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## AXIOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF PRESCHOOL TEACHER TRAINING IN UKRAINE

**Abstract:** The axiological guidelines for the training of preschool education specialists are determined by modern requirements for preschool education, first and foremost, by the consolidation of separate values around the ideal – the concept of a preschool child. Being perceived and appropriated by a preschool teacher, they form professional value orientations and serve as an indicator of professional orientation, personal and professional development. It is the value orientations that determine the attitude of a person to the world, himself, his profession.

Professional pedagogical education aims at formation of the future teacher's value orientation. Its content is determined by pedagogical values of European higher education (quality, mobility, appeal, democracy, human-centeredness, tolerance, peacefulness, environmental security, human rights, solidarity, identity, multiculturalism, professionalism, civic consciousness) and humanistic values of the profession itself (spirituality, morality, love, respect, patience, freedom, compassion, justice, knowledge, competence, personal orientation, child-centeredness, etc.).

It is important to turn the improvement of professional teacher training into an interdisciplinary quest pursued at the philosophical, sociological, psychological, pedagogical, physiological, medical, methodological and other levels. Since the child is the core of pedagogical profession, the content of pedagogical education should include not only knowledge about the child, but also instructions on how to apply it. Of great significance are practical training, the use of person-oriented technologies, exposure of students to the environment, where the approaches, ideas, principles, methods and technologies underlying professional activities of future teachers are implemented.

**Keywords:** pedagogical axiology, axiocentrism, pedagogical values, professional value orientations, pedagogical specialists' training content, humanistic values of education

Pedagogical axiology, a branch of knowledge that determines the values of pedagogy, is actively developing. Values as the main factor in the educational process

provide daily guidance in the subjective and social reality and are reference points for setting life goals. These are higher living principles, ideals, norms, standards, behavior regulators followed by an individual and society.

The axiological content of education is a constant, recognized and coordinated dominant, a social ideology capable of transforming. The axiological aspect of education is considered in three interrelated dimensions: national values (education depends on the educational policy of a nation), social values (moral, intellectual, economic and cultural potential is the foundation of civil society), and personal values. Development of the axiological paradigm of education will determine the strategy and prospects for the development of the pedagogical system, reveal the potential and meaningful content of Ukrainian education.

In virtually all countries, educational reforms start at preschool. The upbringing of children is a complex and time-consuming process that requires deep knowledge, specific skills and abilities, their practical application. In none of the professions is the person's character, values and beliefs, personal qualities, world outlook as important as in the profession of a teacher. Therefore, the strategy of professional activities of preschool specialists is currently determined by axiocentrism, which focuses the process of education on values. The teacher's task is to introduce a pupil to the world of culture through the knowledge and acceptance of culture-bound values. Therefore, in the world of values the child is their discoverer and the teacher is his guide (Nevmerzhytska 2013, p. 404). The teacher is a mediator between the world of values, the world of culture and children. Assimilation of values is not an easy task and the educational authority greatly facilitates it. The teacher's beliefs and priorities influence not only the well-being of a learner but the functioning of the educational system as a whole.

It is the responsibility of pedagogical education to form and develop future teachers' value orientations and further prompt it through axiological guidelines for preschool teacher training.

## AXIOLOGICAL APPROACH TO PRESCHOOL TEACHER TRAINING

It is widely believed that values are the focus of human needs and interests, present in any sphere of human life and activities. Therefore, two groups of values are usually distinguished: material (tools and means of labor, things of direct consumption); spiritual (ideas, theories, thoughts which can be political, legal, moral, aesthetic, philosophical, religious, etc.). Sometimes values are divided into "lower" and "higher", hence their hierarchy. According to the principle of hierarchy, values are divided into individual (personal), social, professional, national, and universal.

Material and biological values are no less important for a person than spiritual, intellectual, moral, or aesthetic ones. In general, there is no single approach to the classification of values. The most general criteria for their division are: spheres of public life, bearers of values, hierarchy of values (Potsiurko 2014, pp. 212–213).

O. Nevmerzhytska points out that the category of “value” is interdisciplinary (i.e. used by representatives of various sciences: philosophy, psychology, sociology, pedagogy), since it deals with certain ideal phenomena that underlie subjective human experiences. So, everyone understands and interprets them in his own way (Nevmerzhytska 2013, p. 10).

