

PLAYING WITH THE COLORS-PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN'S SELF-DIRECTED DRAWING EXPERIANCE

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Abstract. *At the pre-school age, playing is the main key to the child's way to express them selfs in drawing process. In order to ensure the self-directed drawing, there is a need for the availability of diverse naterials throughout of the day, enabling the child to act and play in accordance with his intentions. In a drawing process, trying out different techniques, tools, mixing colors, trying to discover new ways of expression, observing and imitating other (children's or adult) actions, provides the basic conditions for meaningful activity of a child. The aim of the thesis is to find out theoretically and practically the essence of self-directed drawing activity of preschool children and possibilities of the improvement of it in the pedagogical process.*

Materials and methods. *Used the analysis of pedagogical and psychological literature on the possibilities of self-management skills development in the pedagogical process - drawing and accomplished pegogical observation.*

Results. *The essence of self-directed drawing activity of preschool children was updated and possibilities of improvement reviewed .*

Keywords: *drawing activity, preschool, pre-school child, self-management.*

Introduction

Drawing is a one of the form in which child reflects his vision and peception of his world.

Trough drawing young children dosn't reflect specific visual effects, but they are intended to draw the set of personal knowlage about the world around.

The teacher is an observer and analyses the drawing process, evaluates the pre-school children's self-esteem. Taking in to account this companent, the organization of the pedagogical process acquires in a comletely different meaning-it becomes closer to the children, to the development of childrens abilities, skills, attitudes, habits and environment arrangements.

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Materials and methods

In this study, the first stage of self-management in pre-school pedagogy is identified. The study is based on the analysis of theories and the methods used in the first phase of the study - the results of the observation. In the study the observation was made in the preschool age group of the preschool educational institution. Twenty-four children are involved in the study.

Drawing is a natural expression of pre-school children, and the desire to draw appears as soon as a child has access to any of the drawing materials. Experimenting with different materials gives to the child positive emotions and feelings, promotes child's abilities and skills.

Drawing for a child is a play (Vigule, 1998) - a way of self-expression in which a child shows his emotions, perceptions of a world, his attitudes. Drawing, like a toy, occur in the child's subject matter. It's development is closely related to the development of the game and is directed towards the reflection of the environment (Miķelsone, 1994).

Looking at the history of pedagogy, it be concluded that in the 30s spoken about self-management as the principle of self-education in pre-school pedagogy-according to O. Svenne. Drawing at the pre-school should preferably be based on the principle of free self-interest process (Svenne, 1930), because in order for a child to express what he feels, what he likes, what he dreams of- free drawings and other free expressions plays an important role (Dauge, 1928). In the process of self-activity, the personality gets to know the world around him, improves him self, builds his own view of the world (Гецен, 1995) and reflects it in his actions, behavior, drawing.

Pre-school children are happy to draw, play with drawing materials and colors-expressing their emotions and feelings of the moment in time. Free drawing or creative imagination activates the children, because they have the maximum opportunities to express themselves, it's an opportunity to visualize their individual intent without limitations. Children, when drawing and playing with colors, becomes internally and externally active, as new situations, new object structures are imagined (Hibnere & Grasmann, 2000).

Children's potential is unlimited, curiosity and every moment is open to opportunities. Children's every day life, is filled with adventures and the world is widely open (Olmsted, 2012, 15). Therefore, most pre-school children do not need a specific motive for their actions (Špona, 2006), because they are free to work with art-drawing materials (Bartel, 1998) or are inspired by a sudden - an

unexpected event or a surprise, something special has been seen or heard. It is related to the learning process in preschool, if we remember that the learning process is organized as a play.

The process of acquiring skills is a purposefully organized activity for the acquisition of the individual's own experience, on the basis of which abilities and attitudes are developed individually. It can be independent. However, acquiring advanced experience requires that this process be saturated to achieve the desired result in the shortest possible time, thus creating a learning need, while the merger of two activities creates a new reality - learning. The process of acquiring skills or learning for a child is a purposeful and relatively persistent, sociocultural, specially enriched and authentically oriented process of action, enrichment of experience, development of personal qualities - relatively durable qualitative changes of individual qualities that create potential and actual basis for his individual culture (Žogla, 2001). Therefore, the task of the teacher would be to: summon, maintain interest, curiosity about the material and methods of action with it, guide research activities, keep the child happy about the achievements, stimulate the vision of the "discovery" of the vision. The child has an inner need to show and experience. The result, not just the activity itself, becomes important for the child (Новикова, 2010).

