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DEVELOPMENT AND ANALYSIS OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN'S CREATIVITY THROUGH NON-TRADITIONAL VISUAL ARTS TECHNIQUES

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ABSTRACT: This article examines the development and pedagogical analysis of preschool children's creative potential through non-traditional visual arts techniques (such as finger painting, blotography, scratch art, and sand therapy). The study systematically analyzes the criteria for evaluating preschoolers' artistic and creative capabilities, exploring how moving away from rigid templates enhances spatial reasoning, flexibility, and originality of thought. Furthermore, the paper establishes a methodological framework for educators to monitor the dynamic growth of children's creativity, ensuring alignment with contemporary preschool educational standards. The expected insights provide practical recommendations for fostering an unrestricted, innovative learning environment in modern preschool institutions.

Keywords: *preschool children, non-traditional visual arts, creativity development, pedagogical analysis, artistic imagination, educational monitoring, creative flexibility, innovative techniques.*

In modern pedagogy, the primary objective of the educational process is not merely the transmission of ready-made knowledge, but the cultivation of an independent, non-standard, and creative personality. In today’s rapidly changing, information-driven society, creative thinking (creativity) has emerged as one of the most critical core competencies determining an individual's future social and professional success. Psychological and pedagogical research consistently demonstrates that the foundations of creativity are laid precisely during the preschool years—a stage characterized by the intensive development of personality, cognitive capacity, and sensory perception.

Visual arts activities (drawing, modeling, application, and crafting) serve as the most effective vehicle for unlocking the creative world of preschool children and bringing their inner emotions and imaginations to light. Children whose language proficiency is still developing express their understanding of the world, their dreams,

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and their anxieties primarily through visual images. However, in traditional educational practices, the evaluation of children's art often focuses narrow-mindedly on technical skills, such as drawing precise lines, selecting "correct" colors, or copying a teacher's sample. This rigid approach suppresses the child's creative potential and independent ideas. Therefore, incorporating non-traditional visual arts techniques and establishing a proper pedagogical framework to analyze the resulting creativity is a highly relevant issue in modern early childhood education.

The role of children's creativity and art in personality development has long been a focal point for global and domestic scholars. Prominent researchers such as L.S. Vygotsky, N.A. Vetlugina, and T.S. Komarova investigated the psychological and pedagogical laws governing children's artistic endeavors. Vygotsky's foundational theory on imagination and creativity in childhood posits that creative expression is directly tied to the richness of a child's sensory experience. Nationally, Uzbek scholars and preschool specialists have extensively researched the integration of aesthetic education with national values and arts. However, under the current demands of modern education—specifically the integration of STEAM approaches and digital didactics—the methodology of analyzing and monitoring children's creativity through non-traditional artistic mediums requires fresh, innovative frameworks.

The primary purpose of this article is to develop a structured methodology for assessing and analyzing the creativity of preschool children through non-traditional visual arts techniques, providing actionable recommendations for educators. To achieve this, the study outlines objectives to identify creativity indicators across age groups, evaluate the transition from templated drawing to free expression, and dismantle pedagogical constraints that hinder imaginative freedom.

The methodological foundation of this research relies on a comprehensive matrix of qualitative and quantitative pedagogical methods. To align the study with legal and regulatory standards, a comparative analysis of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education" and the state curriculum "Ilk Qadam" (First Step) was conducted. The practical-experimental phase involves structured pedagogical observation, diagnostic interviews, and the assessment of children's artistic products utilizing adapted versions of E.P. Torrance's tests of creative thinking. The analysis focuses on metrics such as originality, elaboration, and spatial freedom, processed through mathematical-statistical methods to ensure objective tracking of creative development.

The implementation of non-traditional visual arts techniques in early childhood education represents a significant paradigm shift from traditional, reproductive teaching methods to productive, child-centered pedagogy. In conventional preschool

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classrooms, art lessons frequently rely on imitation, where children copy a pre-drawn model provided by the educator. While this method may develop basic fine motor skills and the ability to follow instructions, it significantly constrains cognitive flexibility and original thought. Non-traditional art techniques, such as finger painting, plasticineography, scratch art (grattage), blotography, and mono-printing, eliminate the fear of making mistakes because they do not have a rigid "correct" or "incorrect" outcome. By removing these boundaries, children are encouraged to focus on the process of creation rather than merely the final product, which is the foundational core of creative thinking.

To analyze the development of creativity through these innovative mediums, it is essential to establish a robust pedagogical framework that evaluates both qualitative and quantitative shifts in children's artistic behaviors. The experimental research design, structured to be conducted within preschool educational organizations, targets children in the older and preparatory groups (ages 5 to 6). This specific age period is chosen because, according to developmental psychology, children at this stage undergo a transition from purely random scribbling to intentional, symbolic representations of their inner world. The research methodology categorizes the analysis into three interlinked dimensions: cognitive-imaginative, technical-operational, and emotional-behavioral.

