

* LESIA MAKARENKO, ** MARIANA SEVASTIUK

* National Pedagogical Dragomanov University.

Department of Information Systems and Technologies. Ukraine

** National Pedagogical Dragomanov University.

Department of Pedagogy and Elementary Education Methodology. Ukraine

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6062-8834>; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3769-5833>

lesia.makarenko@ukr.net, m_sevast@ukr.net

Vasyl Sukhomlynsky's Pedagogical Ideas: From the Pavlysh School to the New Ukrainian School

*Pomysły pedagogiczne Wasyla Suchomlińskiego –
od szkoły pawłyskiej do nowej szkoły ukraińskiej*

SUMMARY

The article attempts to analyze the fundamental principles of Vasyl Sukhomlynsky's educational work concerning the purpose, content, specific aspects of the Pavlysh School elementary education organization and to compare them with the changes taking place in the modern Ukrainian elementary school system. The ideas of the teacher's and pupil's creative potential development, the use of innovative techniques and technologies, the creation of educational and developmental environment, which were incorporated by Sukhomlynsky and now form the basis of the New Ukrainian School Concept, are highly important for educational reforms. First of all, the article analyzes the influence of the Sukhomlynsky's leading idea – person-oriented pedagogy – on the formation of child-centered pedagogy in the development of the new Ukrainian school. The comparative analysis has been carried out, which examines the goal and general approaches to the learning process organization, which were developed and implemented in the Pavlysh School learning process by Sukhomlynsky and then to the new Ukrainian school, and has showed their further development in modern ideas of elementary education. The article also proves that Sukhomlynsky's ideas were way ahead of their time, and that the Ukrainian school reforming process is based on the best traditions of national pedagogy and education.

Keywords: forward-looking nature of pedagogical ideas; humanism; child-centrism; competency-based approach; educational environment; education content integration; innovative teaching methods

RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC

The changes that are taking place in the modern Ukrainian elementary school system are related to the implementation of the Ukrainian education strategic development concept, entitled “The New Ukrainian School: Space of Educational Opportunities” (2016), which requires the development of a new school on the new strategic principles.

Significant opportunities for understanding the strategic directions of the Ukrainian school development are embodied in Vasyl Sukhomlynsky’s pedagogical ideas. The forward-looking nature and a great potential of his pedagogical ideas can be explained by the fact that the prominent Ukrainian educator was not only a scholar, but also an experienced practicing teacher, a successful educator-manager, an insightful psychologist, a distinctive writer as well as a real man of science. The correlation between the changes taking place in the modern Ukrainian elementary school and the main provisions of Sukhomlynsky’s legacy concerning the purpose, content, and features of the Pavlysh School elementary education organization allows teachers to understand the essence of modern innovations and the possibility of their introduction into the modern elementary school practice.

Various aspects of psychological and pedagogical science, examined in Sukhomlynsky’s legacy, have been comprehended and analyzed by many Ukrainian researchers (M. Antonets, I. Bekh, A. Bohush, I. Zyazyun, O. Savchenko, O. Sukhomlynska, M. Yarmachenko and others). A significant phenomenon in Ukrainian educators’ lives is the annual pedagogical reading “Vasyl Sukhomlynsky in a Dialogue with Modern Times”, organized by the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sukhomlynsky’s key idea of introducing a humane, person-oriented approach to the organization of education and upbringing of a child was not only the motto of his pedagogical heritage, it had specific ways and methods of implementation into the elementary school learning process, such as: creating a situation of child’s emotional well-being at school, obtaining positive results during the study and experiencing a feeling of success of personal achievements in learning by each child, diagnosis of children’s mental characteristics. The preconditions for the implementation of a humane approach is the teacher’s awareness that the child must never lose faith in his or her strength during the study, or feel that something does not work out. This constitutes the optimism of the teacher’s pedagogical outlook. In order to achieve positive results and “the joy of mental work” (Sukhomlynsky 2018, p. 277) during the learning process, Sukhomlynsky drew the teachers’ attention to the fact that there is no “abstract pupil” (Sukhomlynsky 1988, p. 27), each pupil is characterized by

a special nature of cognitive processes, personal qualities which should be studied by a teacher. Therefore, a teacher should primarily be a “connoisseur of children’s souls”, and he referred to pedagogy as “human studies” (Sukhomlynsky 1988, p. 7). As Sukhomlynsky pointed out, the testament of the teacher’s pedagogical wisdom is the ability to correctly determine what each student is capable of at the moment and how to develop his or her abilities in the future.

The ideas of a prominent Ukrainian educator concerning the humanization of the educational process are gaining ground in the context of reforming the Ukrainian school education.

