

## **Spiritual and Moral Education of Younger Schoolchildren in the Course of their Enculturation**

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**Abstract:** The study presents the experience of spiritual and moral education of junior schoolchildren in the course of their positive enculturation provided with the cultural conformity content. The project “Ethno-cultural cluster for junior schoolchildren” as an educational technology, has several advantages. First of all, schoolchildren achieve the understanding of the learned topic. The project provides schoolchildren with the opportunity to generalize and structure the subject material themselves, to define relationships between ideas and concepts, to join associations and relationships contained in a cluster and to gain experience of team working in the group. A disciple who has learned socially accepted value orientation and preference systems, has acquired some knowledge in the field of national and class traditions, morals, world view, customs, rituals, cultural history of his peoplehood, the main symbols of national dignity and pride, can be considered a final product of this project.

**Key words:** Spiritual and moral education, enculturation, cluster, ethnocultural learned topic, final product

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In contemporary elementary school the issue of constant search for ways to improve the spiritual and moral education of schoolchildren is very serious. The right approach to perception of the spiritual and moral development process in junior schoolchild's personality is associated with the knowledge of the process of psychological development as well as its consistent patterns and peculiarities.

Younger age provides great opportunities for the development of moral qualities of a personality. This is facilitated by the amenability and certain suggestibility of pupils, their gullibility, tendency to imitate and the most importantly-the immense authority of the teacher. In the course of socialization of the personality, formation of its moral behavior, the primary school plays a huge role.

In this regard, the school activities should result not only in acquiring a system of knowledge, abilities and skills, but also in positive enculturation of the individual which should be provided by cultural conformity content (<http://www.dissercat.com/content/inkulturatsiya-lichnosti-v-sovremennoi-natsionalnoi-shkole#ixzz3qtufaAG8>).

Culture is linked with education through numerous complicated bonds. Processing of information into

knowledge is a creative, culturally significant act. In these circumstances, the need for shifting the culture and its problems towards the midst of human existence is recognized as the important challenge. At that, focusing efforts on the education of the spiritual and moral personality, having ability for active self-actualization under the rapidly changing conditions of modern society, foregrounds the applied nature of the research on the problem of shaping at school spiritual and moral personality.

The creation of the educational ethnocultural cluster as an effective environment for spiritual and moral formation of junior schoolchild's personality was investigated in the course of his enculturation. It is well known that enculturation is a process of mastering by the individual of social standards and culture, the process of giving personality general cultural competence relative to the standards of the society in which the personality lives. This includes primarily development of the value orientation and preferences system of socially accepted etiquette of conduct in different situations, familiarity with the basics of the socio-political system, some knowledge in the field of national and class traditions, prevailing morality, rectitude, world view, customs, rituals, everyday knowledge in social and humanitarian areas, political and cultural history of native people as well as the main symbols of national dignity and pride.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Education methods:** The concept of cluster in our project entitled “Ethnocultural Cluster for Junior Schoolchildren” is understood as educational technology which contributes to improving the efficiency and quality of the educational process.

Analysis of international practice has shown that the education cluster is widespread in many countries (USA, France, etc). Thus, M. Porter, studying the educational cluster in Massachusetts, analyzes in detail its role in the educational sector in comparison with other USA states and countries (Porter *et al.*, 2010). Educational clusters formation in France at the national level is another challenging experience. They aimed at positioning national universities in the educational services market and attracting foreign students (Kutsenko, 2012). Typical feature of these clusters is that they are geographically localized include educational institutions of all levels and are topically defined.

In our research, the comprehension of the cluster as an organizational system along with educational technology is of particular importance. In some studies of Russian authors, education cluster is defined as a set of interrelated institutions of professional education, combined according to different industry sectors and partnerships between industry enterprises (Smirnov, 2010). Educational innovation cluster is an association of industry representatives such as higher education institutions, research centers and industry where all the participants of the chain from designing to finished innovative product (research institutions, small innovative companies, testing centers, universities, etc.) are in continuous interaction (Tereshin and Volodin, 2010). Education cluster is an entire system of multilevel training of professionals for various companies based on the integration of educational institution and employer's enterprises that provides reduced terms of training, retention of graduates at the enterprises, creation of flexible system of improving qualification of the trained professionals by the companies taking into account current and forecasted production requirements (Rastvortseva and Cherepovskaya, 2013). Scientific-educational cluster is the association of a number of scientific and educational institutions into a certain association, their close interaction and interdependence leading to high-quality transformations of both separate parts and the whole cluster. The Russian experience is represented mainly by educational clusters, focused on improving educational and scientific processes around leading universities in the country. Russian education clusters bring together and integrate the innovation, research and production.