The cognitive-imaginative dimension focuses on the fluency, flexibility, and originality of ideas, drawing heavily upon the theoretical principles established by E.P. Torrance. Originality is measured by the child’s ability to generate unexpected, unique visual solutions that deviate from common classroom stereotypes. For instance, when traditional drawing tools are replaced with unconventional materials like blowing liquid paint through a straw (blotography), the unpredictable shapes formed on the paper force the child to use associative thinking. A random ink blot is transformed into the branches of a winter tree, a mythical creature, or a distant galaxy. This process directly stimulates the cerebral cortex, forcing the child to continuously adapt and reinterpret visual stimuli, which enhances cognitive flexibility.

The technical-operational dimension assesses how effectively children manipulate diverse materials and utilize the spatial boundaries of the canvas. In traditional drawing, a child often feels restricted by the precision required by pencils or thin brushes, which can lead to frustration if their physical motor control does not match their mental image. Non-traditional techniques democratize the artistic process. Using palms, sponges, cotton swabs, or crumpled paper allows children with varying levels of fine motor development to achieve expressive textures and vibrant color layers. Pedagogical monitoring tracks the spatial freedom coefficient, evaluating

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whether the child confines their work to a small corner of the page—a sign of hesitation or anxiety—or dynamically utilizes the entire surface to build a multi-layered composition. The integration of natural and waste materials, such as dried leaves, seeds, textiles, and shells, introduces tactile diversity, bridging the gap between tactile perception and abstract spatial reasoning.

The emotional-behavioral dimension analyzes the child's psychological state, engagement level, and autonomy during the creative process. Traditional, template-based lessons often result in low engagement and premature fatigue, as children try to meet external expectations. Conversely, non-traditional art acts as a form of art therapy. It reduces anxiety, builds self-confidence, and fosters a sense of agency. When a child realizes they can create a vivid sunset simply by dragging a plastic fork through layers of wet paint, their intrinsic motivation increases. Educators observe behavioral indicators such as task persistence, spontaneous verbalization of the narrative behind the artwork, and the degree of independence from adult intervention.

The systematic integration of these techniques directly fulfills the structural requirements outlined in the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education" and the state curriculum "Ilk Qadam." These regulatory documents mandate that early childhood education must prioritize the holistic development of the child, moving away from academic drill toward experiential learning. Non-traditional art serves as a practical bridge to the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) approach. For example, when children experiment with hydrophobic materials, such as drawing with wax crayons and then washing the paper with liquid watercolors, they are simultaneously engaging in an artistic endeavor and observing a basic scientific phenomenon involving chemical resistance.

The data gathered during the initial baseline observations often reveals a high percentage of "pedagogical stereotyping" among children accustomed to traditional methods. When asked to draw a landscape, a significant majority of children reproduce identical houses with a triangular roof, a smiling sun in the top right corner, and a single stylized tree. This uniformity indicates that the standard pedagogical approach treats art as a copy-paste exercise. The introduction of a specialized curriculum focused on non-traditional techniques is designed to break these rigid cognitive structures.

By analyzing the artwork produced during the implementation phase, educators can map a clear trajectory of creative growth. Quantitatively, this is reflected in the detallashtirish (elaboration) index. As children become more comfortable with unconventional tools, the number of secondary and tertiary elements in their compositions increases. Instead of a single flat object, they begin to construct environments, adding intricate patterns, varied textures, and nuanced color gradients.

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Qualitatively, there is a noticeable shift in how children talk about their work. The artwork ceases to be just a picture; it becomes a story, an externalized manifestation of their cognitive processing and emotional intelligence.

Furthermore, analyzing creativity through this lens requires a shift in the role of the educator. The teacher must transition from an authoritarian director who dictates every step to a facilitator who provides materials, establishes a safe psychological environment, and observes without imposing judgment. Correcting a child for painting a tree blue or a sky yellow actively damages their creative confidence. Non-traditional techniques naturally discourage adult interference because the processes are inherently fluid and unpredictable.

In conclusion, the strategic use of non-traditional visual arts techniques in preschool education is a vital mechanism for unlocking child creativity. It aligns historical psychological theories of imagination with contemporary educational standards, proving that when children are freed from structural constraints, their capacity for innovative thought expands exponentially. The pedagogical analysis of these activities provides invaluable insights into the child's overall cognitive, motor, and emotional development, offering a comprehensive diagnostic tool for modern educators aiming to nurture the innovators of tomorrow.

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