

## 5. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVITY THROUGH THEATRICAL TECHNIQUES

Angela Bejan<sup>151</sup>

**Abstract:** *In this article the creativity is built as an inexhaustible subject in education, the subject is brought by psychology, but finds its purpose fully in education. It reminds about the innate character of creativity, about the age particularities of imagination, about the educational character of the theatrical education. The methodological value of this work is the theatre techniques to be used for the description and the development of children's creativity.*

**Key words:** *creativity, features of creativity, imagination, theatrical techniques*

The human being is born with an enormous potential in all areas: social, physical, mental etc. The creativity - human specific dimension - occurs, and therefore, develops from an early age. The education is the basic tool of managing this process. Children create continuously through their through their forms of activity: game, drawing, meditation, dance, song, etc. Often explained, but adults tend to block children's creation from the beginning, i.e. they limit them in their activity by the requirements they impose: *Do not cry, it hurts my head!, Do not jump, it makes noise!, Do not throw, you'll break something!* These are only few typical situations of blockages in children's creation. In this way it creates the following paradox: the child at the beginning creates, because this is his nature, the adult inhibits this tendency from the beginning, and afterwards, within the institutionalized educational process, he forms and develops creation, in other words, he makes the child to rediscover his creative nature and to be disinhibited.

The present context in which there is human existence changed by a mutation almost radical the reference points, the parameters and generally the aspect. This is about the existence of some universal phenomena that have involvement in all aspects of life: the globalization, the rapid pace of changes, of the evolution from various fields. Thus the education as a directed and institutionalized process has as fundamental desideratum the future adult formation for the life with its today dimensions, regarding, mainly the aspects: complexity in changing, interest and enthusiasm for becoming and progress etc. It develops the ability to identify and neutralize the gaps, the responsibility for personal acts, the independence and the openness for interaction and exchange of ideas. All these few aspects listed above, converge and also imply what we call **creativity**.

Moreover, this essential dimension of today life is part of the educational ideal specific to contemporary school which envisages the formation of an autonomous and creative personality.<sup>152</sup> It is known that the main component of the creativity is the imagination. The latter, however, involves almost

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<sup>151</sup> Lecturer, Doctoral Candidate, „Alec Russo” State University from Bălți, Republic of Moldavia, [angy777cipik@rambler.ru](mailto:angy777cipik@rambler.ru)

<sup>152</sup> Tapalagă, T. (2009), *Modalități de stimulare a creativității preșcolarilor*. Bacău: Rovimed Publishers, p. 11

necessarily other things: the motivation, i.e. the desire to do something new, unusual, and the willpower, the perseverance in doing many tests and checks. Hence, the novelty nowadays is a difficult feature to achieve different products.

The creativity itself is a dimension that can be acquired hardly through concrete objectives, in a concrete didactic demarche, during concrete lessons. This can be described in more extensive temporal terms and in its more tangible aspects. It is about those traits of the creativity or the imagination, which are called by the literature in the fields of psychology and those related to it with the following concepts.<sup>153</sup>:

- a. *the fluidity* – the opportunity to imagine in a short time a large number of images, ideas, situations;
- b. *the plasticity*, that is the ease of changing the viewpoint, the way to approach a problem when a process proves to be inoperative;
- c. *the originality* – the expression of the novelty, of the innovation, if it may be established, when we want to test one's possibilities, through the statistical rarity of a response, of an idea.

We said that the imagination and the creativity can be developed and enhanced during each lesson, be it in the natural or real sciences. However, we may propose as the main goal of any activity during the lesson, developing creativity through the use of techniques and methods of theatrical art. This will not overturn the teaching approach, but, on the contrary, it will print on it a certain diversity and attractiveness.