A value is an ideal borne by consciousness, the origin of all norms. Ideals embody expectations and hopes for tomorrow and oppose reality. Their nature is rather controversial: they are normative, i.e. obliging and a criterion for evaluation, however, the obtained result can differ from the predicted ideal. But in general, a value as a purpose is of ideal nature. Contributing to the formation of an ideal order, values are practically embodied in the real behavior of people at the professional, social, educational, family, personal, and other levels. People seek to achieve them for their own sake, not for the sake of pleasure or material gain. Each generation develops and uses pre-accumulated experience while creating new ones. Thus, facts are enriched with the ideal content, meaning, significance, turning them into a cultural phenomenon. In culture, there are three types of values: values-ideals; values-properties of things discovered as a result of interaction with values-ideals; values-things that have value properties (Potsiurko 2014).

Education is called forth to ensure cultural continuity of generations and readiness of a person to perform social and professional roles. With its help an individual is to acquire a systematic set of cultural values that are in line with his interests and social expectations (the needs of society which depend on the mode of production, social progress, harmonization of relations in the system “man–society–nature–technosphere”, the level of development of pedagogical theory and practice, etc.). Education should continue until a learner assimilates the culture, achieves a certain ideal by being aware of who he is, and who he can and should be. An important issue here is the selection of values to underpin the content and methods of education. The more profound the process of value acquisition, the more appropriately the education introduces a person into other worlds: the worlds of knowledge, activity, sensations, human (Kaliuzhna 2012, p. 51).

In the context of our research, the result of professional pedagogical education (provided in Ukraine by pedagogical universities) is a system of the teacher’s values – the inner world, the foundation on which all other components of the system rest. Values recognized and mastered by a pedagogical specialist should become “integral components of his needs, emotions and senses as well as subjective-personal

pedagogical activities”, which will eventually have a positive influence on the formation and development of professionalism and pedagogical skills (Kremen 2010).

The justification of the modern teacher’s system of values is based on a personality approach in pedagogy, which asserts that personality is the goal, subject, core, result, and the main criterion of the optimal pedagogical process. In other words, a person is in the center of the pedagogical system, and the typology of value orientations should reflect a special attitude to spiritual values as an internal potential in combination with social, cultural, professional and personal values (Kaliuzhna 2012, pp. 19–20). The values enable the teacher to meet his own needs while also serving as guidelines for social and professional activities aimed at achieving humanistic goals; they reconcile objective and subjective, material and ideal, personal and social, social and biological planes.

H. Pecherska highlights the relation between the concepts of “pedagogical values” and “professional value orientations” of the teacher, attributing them to general (social) and individual (personal) aspects. A value is an objective category while a value orientation is subjective. Thus, the formation of the teacher’s value orientations occurs in the interaction of “two polarities in a single field – the person and the profession that promote each other’s development” (Pecherska 2013, p. 253).

According to the scholar, pedagogical values are defined as the values of education, its goals, principles, norms regulating pedagogical activities and serving as a link between the social outlook pertaining to education and pedagogical activities, whereas professional value orientations encompass professional aspirations and attitude to pedagogical activities. These are interiorized (adopted) specific professionally significant values recognized as inherent. Professional value orientations help the teacher determine the purpose and means of professional activities, regulate his behavior, express personal objectives and intentions (a subjective attitude to the profession), provide for the emotional and psychological confidence in the chosen direction being accurate and correct, readiness or unwillingness to follow it.

The professional value orientations consist of social settings and personal centerings, which determine the direction of teaching activities:

- 1) comfortable centering – the teacher focuses on the assessment of his own activities;
- 2) self-centering – focusing on personal interests;
- 3) altruistic centering – the focus is on the learners’ interests;
- 4) bureaucratic – centering on the interests and requirements of the administration;
- 5) centering on parents’ interests;
- 6) cognitive, methodical centering – a focus on the content and ways of conducting personal activities;

- 7) humanistic centering of personal and professional value, aimed at own interests and the nature of people, which implies a harmonious combination of these centering (Fedorova 2015).

Thus, the essence of pedagogical axiology is characterized by the specifics of pedagogical activities, their social role and the possibility of creating the personal ideal. The axiological guidelines for the training of preschool education specialists are determined by modern requirements for preschool education, first and foremost, by the consolidation of separate values (dominant axiological ideas, norms, principles) around the ideal – the concept of a preschool child. Being perceived and appropriated by a preschool teacher (embedded in the structure of his personal values, becoming an internal standard of his professional behavior), they form professional value orientations and serve as an indicator of professional orientation, personal and professional development. The axiological level of personality development of a preschool teacher is determined by the rank of pedagogical values (characteristic of a particular society), transformed into individual professional value orientations (settings, convictions, interests, aspirations, desires, intentions). It is the value orientations that determine the attitude of a person to the world, himself, his profession.

