children, because it does not provoke their empathy or sympathy.

Unfortunately, some of the modern cartoons are characterised by a particularly low level of speech culture: they contain rude, slang words which are destructive to a childish consciousness. For example, the words like “jerk”, “stupid”, “idiot”, “moron”, “cretin” are not only immoral, but they also adversely affect the behaviour of preschool age children who imprint them deeply in their memory. In the animated series *Sponge Bob* there are some expressive phrases like “Welcome to a slop tub”, “Sponge Bob and a serial Strangler”, etc. Also slang vocabulary is widely used in the translations of many cartoons, for example “cool”. Modern animation often offers grown-up themes which can be seen from such phrases of the popular cartoon *Shrek*: “We’ll tell each other about love stories”, “we are sexy”. Children, unfortunately, use this vocabulary, believing it to be real, live and “cool”. But the very vocabulary becomes the ground of speech culture for them in the future.

Researcher Malai suggests (in the conditions of kindergarten for senior preschoolers) conducting a number of other methods of work with a cartoon aimed at a comprehensive development of the child, but not only watching cartoons with the discussion. Here are those which are successfully used in the practice of modern preschools (Malai 2014, p. 20–23):



1. The techniques of “working with cartoons”, their acting out. Children transform themselves into their favourite characters, throw out extra energy in the game, fight with their fears, and solve interpersonal conflicts (Malai 2014, p. 21). For example, after watching the animated film *Kapitoshka* a teacher can ask children to pair up – one child takes the role of a funny rain drop, and the second plays a wolf cub, and they together act out any episode. After this, the children must explain the way Kapitoshka managed to reeducate the bad little wolf. Together we come to the conclusion: a smile, a cheerful mood, good deeds are the key to a strong friendship, and if you do someone good, it returns to you.
2. Adding sound to a film. Children love to comment on the cartoons they have seen more than once. A teacher invites the pupils to choose a role “for the soul” and turns on a cartoon without sound. The children take turns uttering their words. By the way, it is not necessary to watch them make their words close to the original; you can unleash children’s imagination: their attention, language and creativity get developed in this way.
3. A live cartoon. This technique is useful for having funny physical warming-up. A teacher assigns roles, tells a tale; the children listen attentively and sit down when their character is named.
4. The film display in reverse order. The children with help of non-verbal means reproduce a cartoon story in reverse order using, if necessary, cards with illustrations. In this way children’s creative thinking, memory, attention, cognitive activity are developed.
5. Making up one’s own cartoon of the suggested stills. Using an animated kaleidoscope (there are six rolling parts on the rod similar to a 9-sided nut with a diameter of 12 cm, on each side there is an image frame from a certain cartoon) children create their own cartoon scrolling and selecting stills. Then they tell an invented story arranged in sequence stills. This technique contributes to the development of creative thinking, connected speech, imagination of preschoolers.
6. Freeze-frame. While watching a cartoon a teacher stops the video at a certain moment (having defined it before) and offers the children a variety of tasks: to examine the details of landscape, interior, clothing, facial expression of the character; to foresee a further course of events; to characterise a character’s deed or event; to describe the character, etc. Using this technique helps children better understand the story, characters’ disposition and develops imagination, observation and connected speech.
7. A time-lapse. This technique is used for studying the processes which are slowly implemented (for example, the growth of wheat ears and making



bread from corn, change of seasons, aging of a person). A teacher accelerates the deployment of the plot using the montage of the cartoon (Malai 2014, p. 23).

I offer preschool teachers the article by Karpenko for creative usage, who deals with the use of cartoons with a positive characteristic and gives a detailed analysis of the integrated class *Locomotive from Romashkovo (Chamomile Town)* for children of preschool age (Karpenko 2013, p. 15).