Nemirovici Dancenco, in the work *The artistic unit of the performance*, said: „The show which is over, starts a new and a real life, entering in the consciousness of the spectator, giving birth to new feelings and enriching people who have watched it. The feelings lived by the actor, based on its external behaviour, is the most precious thing in the art of acting, and it will just take himself out of the theatre in his life. Excellent played I laughed, I cried - hence arises the feeling of enjoyment during the show. The show finally ended the laughter and the tears ended too. But this thing I take with me”.<sup>154</sup>

Toma Hogeia considers theatre show as a "human association with structure and specific functions. The essence of this association is the planned action of building a simulated human experience and the perception of this construction”.<sup>155</sup> Thus, the author suggests to be taken out the definitive separation between the protagonists (emitters) and the spectators (receivers) through ritualizations determined by human relationships: they greet in a way, they say goodbye, they behave ritualized when they are guests, when they are in the transport etc. This fact will foster children's creative act, taking into account the specifics of their experience of social life.

The theatrical techniques are activities which largely take the form of games and do not only concern the development of creative abilities, but also the

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<sup>153</sup> Cosmovici, A., (1996), *Psihologie generală*. Editura Polirom, Iași, p. 154

<sup>154</sup> Apud Hogeia, T., (2007), *Arta actorului în teatrul pentru copii*. Iași, Sedcom Libris, p. 47

<sup>155</sup> *Idem* op.cit., p.24

communication. Their variety allows the teacher the opportunity to select them according to the learning contents or the proposed purpose.

A classification of the theatrical techniques applicable in the educational process should be (depending on the form of expression prevalent in the game/activity)<sup>156</sup>

1. Activities/verbal expression games;
2. Activities/bodily expression games;
3. Activities/visual expression games;
4. Musical expression games.

We show below some opportunities to develop creativity through theatre techniques during the spiritual and moral education classes in primary school.

The moral and spiritual education focuses on all moral values, spiritual, artistic, aesthetic, social, etc. acquired while studying other school subjects and pursuing the main objective child's formation to appreciate and promote human values and national (see "Primary school curriculum"). These values can be implemented efficiently using active and participatory techniques that bring near the children to the properly reality, to the situations that are encountered in everyday life. Only in this way it will be performed the materialization of a specific age experiences, it will be formed a proper lifestyle, where the acquired knowledge and skills will be applied in life.

The moral and spiritual education requires coherence between the content of education acquired at school and socio-cultural environment and helps to the formation of appropriate behaviours, of the social integration and adaptation, of the positive attitude, of the harmony in relationship with themselves and others. The one, who practice/play life situations in order to reduce their risk, may become a well prepared man for life.

Some of the most effective means of achieving this "preparation for life", we would say, are the theatrical techniques. For the student it is easier to solve a life problem where he is involved only as an actor, where he is aware that he has the right to take decisions like an adult, where the result depends directly on his own decision/action. However, such situations allow children to return to the decisions by resuming the situations, thus giving them another chance. Children can discuss/analyze their own actions and the actions of their colleagues, parents, taking into account the events of real life.

One of the actions analysis methods of the characters in a work may be conventionally called the "Character's shadow". The child faces the situation when he should analyze a character's action, should express his own ideas about how he acted and say what he would have done instead of him in such a situation. For example, studying the biblical parable "The living water" (text recommended in the text book "Moral and spiritual education", the 4<sup>th</sup> form), the pupil will appreciate the virtues of the man that makes wells, when the work leads to an end and how the man's persistence and patience were rewarded.

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<sup>156</sup> *Teatrul și comunicarea didactică*. (2002), Coord.: Anca Doina Ciobotaru, A. D.; Mihailovici, E.; Iași: Editura SPIRU HARET, p. 18-22

Something specific to the children in such an analysis is that they easily detect the correctness of behaviour and become partakers of the positive hero. But we are also interested in how acted the "student-shadow" in a similar life situation, that he lived, when he showed the same qualities as the man that makes wells. The child remembers such a situation, becoming the character of his own story. The situation can be analyzed by another colleague using the same method, the "Character's shadow". A method that may be used, for example, for the curriculum content „Development of activities for the benefit of the community” (the 4<sup>th</sup> form) is “The communitarian platform”. Even the adults who have a good life experience and know what is right and what is wrong, find a lot of reasons to avoid such activities. Only the one who understands that communitarian problems can be solved through their involvement is a citizen that implements the things that he learned.