Cluster is a technology that originated in the USA and was introduced by the American teachers, who

believe that before learning something new, one needs first to build his own model based on known conceptions and then to improve this model in the course of acquiring new information (<http://www.mediobio-kgmu.ru/cgi-bin/go.pl?i=2294>).

The name of the technology comes from the English word “cluster” which has the same meaning as a beam or bunch (the cluster of grapes). This technology can be also modified into graphic systematization of material, i.e., schemes or clusters, showing the semantic fields of a particular concept (Fig. 1).

Preparation of a cluster allows pupils to assimilate information creatively to develop logic and reasoning. A cluster as educational technology has several advantages. First of all, schoolchildren achieve the understanding of the learned topic. The project provides schoolchildren the opportunity to generalize and structure subject material themselves, to determine the relationships between ideas and concepts to join associations and relationships which are contained in a cluster and to gain experience of team working in the group.

In our case, the ethnocultural profile of the cluster is determined by the field of educational institution activity, supplementary educational program as consistent with the Federal State Educational Standard of primary general education (FSSES).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**The cluster of “artists” group:** Topic 1: Social hour. “Choroon”. “Everlasting simple pattern runs and never ends.”

**Objective:** To familiarize children with the choroon, the Yakut national crockery, its types and use in ceremonies; acquaintance with traditional patterns that are typical for choroon decoration and the artistic works reflecting the Yakut crockery; nurturing love for poetry and literature of the Sakha people.

**Expected outcome:** To acquire knowledge about the Yakut national choroon crockery and the meaning of its patterns: Topic 2; integrated art lesson: “Yakut patterns”.

**Objective:** To consolidate the knowledge about the Yakut patterns which were acquired during the social hour “Everlasting simple pattern runs and never ends...”, to familiarize with other yakut patterns, typical for clothing, jewelry and household items.

**Expected outcome:** To be able to identify the Yakut patterns and ornaments, draw these patterns during the drawing lesson, acquire knowledge about their application: Topic 3; cultural expedition: “native land”.

**Participants:** Supervising teacher, pupils, parents and the staff of the museum.

**Objective:** To acquaint with the history of native land, the life and customs of Yakut people.

**Expected outcome:** To take part in competition of drawings following a visit to local lore museum named after E.M. yaroslavsky: Topic 4; integrated lesson on “Clay modeling” technology.

**Participants:** Supervising teacher and pupils.

**Objective:** To teach how to sculpt a clay choroon and decorate it with ornaments.

**Expected outcome:** To take part in the exhibition of choroons made by pupils. Topic 5; integrated lesson in russian literature.

**Objective:** To study the poems about choroon and Russian national crockery (pots, Gzhel ceramics, Khokhloma crockery, Zhostovo trays, samovar and birch-bark baskets); to foster a sense of respect for the national utensils.

**Expected outcome:** To participate in the recitation competition. The cluster of “Sweet Khomus” group Topic 1; meeting with the khomus playing musician.

**Objective:** To familiarize pupils with the Yakut national instrument-khomus and exiting world facts (Guinness world record for mass playing on khomus in Yakutsk, Jew’s Harp instruments of other peoples of the world, etc.); to raise the interest in this instrument.

**Expected outcome:** To encourage pupils o enter folkloristic class: Topic 2; visit to the khomus Museum.

**Objectives:** To familiarize pupils with exhibits of Jew’s Harp musical instruments of the world and their history; to analyze various forms and species of the Yakut khomus.

**Expected outcomes:** To organize a photo exposition of Jew’s Harp musical instruments of the world and their history: Topic 3; participation in the “Ysyakh” national holiday.

**Objective:** To familiarize pupils with “Ysyakh” national holiday, to take part in the Yakut national rituals and competitions.

**Expected outcome:** To take part in national school fast “Ysyakh. The cluster of “Olonkho” group: Topic 1; Homeroom: “Olonkho: masterpiece of the intangible art of UNESCO”.

**Objective:** To familiarize pupils with the yakut olonkho folk epos.

**Expected outcomes:** to present to pupils the excerpt from Olonkho epos: Topic 2; visit to the Olonkho theatre.

**Objection:** To familiarize pupils with the history of Olonkho theater and its performing actors.

**Expected outcome:** To take part in communication with performing actors of Olonkho theater: Topic 3; a visit to the exhibition devoted to the topic of olonkho.