The manifestations of self-directed activities of children are revealed in the process of drawing and one of the pronounced signs is the free use of colors (see Table 1).

Table 1 Development of dyeing (Duffy, 2006)

Age	Activity
3-4 years	Are interested in mixing and creating their own colors Take pleasure in exploring accessories and colors Colors are used to create separate and overlapping color areas Is able to distinguish and harmonize color nuances
4-5 years	Differentiates secondary colors Able to mix colors, know's that adding white can make the color brighter, while adding black can make it darker Use color to create appropriate shapes and types of representations Shows intentions and feelings by commenting on the drawing Start's using realistic colors to visualize as it is in real life
5-6 years	Includes small details in paintings Are able to mix a wide spectrum of colors Colors the small areas accurately Precisely puts colors together Reveals, concludes, pronounces during the drawing-coloring process

The use of colors for children greatly increases the information they provide in their imagery. Colors allow us to expand light and color. Color captivates and influences us all, and it is reflected in the language we use. When we talk about envy, we imagine it green, we feel blue or look red. Early encounter with paints basically focuses on the properties of the textile, how to handle them. This awareness is very important, and it is crucial, as in this period the children become aware of things around them. Once they acquire these skills, children use colors for their own purposes. Later, children discover the ability of colors to cover certain surfaces, overlap, mix and form layers. With the development of technical skills, children are able to create color spaces by arranging each other to create a compilation effect. The ability to paint and draw develops in parallel. Interest in mixing colors is at an early age, and children need to be able to develop these abilities. With this improvement in ability, children should be given the opportunity to choose colors according to their wishes and vision (Duffy, 2006). In a process where children play with colors, the child not only experiences the emotional experience, but also creates new visual images. Those plays are a creative, motivated activity that develops imagination, thinking (Маханева & Рещикова, 2008). This means that in such a free, creative process, purposeful, self-directed drawing takes place, as a result of which the child promotes his / her own development, creating the growth of self-experience.

Playing with colors brings positive emotions for children and are important life activities. Joy is the foundation of children's play activity. It is believed that the joy of a child arises when he has the opportunity to test his abilities (Dzintere & Stangaine, 2007), so to speak out. Self-expression in visual art is based on the child's free choice - a self-controlled process, and it is related to the positive emotion of the child - the cause of.

In action - in the process of visual art, a person develops both physically and psychically and as well as socially. If the child is constructively supported by the teacher, learning, for example, by actively working with colors, improves his/her abilities, ambitions.

Children learn different skills according to a certain sequence of actions (see Figure 1), under which the child reaches the goal - something new learning. When a child has caught up with the learning process, he/she will start the process from the beginning through new tests (Bjūzens, 2008)