#### PROFESSIONAL VALUE ORIENTATIONS OF A MODERN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION SPECIALIST

It should be noted that pedagogical values of contemporary Ukrainian society are determined by the values of European education: quality, justice, correspondence, mobility, appeal, democracy, human needs, rights and freedoms, etc. They are regulators of the behavior of all mankind, important criteria, incentives and tools for finding ways of understanding and harmony among people.

Not the similarity but differences in people are of prime interest to pedagogues which aims at understanding all the nuances of human nature and the chaotic movement of the world toward a certain unity (“learning how to put up with each other”). This means that the value of a person does not depend on his abilities and achievements; every person is capable of feeling and thinking; has the right to communicate and to be heard; all people need one another, long for support and friendship; true education can only be implemented through real relationships. Diversity which goes hand in hand with integrity (the unity of spiritual and physical nature) reinforces all aspects of life.

The “Pedagogical Constitution of Europe” establishes the principles of a coordinated trans-university policy, regulates the mechanism of training teaching staff.

Its leading values are human centeredness, tolerance, peacefulness, environmental safety, respect for human rights, solidarity (Andrushchenko 2014).

The above-mentioned platform of values facilitates the preparation of new teachers capable of implementing tasks of teaching and upbringing an individual and facing existing challenges. The main features of teacher training are fundamentality, versatility, humanitarian and research orientation. In Ukraine, this system covers continuous training of students (Bachelor's and Master's degrees), academic and teaching staff (PhD, doctors of sciences), as well as retraining of pedagogical specialists and improving their qualifications. The main competences to be mastered by the teacher of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are research, informational, linguistic, adaptive, communicative and life-long learning.

The teaching community proposes various interpretations of the pan-European pedagogical model. Its key elements are: identity (awareness of national roots and belonging to the pan-European community of people); knowledge (awareness of the peculiarities of other countries' educational systems); multiculturalism (awareness of the multicultural nature of Europeans, respect for national culture and openness to other cultures); language competence (possession of more than one European language at the appropriate level); professionalism (education that allows you to teach in any European country); civic consciousness (focusing on such values as respect for human rights, democracy, freedom); quality (an ability to compare the systems of pedagogical education in neighboring countries through intercultural exchanges) (Andrushchenko 2014, pp. 8–9).

Apparently, the functioning and content of pedagogical education are influenced by globalization and the values of European higher education. The teacher should not only have modern views, but be ready to feel and implement the actual requirements, be able to observe traditions while directing his attention to the future.

Another important precondition is the teacher's professional culture that implies perception of the teaching profession as a vital value which integrates "interpersonal service" and "public service". It is a question of professional value orientations transformed by a future preschool teacher while studying at university. One of them was discussed in the previous section which emphasized the importance of humanistic orientations whose axiological dimensions are: life as a core value, love, respect for human dignity, faith, patience, truth, freedom, friendship, compassion, justice, harmony of truth, beauty and kindness, etc. Thus, the following humanistic values lie at the basis of pedagogical specialists' professional value orientations:

- universal: man, child, teacher, creative personality;
- spiritual: pedagogical experience of a person, pedagogical theories, methods of pedagogical thinking, etc.;

- practical: pedagogical technologies, educational systems, methods of activities, etc.;
- personal: pedagogical abilities, individual qualities of the teacher, ideals, etc. (Kaliuzhna 2012, p. 50).

Axiological preconditions for modern educational activities can also be divided into political (patriotism and public service), existential (the value and meaning of human life, human dignity, freedom), aesthetic (harmony, beauty in its diverse manifestations, elation, harmony, etc.).

V. Slastyonin distinguishes the following types of professional pedagogical values: values which contribute to the teacher's recognition in society; values which influence the development of communicative culture; values which lead to self-improvement; values of self-expression; values related to utilitarian pragmatic requests (Kaliuzhna 2012, p. 49). Thus, professional and educational values such as goals values, means values, relationship values, knowledge values, qualities values are the object of acquisition and development (Chepil 2016, p. 202).

We believe that the modern teacher must be oriented towards a profound and thorough study of a child's personality with its weaknesses, basic needs and spiritual demands. The teacher is an observer, a researcher who studies children's nature, notices the talents, influences the will, develops innate strength and intelligence, awakens the spiritual life, promotes self-affirmation of little humans.

A child is a higher value which stands in the center of the pedagogical process and is assisted by a preschool teacher on its way to becoming autonomous, independent and competent. This is the most active, independent and creative personality that possesses a unique and inexhaustible inner world. Therefore, the teacher must understand, love and serve the child. This is what makes this cooperation truly holistic, orderly, mutual and interdependent. Knowing the learner helps to determine the methods and techniques of work. Thus, it is important that the teacher is familiar with anthropometry, physiology, medicine, anatomy, culture studies, sociology, psychology, pedagogy, laws of development, is open to constant observation and study of children's desires and personal qualities.

