DIDACTIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING CREATIVE COMPETENCE BASED ON THE INTEGRATION OF DEVELOPMENT CENTERS IN THE PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

I. Toshpulatova
NamSU Doctoral student
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Abstract. *This article analyzes the purpose, nature, and didactic potential of the integration of developmental centers in preschool educational organizations. The methodology is based on the comparison of theoretical sources, observation of practical activities, and analysis of pedagogical situations. The findings provide a basis for well-founded conclusions regarding integration planning, educational environment design, and pedagogical collaboration.*

Keywords: *developmental center, integration, preschool educational environment, competence, pedagogical cooperation, independent activity, creativity.*

Introduction

The issue of organizing a developmental environment in the preschool education system, which is the initial stage of the education system, has gained great importance in recent years. These developmental centers are understood as places that ensure children's natural curiosity, independent activity, learning through play, communication and experimental processes. The frequent practice of individual activities in centers prevents the formation of a child's knowledge and skills as a holistic system. Modern pedagogical approaches, in particular, activity-oriented and competency-based approaches, emphasize the integration of educational content as an important condition for developing the ability to think coherently in complex situations and to integrate and maintain different knowledge and skills [7; 9]. Also, an important mechanism for the formation of creative competence in a child is integration. Creative competence refers to the child's ability to think unconventionally, develop new ideas, apply existing experience in a new situation, and find creative solutions.

Although the psychological and pedagogical foundations of a developing environment are widely covered in scientific sources [5; 6], namely, the content, levels of inter-center integration and its role in the development of creative competence are not sufficiently coordinated [1; 2]. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to clarify the content of the integration of developing centers, systematize its components, and develop assessment criteria related to the development of creative competence.

Methodology

The methodological basis of the study was formed by systematic, activity-oriented and competency-based approaches. The systematic approach made it possible to consider development centers not as separate territories, but as a system of interconnected components serving a common goal. The activity-oriented approach served to interpret integration as a content unit that emerged through the real activity, experience, and reflection of children [6; 7]. The competency-based

approach made it possible to assess the result not only in terms of the amount of knowledge, but also through the formation of communicative, social, self-management, and creative abilities [9].

As empirical data, normative and methodological documents, planning samples of teachers, and observation notes on the activities of development centers were analyzed. Through data analysis, the common goal of the centers, the interdependence of activities, resource exchange, and elements of creative activity were identified [1; 4; 8].

Results

The results of the study showed that the integration of developmental centers is manifested in four interrelated layers.

1. Integration of goals. The centers should serve the goal of general development, not individual tasks. Communication, problem solving, self-management and creative competence should be identified as common outcome areas for all centers. For example, a child describes, models, or tells a story about a process he observes in one center in another. In this process, he does not repeat ready-made knowledge, but rather reworks it and brings it into a new form. Due to this, creative thinking develops.

2. Integration of activities. The mechanisms of integration “sequentially” and “at the same time” have been identified. In sequential integration, an experience in one center is continued in another. For example, observation in the nature center is connected to visual expression in the art center, model making in the construction center, and story-telling in the language center. At the same time, in integration, communication, calculation, imagination, and creative expression are combined in the process of role-playing. These mechanisms serve to develop creative competence, as the child reconstructs the same content through different means of expression and creates new connections [5; 7].

3. Integration of resources and environment. The openness and mobility of resources are important factors for creative development. If the material is attached to only one center, experience is limited. On the contrary, when the resource is used in different conditions, the child learns to use it for a new purpose. For example, a simple subject can perform different functions in different centers. This leads to a reinterpretation of the function of the subject and the formation of creative thinking [4; 8].

4. Pedagogical cooperation and management integration. In order for integration to produce stable results, collective planning, common assessment criteria, and a single pedagogical goal are necessary. The task of the teacher is to purposefully direct free activity, create a problematic situation, and encourage the child to analyze himself. In this regard, creative competence is considered not only as an unexpected creation, but also as the result of a purposeful pedagogical design [6; 9].

Criteria for assessing integration and creative competence

Evaluation of the effectiveness of integration can be carried out in the following areas:

Cognitive-transfer criterion - can the child apply the experience gained in one center to another?

Communicative criterion - does he freely express his opinion during the task, does he cooperate?

Self-management criterion - does he make choices, complete the work, correct the mistake?

The creative criterion is whether the child proposes a new idea, uses the material in an unusual way, or tries to solve a problem in several ways.

In this way, creative competence is manifested as one of the main indicators of integration.

Discussion

The results are consistent with theories of development through social interaction of the developing environment [6]. Reworking experience in different activity contexts supports the formation of higher mental functions. Based on constructivist principles, the child builds knowledge on the basis of active experience [5]. Integration between centers enhances this process. The idea of spiral learning explains the consolidation of content through repetition in different activities [7].

Thus, integration is manifested as a natural pedagogical mechanism for the formation of creative competence. Based on the organization of inter-center integration, didactic opportunities for developing the creative competence of preschool children will be clarified, while at the same time it will be determined that the specific didactic materials and methodological approaches of each center will serve to increase the creative potential of children.(Table 1)

Table 1.

Development centers	**Didactic opportunities**	**Content**
Construction and Building Center	Problem Solving and Analytical Thinking	Through construction and building activities, children develop the skills to identify problems, analyze them, and generate logical solutions.
	Integrative Approach	Mathematical, geometrical, and design concepts are integrated through creative projects.
Role-Play and Dramatization Center	Creative Expression and Empathy	Through role-play and dramatization activities, children create their own characters and express various emotions and perspectives, thereby developing empathy and social communication skills.
	Theatre and Dramatic Methods	Improvisation and role-based performance foster creative engagement and critical thinking.
Language and Speech Center	Verbal Creativity	Through language and speech activities, children learn to express their ideas in the form of stories, poems, dialogues, and monologues.

	Expression of the Creative Process	By using language tools, children learn to clearly and confidently articulate their emotions, thoughts, and creative perspectives.
Science and Nature Center	Scientific Questioning and Analysis	Through experiments, observation activities, and scientific project work, children develop the ability to ask questions, analyze, and formulate hypotheses.
	Interactive Learning	Theoretical knowledge is integrated with practical experience through laboratory work, interactive experimental areas, and virtual models.
Art Center	Aesthetic Sensibility and Creativity	Through art forms such as drawing, music, drama, dance, and handicrafts, children develop their aesthetic abilities and demonstrate their creative potential.
	Holistic Development and Integration	Through art lessons, knowledge and experiences gained from other areas—such as observations in the Science and Nature Center and expression activities in the Language and Speech Center—are integrated, forming a unified creative system

Conclusion

The mutual integration of developmental centers in the preschool educational environment is carried out on the basis of the harmony of goals, activities, resources and pedagogical cooperation. Integration is not limited to combining topics, but serves to develop the child's application of knowledge in practice, communication, self-management, and creative competence in a holistic way. The presented conceptual model interprets integration as a guided pedagogical design and allows for a criterion-based assessment of effectiveness. In the future, it will be important to empirically test these criteria and strengthen integrated and creatively oriented design competencies in teacher training programs.

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