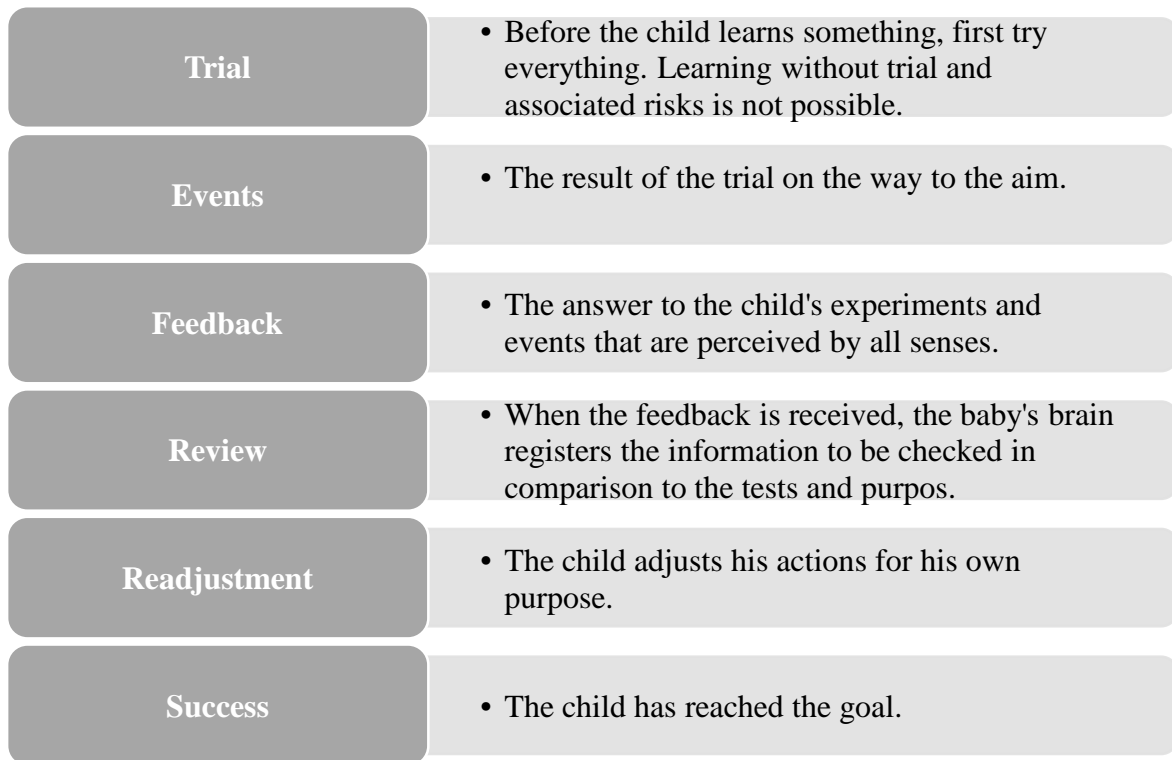


Figure 1 Childs self-controlled activity

It is important to note in the pre-school that there are certain directions for the self-management process:

- a) awareness and assessment of their abilities - they include both skills, knowledge and motivation to develop them. Motivation is largely determined by public attitudes towards the individual. The child will always be interested in finding out for themselves and developing if they feel public support. If the ability develops successfully, the child feels more fluent about himself, preferring to take on new tasks;
- b) targeting and Planning - The path to each goal begins with the definition of specific actions. The child should be aware of the length of time and resources needed to reach each step. Planning should also include risk factors that could interfere with the steps;
- c) monitoring the process of learning and correcting the activity - By monitoring one's own learning process, the child develops thinking or metacognition skills. The child is motivated to evaluate his / her work, analyze the expected results and the result achieved;
- d) Reflection on one's own abilities - a look at what has been done in response to the question of how the tasks have been accomplished. Understanding their own achievement, the child builds his or her self-

confidence, learns to draw conclusions and use them to set further goals (Purēns, 2017).

In the process of children's visual art, which is a self-directed process of the child, in play with colors, the adult in the drawing activity is a carer and observer. The child's self-direction by various factors develops thinking skills, self-control, and progress towards the next goal. Planning in interaction with correction and reflection is self-management process.

When creating the environment and the pedagogical process in pre-school, it is very important to take into account not only the direction of each child's learning, the abilities, but also the directions of self-management in order to develop and promote successful acquisition of skills and abilities in the particular moment of development of the child.

It should be remembered that the differences in the learning of each child arise in the process of acquiring learning experiences, provided that appropriate conditions are created in which children have the opportunity to test different learning strategies and techniques (Maslo, 2003, 63). The process of acquiring the skills and abilities of the child is closely related to the specific needs of the child, the diversity of the experience and the peculiarities of the circumstances. The child is still learning to lead his/her learning process (Steinberga, 2013).

The term "self-directed learning" in pedagogical and psychological literature is also found in "self-regulated learning", "self-organized learning", "learning by doing", which means that the individual manages his/her own learning process by setting goals, controlling the performance of activities, self-analysis. G. Dohmens points out that self-management in the very process of teaching is related to the central purpose of pedagogy - to promote the fullness of the human spirit. So, a child who directs his own learning process strengthens his inner world, experiences, enriches it (Dohmen, 1998).