The idea of a humane attitude, which penetrates the entire Sukhomlynsky’s pedagogical activity, has developed into the idea of child-centrism in modern pedagogy, whereas the position of a modern teacher, which is based on humane relationships with pupils, has developed into the modern position of the teacher-facilitator, moderator, and motivator, who creates a developmental and cognitive environment for a happy life and studying of pupils. Accordingly, studying at the New Ukrainian School is based on the principles of partnership pedagogy, positive psychology and the philosophy of child-centrism. The main provisions of them are: the development of a child in accordance with their age and individual psychological and physiological characteristics and needs, individual styles, rate, educational trajectories, the organization of cognitive process which brings joy and satisfaction to the child. It is obvious that these ideas are grounded in scientific and practical activity of the Pavlysh School headed by Sukhomlynsky.

An educational reform of the modern Ukrainian elementary school is characterized by the significant innovative potential, which covers the goals, structural components, content, methods of teaching and upbringing, its quality assessment, etc. Let us analyze them according to the positions of Sukhomlynsky.

First of all, as Sukhomlynsky stated in his works *My Heart I Give to Children* (2018), and *One Hundred Pieces of Advice to Teachers* (1988), which are devoted to the problems of elementary education, the purpose of this level of education is a comprehensive personality development. He argued that “during the first 4 years of study – from 7 to 11 years old – a development of a child’s personality takes place (...). These years are the most intense phase of human life” (Sukhomlynsky 2018, p. 183). These words resonate with the conceptual foundations of secondary education reform of “The New Ukrainian School: Space of Educational Opportunities”, which defines their aim as the training of young people for successful self-realization in life, the development of a competitive expert, a fully developed individual – a citizen with a proactive life position, an innovator who can change the world and learn throughout his or her life (*The New Ukrainian School...* 2016, p. 9).

Elementary school plays a special role in the fulfillment of the modern Ukrainian school tasks and lays the foundations for successful further learning. Accordingly, the purpose of elementary education is redefined, which consists in the overall de-

velopment of children, their talents, abilities, competences and comprehensive skills in accordance with their age and individual psychological and physiological characteristics and needs, values formation, development of independence, creativity and curiosity. This purpose clearly reflects the child-centered, person-oriented direction of elementary education.

According to Sukhomlynsky's views, the basic conceptual principle of studying at elementary school is to teach children how to study (Sukhomlynsky 1988, p. 34). Sukhomlynsky distinguished 12 complex skills, which he considered important for the development of children's ability to study. They are: "(...) the ability to read, to write, to observe the phenomena of the surrounding world, to think, to express your opinion. These skills are, figuratively saying, a tool without which it is impossible to master knowledge" (Sukhomlynsky 2018, p. 182). During ten years of schooling, the pupil must master the ability to observe the phenomena of the surrounding world: to compare, to contrast, to find the incomprehensible, to be surprised; to express an opinion on what he or she sees, watches, does, thinks; to read freely; to write freely, quickly and correctly; to allocate logically finished parts of the text, to establish the relationship and interdependence between them; to find a book on an issue of interest; to make a preliminary logical analysis of the text in the process of reading; to listen to the teacher and at the same time briefly note down the content of the story; to read the text and at the same time listen to the teacher's instruction on working with the text; to write a composition, to express what he or she sees and observes around themselves (Sukhomlynsky 1977, pp. 211–212).

By analyzing Sukhomlynsky's pedagogical experience, we have distinguished the ideas of modern competency-oriented education in his works. The scholar calls for a change in the attitude towards pupils' learning results. "One of the most important goals of education is to teach how to use knowledge. The danger of transforming knowledge into dead luggage originates in elementary school years (...)" (Sukhomlynsky 2018, p. 223). This leads us to the conclusion that Sukhomlynsky laid the groundwork for a competency-based approach to learning. Anticipating the future, Sukhomlynsky stressed the need to form subject and key competences of school-children.

The idea of the formation of comprehensive skills, general educational competences, without which it is impossible for a pupil to continue the study, is laid in Sukhomlynsky's pedagogical works and has found its continuation in the State Standard of Elementary Education and content of modern elementary school. In accordance with the Concept's implementation, a New Ukrainian School teacher must develop the pupils' ability to possess ten groups of competencies that will enable them to develop and become more successful. These are: 1) speaking state (or native, in case of difference) languages; 2) speaking foreign languages; 3) mathematical literacy; 4) competence in natural sciences and technologies; 5) information and digital competence; 6) the ability to study throughout life; 7) social and civil competencies; 8) entrepreneurship;

9) general cultural literacy; 10) environmental literacy and a healthy lifestyle (*The New Ukrainian School...* 2016, p. 14). They are closely linked to the comprehensive skills which are taught in elementary school, such as: the ability to read and understand the text read; ability to express opinion orally and in writing form; critical thinking; the ability to reasonably justify your position; identify initiative; create; ability to solve problems, assess risks and make decisions; ability to constructively manage emotions; apply emotional intelligence; the ability to cooperate in a team (*The New Ukrainian School...* 2016, p. 14). The listed competencies are equally important and interconnected. A child acquires each of them systematically and consistently, studying various subjects at all stages of the educational process.