However, it should be made clear that having only scientific knowledge about children is not sufficient for teachers' successful professional activities. The concept of an ideal teacher is marked by a significant number of qualitative indicators. The most important of them are: understanding the child's nature; morality as exemplary behavior for pupils; availability of educational methods, etc. Of axiological significance are humanistic values, the genetic connection between theory and practice.

Pedagogical activities can be compared to a careful touch, a filigree treatment of the pupil's personality, while a preschool institution resembles a special peda-

gological laboratory where the teacher perfects his ability to invent new techniques, methods, technologies of education. However, the profession of a teacher should give freedom of action and an understanding of personal and professional responsibility.

Freedom is a way of life that is inherent in love. Therefore, sheer existence of freedom is the highest manifestation of spirituality. The teacher's freedom is, above all, a self-imposed responsibility, adherence to spiritual laws which are enforced through teaching practice and create a favorable atmosphere for spiritual self-realization of a person (Kaliuzhna 2012, pp. 78–79).

The teacher's main value is his effective and life-asserting self-consciousness which helps to select appropriate activities and a suitable role for himself and others, to develop personal goals and use proper means for their achievement. The teacher should be ready for ultimate dedication, possess pedagogical intuition and an aptitude for professionally justified improvisation.

Another crucial element is the moral aspect of technology-driven education, its security and spiritual purity. The interaction between the teacher and the child should happen by mediation of person-oriented technologies, which are divided into: humanistic-personal (love, respect, help, support), cooperative (democracy, mutual understanding), free education (freedom of choice, independence), esoteric (learning leads to the truth, the pedagogical process encourages the search for the truth) (Chepil 2016, p. 101).

It is worth specifying professional value orientations of a preschool teacher: orientation towards the child's interests and needs (the study of the child's nature, respect for the child, acceptance and understanding of the child's personal development, the use of person-oriented technologies); the teacher's professional orientation (realizing public significance of the profession, orientation toward professional values, treating teaching as an efficient and effective activity); personal values (professional self-recognition, desire for professional development, self-knowledge, material well-being, etc.). These orientations allow the teacher to meet his physical, spiritual and social needs while channeling his social and professional activities into a humanistic direction. Being a role-model helps the teacher to unveil the values to his pupils.

So, professional value orientations of a modern preschool specialist are determined by pedagogical values of European higher education (quality, mobility, appeal, democracy, human-centeredness, tolerance, peacefulness, environmental security, human rights, solidarity, identity, multiculturalism, professionalism, civic consciousness) and humanistic values of the profession itself (spirituality, morality, love, respect, patience, freedom, compassion, justice, knowledge, competence, personal orientation, child-centeredness, practical, personal, political, aesthetic orientations, etc.).



## PROSPECTS OF FUTURE PRESCHOOL SPECIALISTS' TRAINING IMPROVEMENT

Training of preschool specialists as a multilateral, multifunctional and interdisciplinary process should be held in several ways: in three time aspects: past, present and future; in four planes: regional, national, European and global; in three areas: axiological, emotional and practical. Also, it should include formal training (in the system of pedagogical education), supplementary training (courses, trainings, conferences, retraining, advanced training) and informal training (self-study, books, the Internet, personal experience) throughout life.

Modern society demands that preschool specialists should develop sufficient general and professional culture, possess a sense of responsibility, an inclination for self-esteem and self-development, as well as exercise control over their relationships with other people. Incorporating such human values as kindness, beauty, justice, equality and dignity into a palette of professional values determines the content of pedagogical education. Such values make the life more meaningful, facilitate decision-making, promote harmony. The axiological aspect of the teacher's professional training implies the formation of specific pedagogical values pertaining to professional activities, whose subjective perception is crucial for students.

The axiological component of pedagogical activities should not be overlooked for it is the teacher's vocation to become an "axiological guide" for the child, and their interaction is a real axiological relationship. It is important for a preschool teacher to understand that common values unite people. He should become a bearer and advocate of universal values. Absorbing axiological knowledge about universal values, global, national and spiritual culture while studying culture-related subjects at pedagogical universities supports the following ideas: national values unite people, help them identify themselves, give rise to patriotism, educate a tolerant and multicultural personality, make a nation stronger.