In any activity in which the child is guiding his or her activities, he / she insists that self-directed learning is:

- 1) ability to take more responsibility for own activity;
- 2) volunteering and cooperation;
- 3) in-depth research (self, goods and surrounding research);
- 4) a conversation with yourself;
- 5) development of critical thinking.

Self-directed learning skills should be mastered in the same way as any other skill, so it is worthwhile to train these learning skills in action by constantly repeating and changing different goal achievement strategies (Rothwell, 1999).

In the self-led process, the child is capable of operating and using thinking, emotional processes and behavioral regulation tools to systematically orient themselves and achieve personal goals. The purpose of such learning at self-directed learning is: the child is conscious of the individual, his or her desires,

abilities, needs and interests; are able to control their emotions and thoughts as well as their behavior. As a result of self-directed learning, the child can independently set goals, take responsible decisions, become aware of the most effective learning techniques, plan the process and take responsibility. The structure of self-directed learning of children reveals the structuring of the child's activity (see Figure 2). The child should be able to plan and monitor his / her activities, as well as evaluate the success of the selected problem solving strategies (VISC, 2018).

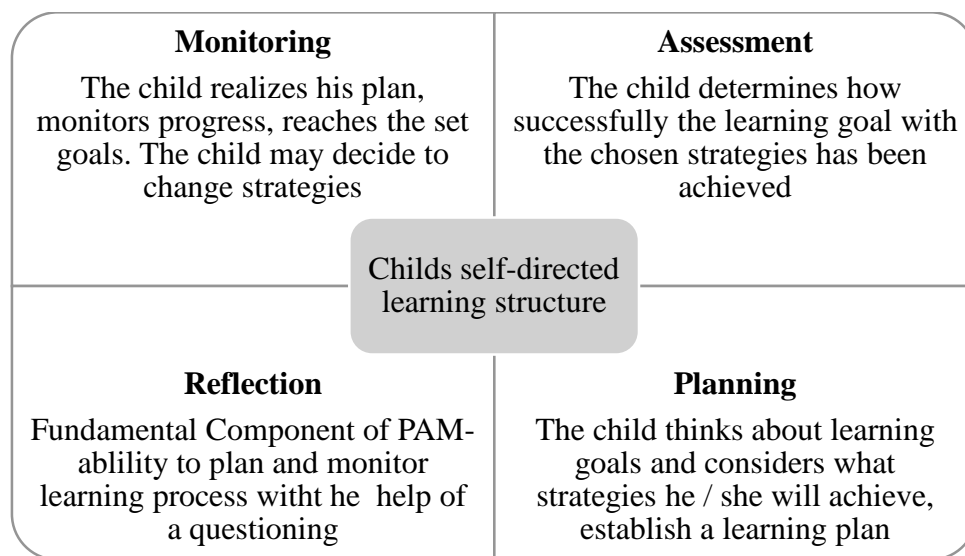


Figure 2 Childs self-directed learning structure

Self-regulated, self-directed learning consists of the independent creation and self-control of one's own thoughts, feelings and behaviors in order to achieve a self-directed goal. If self-regulation skills are acquired in pre-school, then it is much easier for the child to set goals, to identify his / her emotions and to be able to regulate them, to control the approaching of the result to be achieved, as well as to assess possible obstacles when making adjustments (Krastiņa & Pipere, 2004). Thus, it can be concluded that if a child is offered to manage his own visual art process - to arrange a table for work, to find all the necessary accessories, to choose the content of the drawing, how the content is displayed and to make a decision that the work is ready, as well as to arrange his own work place after completing the work, he also learns to plan and lead other important life activities in parallel.

Such self-directed learning enables the child to cope with the demands of lifelong learning because learning independently or self-directed is better and more positive than being taught. It follows that the child structures and differentiates different forms of independent learning, being able to choose the type of activity, time, space; controlling your learning process (feeling

responsible); learns to coordinate learning with other activities and is able to define one's own learning as an independent activity (Kraft, 1999).