**Objective:** To familiarize pupils with paintings and murals dedicated to the topic of Olonkho.

**Expected outcome:** To make oral presentation according to the materials of Bessonov exhibition on the topic of olonkho: Topic 4; integrated literature and art lesson (drawing fold out book).

**Objective:** To familiarize pupils with the Olonkho “Nyurgun Bootur the Impetuous” by P.A. oyunsky; to improve drawing skills and the ability to work in a team.

**Expected outcome:** To issue fold out book on the subject of “Nyurgun Bootur the Impetuous” Olonkho. The cluster of “World Culture” grou: Topic 1; easter (class-based event).

**Objective:** To familiarize pupils with the Orthodox Church holiday; to instill respect for the belief of the Orthodox.

**Expected outcome:** To take part in exhibition of painted eggs and rabbits as well as in a tea party with the Easter cake: Topic 2; cheese Fare Week or “Maslenitsa festival”.

**Objective:** To familiarize pupils with a Russian national tradition-welcoming of spring-beauty.

**Expected outcome:** To take part in the maslenitsa festival, the traditional burning of an winter scarecrow, treat each other with pancakes-the Russian national dish: Topic 3; participation in the republican contest “Music for everybody”.

**Objective:** To introduce pupils to Russian folk culture.

**Expected outcome:** To perform Russian folk song “Dear Potato” to the accompaniment of musical instruments: Topic 4; literature lesson on the myths of the peoples of the world.

**Objective:** To explore the myths of the peoples of the world.

**Expected outcome:** To make short presentations on favorite myths.

### CONCLUSION

The study “ethnocultural cluster for junior schoolchildren” was successfully tested on the basis of secondary school No. 17 in Yakutsk and revealed the positive dynamic pattern of the enculturation of younger pupil’s personality. The efficiency of the creation of educational ethnocultural cluster as an effective environment of spiritual and moral formation of the child’s personality was investigated by monitoring the activities performed in the framework of ethnocultural cluster as well as by interviewing pupils of the cluster groups to identify their interest in held events as well as questioning children and adult communities.

Thus, the dynamic pattern of rating results of the “Sweet Khomus” cluster group is characterized by an increase in the number of pupils attending the sessions (13 pupils in 2011/2012 academic year while in 2014/2015 the number of pupils increased to 39); the increase in the number of pupils who knew how to play khomus (3 pupils in 2011/2012 academic year and 39 pupils in 2014/2015); the increase in the number of pupils expressed their interest in the activities of the coterie (16 pupils in 2011/2012 academic year and 39 pupils in 2014/2015); the increase in the number of parents who were involved in the activities of the coterie (13 people in 2011/2012 academic year and 39 people in 2014/2015); the increase in the development level of pupil’s musical abilities (in 2011/2012 academic year 13 pupils had the level of beginners in playing musical instruments while in 2012/2013 academic year 2 pupils had the level of beginner and 13 pupils played the instruments at the intermediate level; in 2013/2014, 14 pupils played at the level of beginner and 15 at intermediate level; in 2014/2015, 7 pupils played at intermediate level while 20 pupils reached quite good level and 3 pupils became solo performers); the formation of a team spirit among pupils and adults increased sense of

responsibility towards the group (the duties and tasks were performed accurately and timely); the raised interest in the study of the Yakut language in the Russian-speaking children (the interest to Yakut language among schoolchildren emerged in 2013/2014 academic year, while in 2014/2015, 9 children who previously did not understand and speak Yakut language started to use colloquial Yakut words and simple phrases in their spoken language); increase in the number of pupils of different nationalities studying khomus (10 Sakha pupils, 2 Russian and 1 Tuvanian in 2011/2012 academic year; 10 Sakha pupils, 4 Russian and 1 Tuvanian in 2012/2013; 33 Saha children, 4 Russian, 1 Tuvanian and 1 Buryat in 2013-2014; and 33 Sakha pupils, 4 Russian, 1 Tuvanian and 1 Buryat in 2014/2015 academic year).

It should be noted that the creation of ethnocultural cluster was made possible due to mutually agreed efforts of pupils, parents, teachers and national communities of Yakutsk as well as attraction of socio-historical, cultural, educational and additional educational resources. This project shows that the tasks of spiritual and moral education can be considered as the findings which result from the enculturation of the younger schoolchildren through the development of ethnocultural cluster. Our project’s logic is based on a concept of spiritual and moral education which is a pedagogically organized process where pupils learn and acquire basic national values, the system of human values as well as cultural, spiritual and moral values of the multicultural nation of the Russian Federation.

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