It has been noted that personal values of a future specialist should focus on professional values as professional success and competitiveness are impossible to achieve without having formed professional competence. Therefore, improving teacher training content should become an interdisciplinary quest, pursued at the philosophical, sociological, psychological, educational and psycho-physiological levels (Kaliuzhna 2012, p. 73). In this respect, of great importance is a new approach to teaching subjects about the child – their differentiation and variability should depend on peculiarities of further activities involving education of preschool children. Since a child is the core of pedagogical profession, the content of pedagogical education should include not only mere knowledge about the child, but also its application.

Improvement of teacher training should engage the educational process in higher educational institutions, where not only the content but also technological components (use of design, gaming technologies, problem learning, innovations) have to be modified. After all, the values are learned by a student not only by way of speaking and instructing, but through activities that involve interpersonal interaction, positive emotions, freedom of choice and self-formation.

Basic information (knowledge) should be supplemented by practical experience (practical training). Pedagogical practice in a preschool institution involves extensive students' involvement in solving professional tasks related to children's education, playing, upbringing, observation as well as cooperation with experienced teachers. Actually, it is aimed at the development of initiative, communicative, organizational, diagnostic, projective, creative skills.

Students' learning activities are efficient on condition that the teacher and the learner interact in all possible ways in or out of class. In particular, the systematic use of pedagogical technologies for the analysis of specific educational situations, problem tasks whose solution is predetermined by human attitude, etc. help to develop the spiritual world of future teachers, strengthen the axiological attitude to learning and teaching work, promote the formation and development of general and professional culture as well as self-identification, help to outline the frames of their future professional activities. Thus, the student is able to try out each technology acting as both a teacher and a learner. The formed values are interiorized into personal qualities and subsequently manifest themselves in behavior and professional activities.

While being the object of individual acquisition, the technologies used in teacher training should give impetus to students' professional and personal development in the process of testing them. That is, solution of pedagogical tasks, case-studies (task-based and situation-based approaches), variability, individualization, differentiation, problem-making, freedom of choice, humanistic interaction of the participants in the educational process and reflectivity are crucial elements for filling the content of preschool teacher training. Assimilation of professional value orientations by a preschool teacher involves no forced external influence on him. On the contrary, it creates a favorable environment for self-development and self-improvement.

In the system of pedagogical education which rests on the concept of a value orientation, the future teacher's personal axiosphere should be formed through value-oriented activities. Furthermore, the values should be reproduced in specific elements of these activities and suggest answers to the most important questions of life.

This implies reformatting the training of pedagogical staff, axiologizing the contents of the whole system of education (preschool, general, higher) by creat-

ing, for instance, learning materials in compliance with the axiological approach, using pedagogical technologies based on humanistic values.

It is important to turn the improvement of professional teacher training into an interdisciplinary quest pursued at the philosophical, sociological, psychological, pedagogical, physiological, medical, methodological and other levels. Since the child is the core of pedagogical profession, the content of pedagogical education should include not only knowledge about the child, but also instructions on how to apply it. Of great significance are practical training, the use of person-oriented technologies, exposure of students to the environment, where the approaches, ideas, principles, methods and technologies underlying professional activities of future teachers are implemented.

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## AKSJOLOGICZNE WYMIARY KSZTAŁCENIA SPECJALISTÓW EDUKACJI PRZEDSZKOLNEJ NA UKRAINIE

**Abstrakt:** Aksjologiczne wzorce kształcenia specjalistów edukacji przedszkolnej są ustalane według współczesnych wymagań odnoszących się do edukacji przedszkolnej, zmierzającej

w kierunku ideału, tzn. obrazu dziecka-przedszkolaka. Kształtowanie orientacji specjalistycznej przyszłego pedagoga powinna realizować edukacja zawodowo-pedagogiczna. Na jej treść mają wpływ wytyczne europejskie oraz humanistyczne walory zawodu nauczycielskiego. Istotne jest, aby kształcenie i doskonalenie zawodowe pedagogów miało charakter interdyscyplinarny i by było realizowane nie tylko w oparciu o wiedzę psychologiczną i pedagogiczną, ale też filozoficzną, socjologiczną, medyczną. Ponieważ kwestia dotyczy wychowania dziecka, ważne jest aby treści edukacji pedagogicznej wzbogacić zarówno wiedzą o nim (dziecku), jak i wskazówkami pozwalającymi praktycznie z tej wiedzy korzystać. Duże znaczenie odgrywają tu szkolenia, rozeznanie środowiska i inne czynniki, na podstawie których przyszli specjaliści mogą budować swoją działalność zawodową.

**Słowa kluczowe:** aksjologia pedagogiczna, aksjocentryzm, walory pedagogiczne, orientacje zawodowe, treść kształcenia przyszłego pracownika, humanistyczne walory edukacji