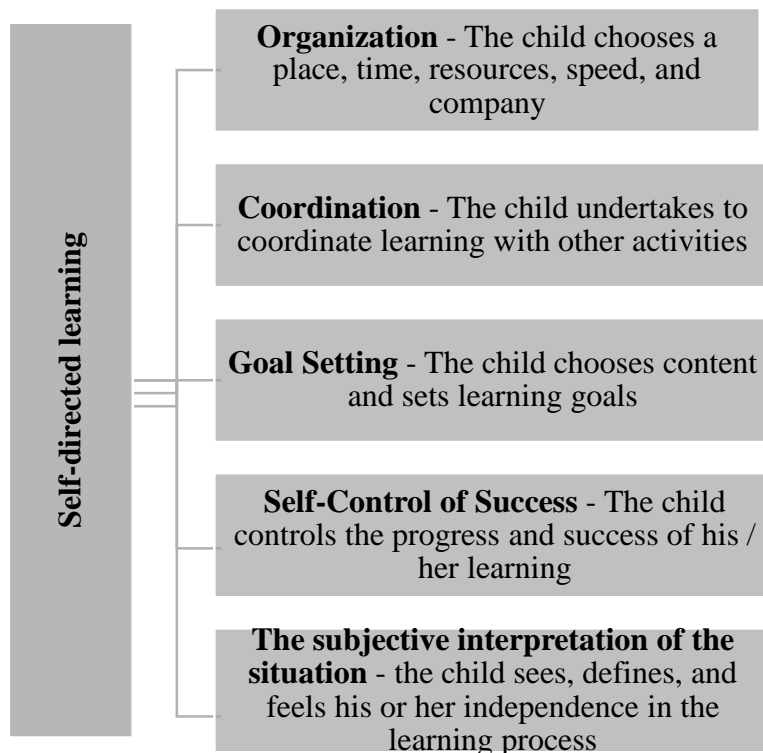


Figure 3 *Forms of child's self-control*

Self-directed activities for a child in pre-school are free choice of curriculum, aims and means, conducting independent learning, responsibility for the course and outcomes of learning, but each learning is both self-directed and foreign-led. A child cannot learn without external information (Maslo, 2003).

Results

To be able to evaluate the process of self-directed learning in pre-school. On the basis of theoretical analysis, criteria were developed for the study of the conduct of self-directed drawing activity:

- use of self-service skills;
- ability to plan the sequence of the drawing process;
- the ability to independently choose the necessary tools for drawing;
- ability to evaluate self activity;
- ability to overcome difficulties in preparing for drawing process.

The process of self-directed drawing requires an appropriate environment. When researching the learning environment at a pre-school educational institution, it was found that the group's learning environment should be

transformed to promote self-organized, artistic activities. All drawing, painting accessories are freely available at the Art Center - all that is needed for a child's free, creative work. Materials are freely and easy to reach for each child in the group.

Self-directed activities ensure that the child acquires the skills to plan: the sequence of activities, the materials, the content, and the experience needed to select the appropriate materials. In such an organized environment self-control opportunities for the child's activities are created - the child is able to follow the growth of his / her activity, progress.

Self-guided drawing activities reduce the number of unfinished works. The child knows that there will be an opportunity to do it later, as well as eliminates personalized exercise and the possibility of tasks for each child, considering his regularities of development, needs, interests, abilities and skills.

It is important that the child also has the opportunity to perform self-control - marking and evaluating the results of his / her activity, for example, by using "speaking walls" (posters with activities carried out by children, marking the acquired skills, abilities).

In play with colors, children's activities are orientated towards free, as well as educated, targeted activities (for every child's needs). Children are not interrupted, controlled or regulated. Children have a free self-expression process.