Pupils, divided into teams, will develop a platform in order to solve the most pressing communitarian problems. In parallel with these teams, will also work the team of experts that will research in the field the community problems, and will evaluate each team working platforms, the domains introduced in the platform, the solutions in solving them as well as the concrete activities already completed. It is more interesting to develop this activity in all primary classes and, together with the teachers, the classmates, the high school pupils who will guide the activity, with their parents to elaborate this platform and to implement it during the previously indicated period. It can be carried out a wide range of activities, which are in early school age pupil's competence: the arrangement of a territory, litter gathering in the park, street sweeping, caring for wells, monuments, cemetery, rivers, helping old and disabled people, organizing certain artistic activities with information purposes, elaborating a newspaper indicating the results of the accomplished activities, displaying certain advertisements, quotes, drawing and poetry contests etc.

In order to evaluate this activity it may organize a round table, a conference inviting the administration of the institution, the Local Public Administration, Family Doctors Centre etc., where it will be assessed the activities from the work program of each working team. A particular attention will be paid to the team of experts that will analyze in details the activity of each team as well as the activity of each member taken apart, both within the platform activities and particular domain. For example, pupils respect things that are exposed on the platform, but they can afford to fight during the break, to eat seeds in public places, to be rude with their colleagues etc.

The moral and spiritual education is the discipline that primarily teaches the child how to behave in the family, in the school, in the society, how to appreciate a deed, a friend, himself. However, children are able to distinguish the right from the wrong, the allowed things from those forbidden ones.. They often do not agree with the adults' decisions, with the penalties they apply to the children, as they believe that some happenings from their life are insignificant to be punished. In order to allow the child to transpose in parent's situation and to appreciate differently something that happened for what it is worth, we will

apply the well-known game “The mother and the father”. The only condition that should be followed in this situation is not to allow the child to do one or the other. The child in his role-playing game should insist to do to his liking. In this context, we analyze real-life situations that happened once with the children. For example:

- the parents do not allow his son to stay long at the computer;
- the child refuses to stay with his little brother or sister;
- the child refuses to gather ripe berries; to clean his shoes etc.

We simulate the first situation. The student playing the role of the parent will receive a written task on a sheet of paper. For example: *You have a child of nine years, disobedient, who caught a cold that means you have to act carefully with him. You are anxious about his health, but lately you notice that he is nervous, he tells you lies, and he receives bad marks at school. Try not to punish him, but convince your son that the excess of time in front of computer is harmful for his health and for his success at school.*

The student playing the role of the child will also receive a written task on a sheet of paper. For example: *You are 9 year old. It's the age when you have to play. You like the computer and you prefer to sit in front of it for hours. The parents disagree and every time they bored you with advices like “It's late!”, “It's enough!”, “It's abnormal to...” etc. Besides all this, you are not like some children who stay all day in the street, screaming and the just making mischief. You are calm, obedient and you want to let you organize your time as you wish.*

After both students presented their roles, each of them will express his point of view on the character played. Also, they will bring similar examples from their private life, which will be discussed. The theatrical situations, the dramatizations, the simulation, the role play etc., theatre education methods facilitate the social integration of the child who is believed wronged or neglected life situations. The child, playing a role, realizes the other side of the truth that belongs to the parent, the teacher and the adult. A child who has tried himself in the role of an orphan child, marginalized, too spoiled, will truly understand the positive aspect of the opportunities that life offers him by parents, teachers and friends. He will be aware with the essence of each category of values that he studied: virtue, kindness, love, mercy, patience, education, obedience, faith, forgiveness, etc.

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