The introduction of a competency-based approach is closely linked to the introduction of integration into the modern elementary school. It should be noted that Sukhomlynsky paid much attention to the implementation of the integrated approach in the educational process of the Pavlysh School, as exemplified in the lessons of thinking in nature. These lessons promoted the development of “bright thought, living word and creativity in children”, combined the emotional and the logical, word and action, the visual and the figurative, developed logical thinking and speech, encouraged observation, combined knowledge of several subjects.

Another example of the implementation of interdisciplinary connections is Sukhomlynsky's proposal to combine teaching of reading and writing with drawing, which he incorporated in his work *My Heart I Give to Children* (2018, p. 149). Sukhomlynsky taught children to read and write at unusual lessons, which he called “a journey to the sources of the word”, where they studied the letters by searching for their images in nature.

The main innovation of the New Ukrainian School is the development of a learning content based on an integrated approach for forming a holistic perception of the world in pupils. Integration into the elementary school is carried out through the introduction of integrated courses (“I explore the world”, “Art”, “Environmental Studies”, etc.), the development of integrated lessons, the implementation of project technology for a holistic interdisciplinary solution to the problem. One of the best integration models in elementary school is the integration around one topic during the thematic days and weeks. This interdisciplinary approach to studying, which was proposed by Sukhomlynsky, is realized in the conditions of the New Ukrainian School through the introduction of integrated studying.

In the Pavlysh School a significant place was devoted to the creation of an educational environment for learning and development of pupils: the lessons of thinking in nature, the room of fairy tales, the science room, the island of miracles, the garden of health, etc. Sukhomlynsky called for a thought-out system of favorable conditions in every corner of the school premises (Sukhomlynsky 1977, pp. 116–124). The study of Sukhomlynsky's pedagogical system on the creation and use of educational space provides opportunities for teachers to make more thoughtful use of it in the conditions

of modern elementary school. This idea of the educator has considerably outstripped his times and occupies a significant place in the new modern Ukrainian school. The educational environment involves mobile workplaces in the classroom for the effective organization of group, research, project work of pupils, zoning of school premises in accordance with the needs and interests of children. Such an environment provides an opportunity for children to make their own choice of educational activities, to show active attitude and initiative during the educational process.

However, as Sukhomlynsky stated, the educational environment must primarily be health-saving. The care of children's health was one of the important tasks of the Pavlysh School. "If one measures all my troubles and concerns about children during the first four years of study, then the better part of them are about health" (Sukhomlynsky 2018, p. 187). This idea is especially relevant today, when after graduating from elementary school, according to the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, 50% of schoolchildren have functional disorders of various body systems, and 42% – chronic conditions.

In modern elementary school, there is much concern about preserving not only physical but also mental, spiritual, social health of children. Sukhomlynsky's idea of emotional well-being of a child at school, providing moral and psychological comfort, teaching pupils to cope with stress is extremely relevant for the present realities. The health-improving potential of education should be provided by the modern elementary school. An especially important task today is to turn the school into a safe place where there is no violence and persecution, and there is respect for the personality of each child – what was successfully achieved in the Pavlysh School.

According to Sukhomlynsky's views, the structure of the school itself must meet the requirements of child's physical condition and be very flexible. The educator approached the development of elementary education rather dialectically – from "school under the blue sky", schools of nature, sensory, emotional-specific perception of the world to the school as a source of spirituality, culture, and moral values (Sukhomlynsky 1988, p. 159).

The elementary education of the new Ukrainian school will also be divided into two cycles: the first, adaptive-playing (1–2 classes); the second, basic (3–4 classes). The first cycle of elementary education helps pupils to get used to school life, and the task of the teacher is to support each pupil's confidence and motivation for knowledge. In the second cycle of elementary education pupils will have a sense of responsibility and autonomy. Upon graduating from elementary school, the academic achievements of each pupil must comply with the elementary school standard.

Many innovative, creative methods and techniques of teaching were used in Sukhomlynsky's own practical work as a teacher. His innovative achievements are the School of Joy, the lessons of thinking in nature, conversations on human studies, psychological and pedagogical workshops, Mother's Day, composing fairy tales and stories for children's reading, etc. Methodological techniques, which develop children's curiosity, mind, cause joy from knowledge, are relevant for teachers as well ("questions – knots of knowledge", "to read the book of nature", "to think about your

thoughts, about the incomprehensible”, “the mind of the child – at the tips of their fingers”, “fantastic period of mental education”, “travel to sources of thinking and language”, “two learning programs”, “educational dialogues”, “ethical value of teacher’s assessment”, etc.) (Sukhomlynska et al., 2012, p. 114). Project techniques should be mentioned separately, namely “three hundred tasks from the living problem-book of nature”, which allow pupils to learn to independently develop the content of their learning activities (Sukhomlynsky 1988, p. 249). Using them in their practical work, modern teachers achieve significant results, which increase the quality of elementary education and the pupils’ interest in the learning process.