#### CONCLUSIONS

In modern preschool pedagogics the problem of using cartoons and their influence on the morality of preschool children is being cleared up. Scientists emphasise the main psychological factors of effective influence of cartoons on the development of moral behaviour of preschool children: a) preparedness of teachers to the modelling of cartoons plots which mostly affect the development of moral qualities of children, b) preparedness of teachers and children to play activities, c) positive psychological climate of the educational process, d) usage of psycho-artistic situations with embedded videos in the game and conversations with preschoolers.

Summing up, I note once more that animation is not only an important art form, but also an effective developing educational tool which gives the possibility to much more interesting solve various educational tasks in the work with children of preschool age. The contents of cartoons, the variety of their plots make up essential features and have a dominant effect on moral education of senior preschool children. Therefore, the list of cartoons for children of different ages should be carefully sorted, put into modern programs of preschool institutions and strictly controlled by the teacher.

#### REFERENCES

- Артемова Л.В. (1974), *Моральне виховання дошкільників*, Київ.
- Бех І. (2004), *Концепція правил відповідного виховання : правила морального виховання*, «Дошкільне виховання», 11.
- Богущ А. (2009), *Духовність і моральність: виховний контекст*, «Дошкільне виховання», 10.
- Васильєва О. (2013), *Використання мультиплікаційних і розвивальних фільмів у роботі з дітьми*, «Дитячий Садок», 6.
- Гавриш Н.В., Клокова Г.А. (2013), *Вплив мультфільмів на формування моральної свідомості дітей*, «Вісник ЛНУ імені Тараса Шевченка», 13.
- Гензур Г. (2013), *Вплив мультфільмів на формування моральних якостей старших дошкільників*, «Вісник ЛНУ імені Тараса Шевченка», 13.
- Гончаренко С. (1997), *Український педагогічний словник*, Київ.
- Карпенко С. (2013), *Паровозик із Ромашкового*, «Дитячий садок», 6.

- Кіндрат І.Р. (2013), *Вплив сучасного медіа-простору на формування світоглядних уявлень дитини дошкільного віку*, «Вісник ЛНУ імені Тараса Шевченка», 13.
- Кононко О. (1997), *Душевність, людяність, щирість: моральне виховання дошкільника*, «Дошкільне виховання», 2.
- Ладивір С. (2014), *Сім'я – перша школа морального зростання*, «Дошкільне виховання», 6.
- Малай І. (2014), *Мультики : поєднуємо приємне з корисним*, «Дошкільне виховання», 1.
- Моліцька М. (2011), *Терапевтичні казки*, Кн. 2, Львів.
- Мосіяшенко В.А. (2005), *Українська етнопедагогіка: навч. посіб.*, Суми.
- Поніманська Т.І. (1993), *Моральне виховання дошкільників : навч. посіб. для студ. пед. ін-тів*, Київ.
- Поніманська Т.І. (2004), *Дошкільна педагогіка : навч. посібн. для студентів вищих навчальних закладів*, Київ.
- Сухомлинський В.О. (1978), *Моральні заповіді дитинства і юності*, Київ.
- Теплюк А. (2013), *Вплив сучасних мультфільмів на психіку дитини*, «Дитячий садок», 10.
- Ушинський К. (1955), *Про виховання моральності*, Твори: в 6-ти т. Т. 6, Київ.
- Халамай І. (2014), *Мультимедійна презентація як інструмент мультитерапії*, «Вихователь-методист дошкільного закладу», 6.

#### STRESZCZENIE

W artykule zostały scharakteryzowane główne podejścia do ustalenia istoty pojęcia „wychowanie moralne” w literaturze naukowej. Przeanalizowano jego istotne cechy, została udowodniona ważność kształtowania moralnego zachowania u starszych przedszkolaków przy pomocy filmów animowanych, przeanalizowano stosowanie filmów animowanych we współczesnych przedszkolach oraz uzasadniono ich wpływ na moralne wychowanie starszych przedszkolaków.

**Słowa kluczowe:** moralne wychowanie; moralne normy i wzorce zachowania; filmy animowane; animowane filmy-bajki; starsze przedszkolaki