



FEATURES OF FORMING ENVIRONMENTAL COMPETENCE IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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Abstract: *This article examines the characteristics of forming environmental competence in older preschool children. It defines the concepts of "competence," "environmental competence," and "professional competence." The article also discusses pedagogical conditions and developmental technologies that contribute to increasing environmental competence in senior preschool children.*

Keywords: *Creative thinking, innovative processes, pedagogical process, socio-educational technologies, competence, environmental competence, technology, pedagogical competence, personal-professional self-determination.*

Аннотация: *В статье рассмотрены особенности формирования экологической компетентности у детей старшего дошкольного возраста. Дано определение понятий «компетентность», «экологическая компетентность», «профессиональная компетентность». Рассмотрены педагогические условия, технологии развития компетентности, способствующие повышению экологической компетенции у детей старшего дошкольного возраста.*

Ключевые слова: *Творческое мышление, инновационные процессы, педагогический процесс, социально-воспитательные технологии, компетентность, экологическая компетентность, технология, педагогическая компетентность, личностно-профессиональное самоопределение.*

The integration of research activities into the educational system supports the development of environmental competence in preschoolers. Many researchers note that research activities are fundamental to environmental education. Involving children in ecological research methods helps them understand the essence of

environmental phenomena and make practical conclusions when solving real-world environmental issues. Participating in ecological research transforms a child's worldview, behavior, and lifestyle, while fostering awareness of regional and global environmental problems and active participation in their resolution.

At the current stage of societal development, the importance of an environmentally educated individual is increasing, which necessitates the formation of ecological culture from early childhood. In the theory of preschool pedagogy, a systemic approach to forming ecological culture in preschoolers is being developed, including content and methodologies.

Cognitive development in preschoolers occurs through various types of activities. A key role is played by familiarizing children with the changes and development of the surrounding world. K.D. Ushinsky emphasized the special role of nature in cognitive development, viewing the logic of nature as the most accessible, visual, and beneficial for children.

Preschool age is a valuable stage in developing a person's ecological culture. During this period, the foundations of personality are laid, including a positive attitude toward nature and the surrounding world. At this age, a child begins to distinguish themselves from the environment, develops an emotional-value relationship with the surrounding world, and forms moral-ecological positions. These are reflected in the child's interactions with nature and their understanding of inseparability from it. This allows for the formation of ecological knowledge, norms, and rules for interacting with nature, fostering empathy for it, and encouraging activity in solving some environmental problems.

However, accumulating knowledge is not an end in itself. For preschoolers, knowledge is a necessary condition for developing emotional-moral and active attitudes toward the world. At this age, children observe natural phenomena and can establish cause-and-effect relationships between them. They deepen their understanding of the living conditions of plants and animals and learn that humans

are part of nature. Children should behave in ways that do not harm nature or themselves.

In environmental education, children learn to identify links between a plant's condition and environmental factors, and to determine the causes of changes (e.g., leaves drying due to a lack of water, fading due to insufficient light, or slow growth due to a lack of nutrients).

Preschoolers become familiar with wild animals and their behaviors. They learn to name animals that live in nearby climates, as well as those in their own country and abroad. They must understand that no living organisms are "harmful" in nature; all are essential for maintaining ecological balance.

The content of environmental education can be based on core ideas and concepts of ecology (bioecology, social ecology, and human ecology). Scientific definitions should be adapted to the psychological and pedagogical specifics of early childhood. This can be achieved through selecting and using natural objects with key characteristics of morphological and functional adaptation to the environment and creating an ecologically developmental environment for children that includes such objects. These environments highlight the adaptive interrelations between plants and animals and their habitats. This approach fundamentally distinguishes preschool environmental education from natural science education in schools and serves as its preparatory stage.

Thus, environmental education is a crucial factor in personality development. Participation in this process radically changes the child's perception of themselves and the world, influencing their self-esteem. Furthermore, the process develops various abilities, skills, and competencies.

Systematic observations show that difficulties in developing a humane attitude toward living beings in nature often stem from children's insufficient knowledge of plants and animals as living organisms. This knowledge should be

structured as a system, emphasizing the central connection between organisms and their environment.

Various activity types aimed at developing ecological culture should be used in combination, with priority given to in-depth and integrative activities. These help children identify causal relationships in nature and form general concepts. Experimental and exploratory activities are especially engaging for children.

In conclusion, forming ecological culture in children requires the integrated use of diverse forms and methods. Their appropriate combination depends on the children's age, as well as the nature of the educational goals set by the teacher.

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