Sukhomlynsky paid considerable attention to the correct use of the control and evaluation functions of the educational process. He urged the teachers not to manipulate their authorities during the control and evaluation procedures, use assessments carefully. A teacher must first notice pupils’ achievements, and not pay attention to the disadvantages of their study. The New Ukrainian School continues the development of Sukhomlynsky’s ideas concerning the purpose and function of evaluation. First of all, the assessment should be focused on the child; its task is to monitor the child’s development in education, the formation of their self-confidence, the emphasis on their strengths, and not mistakes. The assessment should ensure that pupils develop a positive self-esteem, especially for those children with learning disabilities. To this end, a new form of assessment – a verbal forming evaluation – is widely introduced in the early stages of elementary school education. The result of the school work should be the motivation for which the pupil shows a desire to learn independently and assess their achievements, set goals and choose ways to achieve them. This all will contribute to the development of a new position of the pupil – the subject of educational activities.

All things considered, an appeal to Sukhomlynsky’s pedagogical heritage from the standpoint of modern tasks of the New Ukrainian School showed that his ideas did not lose their significance and relevance in the conditions of reloading the content of modern pedagogical science with orientation to the demands of time. The Pavlysh School headed by Sukhomlynsky may be a conceptual model of the 21st century school, which will be based on the ideas of the inherent value of childhood, the creation of a learning environment for the development and self-fulfillment of the personality, recognition of the special features and demands of childhood, which is confirmed by the experience of the modern schools.

Summarizing all above-mentioned information, it is worth noting that Sukhomlynsky’s pedagogical heritage is theoretically and practically significant for the development of modern pedagogical science. Creative mastering of scientific efforts and practical experience of the outstanding educator is a valuable prerequisite and a scientific basis for the New Ukrainian School development. Without the study and creative implementation of his pedagogical heritage, it is impossible to reform the national education system, which relies on new requirements and world trends, traditions, achievements and experience, which Ukrainian pedagogy and elementary school system possess.

REFERENCES

- Sukhomlynska O. et al. (eds.). (2012), *Vasyl Sukhomlynsky in Reflections of Contemporary Ukrainian Educators*. Luhansk: Journal of LNU.
- Sukhomlynsky V. (1977), *The Pavlysh Secondary School*. Kyiv: Radoshk.
- Sukhomlynsky V. (1988), *One Hundred Pieces of Advice to Teachers*. Kyiv: Soviet School.
- Sukhomlynsky V. (2018), *My Heart I Give to Children*. Kharkiv: Akta.
- The New Ukrainian School: Conceptual Principles for Secondary School Reforming: Adopted by the decision of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine Collegium on 20.10.2016*, <http://mon.gov.ua/activity/education/zagalna-serednya/ua-sch-2016/konczepczyia.html> (access: 21.09.2019).

STRESZCZENIE

W artykule podjęto próbę przeprowadzenia analizy podstawowych postanowień Wasyla Suchomlińskiego w odniesieniu do celu, treści, specyficznych aspektów i organizacji podstawowego kształcenia w szkole pawłyńskiej i porównania ich ze zmianami zachodzącymi we współczesnej ukraińskiej szkole podstawowej. Dla reform edukacyjnych znaczący jest rozwój potencjału twórczego nauczyciela i ucznia, stosowanie innowacyjnych technik i technologii, tworzenie środowiska edukacyjnego i form rozwoju wprowadzonych przez Suchomlińskiego i stanowiących podstawę koncepcji nowej ukraińskiej szkoły. Przede wszystkim przeanalizowano wpływ wiodącej idei Suchomlińskiego – humanistycznej pedagogiki – na kształtowanie się partnerstwa pedagogicznego i pedagogiki zorientowanej na dziecko w rozwoju nowej szkoły ukraińskiej. Przeprowadzono analizę porównawczą celu, ogólnych podejść do organizacji nauczania opracowanych i wdrożonych przez Suchomlińskiego w pawłyńskiej szkole i nowej szkole ukraińskiej oraz pokazano ich dalszy rozwój we współczesnych ideach szkoły podstawowej. Autor dowodzi również, że idee Suchomlińskiego znacznie wyprzedziły swój czas, a reforma ukraińskiej szkoły odbywa się w oparciu o najlepsze tradycje pedagogiki krajowej i edukacji.

Słowa kluczowe: perspektywa idei pedagogicznych; humanizm; pedagogika zorientowana na dziecko; podejście kompetencyjne; środowisko edukacyjne; integracja treści edukacyjnych; innowacyjne metody nauczania