Table 2 Examples of self-directed drawing

Playing with lines	The child in the drawing paper with the crayon tightens the lines (one type of lines) so that the fields are formed. When the lines are drawn, the squares they create are covered with colours, trying to paint so that the adjacent fields are each in different colour. After repeatedly performing this drawing activity in the learning process, children can be encouraged to paint squares using a certain amount of colour - from 2 to 4 colours. Drawings can be done individually or in pairs (each child should choose their own line type), as well as several children doing it together on a larger page.
Drawing with bubble film	The child puts the gouache on the bubble film (cut out regular, irregular shapes) or other embossed material and creates footprints on the page. After the imprint, the child observes his work and adds it - associative images, natural objects, etc. It is advisable to put the color on the bubble film with the help of a sponge.
Drawing using a toys	The child draws freely while playing with colors and toys. Leaving the shapes of a toy at the drawing page (car, lego, etc.). The child at his work portrays the character of a particular toy, its dynamics and survives it through its activity.
Spontaneous, playful drawing	Free play with colors - the child spontaneously plays with colors and materials. A child can give a character, an image and color it to the scene. The teacher can offer aids, music, etc. to support the child's desire for self-expression.

Drawing circles	The child dips in to the color the end of the paper-formed roll and imprints on the page - one to the other and so on. When the work is done and dry , it is could be complemented by coloring with crayons, drawing faces, etc. after the child's intentions. The paper roll compresses in to the shapes and forms and imprints on the page.
Drawing according a story or a fairy tale	After a teacher's story telling, fairy tale, story or other literary play hearing, the child freely draws regular or irregular shapes (in relation to literary work) and makes a drawing elements (lines, dots, geometric shapes, etc.) associated with what is heard in the fairy tale or story. The drawing can be supplemented with the conclusion by the scene, depending on the child's intentions.
Sense of literary work and play with colors	A child or a teacher chooses a literary work (fairy tale, poem, story, etc.). The child listens to it, discusses it, analyzes it, then depicts it by drawing illustrations in its own associations about the experience of literary work. The child narrates his drawing regardless of the storyline of the literary work. The accompanied music can be matched to this process.
Representing the rhythm, sense and associations of music in the drawing	Children are encouraged to listen and sense the rhythm of the music then form the associations and to transforme their feelings in the drawing. Sequence: 1 - conscious listening to music; 2 - clarification of music content, characterization of feelings; 3 - deliberate re-listening and evaluation of music; 4 - drawing activity. Children who have already worked like this can be offered to draw with the music immediately after listening to it once. It is advisable for children to choose the colors themselves and choose what music they want to listen.

In the pedagogical process, observing self-directed learning by evaluating children's activities according to the set ones and observing and evaluating children's activity according to the set criteria can conclude that playing with colors in a free, non-forced, self-directed drawing activity promotes the development of the child's self-control skills:

- Self-service skills are successfully used by 88%, while other children are looking for teacher support in their activities. Only 12% of children admits that they have difficulty choosing their own materials. If the child is interested in drawing, he is looking for new opportunities with enthusiasm, thus enriching his own experience.
- In an organized environment, 100% of children have the skill to plan a drawing process and no adult assistance is required.
- 86% of children have the ability to independently choose the necessary tools for drawing, but 14% turn to the teacher for help and encouragement. One child always asks for help from a teacher (the child has an adaptation time).
- The ability to evaluate one's performance is still evolving, as self-directed drawing, his own legacy, the evaluation of the result is a complicated process if there is not enough experience to do it.

- 57% of children successfully coped with the difficulties that had arisen in the drawing or preparation process, but 29 % repeatedly approached the teacher for the solution options, but 14% only few times pointed out the difficulties and looking for a support from a teacher.

Conclusions

Self-directed drawing is an activity that is independently organized and managed by the child and which arises in a learning environment that is carefully and purposefully prepared by the teacher. The learning environment needs to be sorted out, including the emotional atmosphere. Self-directed learning is not possible if the child is denied free choice and independent activity.

Children at pre-school age are active imitators and researchers, so teacher should be professional and active, able to find different solutions in different situations, be able to follow their actions and attitudes as children copying it. A teacher is an observer, support, and assistant for the child as needed, as the child is guided by his / her own activities.

It is important that drawing for the child is personally important, only that kind of process gives the opportunity to find a suitable learning path, strategies, techniques and materials. If the child will be able to plan, manage and evaluate their own drawing process, then the whole pedagogical process - learning for the child will be rich in achievements. Self-directed drawing is the foundation of personality development.

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