AESTHETIC LEARNING SPACE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON VALUE ORIENTATIONS OF STUDENTS

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Abstract: The problem of creating the facilitating environment for personality development in the learning process is relevant to the modern education where the leading role belongs to digitalization. This paper provides a theoretical justification for the role of an aesthetic learning space and proves experimentally its impact on the value orientations of students as critical factors in mitigating the personality "decephalization" under the influence of globally spread artificial intelligence. An aesthetic learning environment decorated with the art objects handcrafted by students contributes to a more harmonious perception of the surrounding reality and to obtaining a more meaningful view on the world's aesthetics.

Keywords: value orientations of students, design, learning space, space aesthetics, art objects, digitalization.

1 Introduction

In the modern life, all processes are constantly gaining pace. This confronts a man with non-standard challenges and problems, laying it bare that in the world around us a lot remains unknown, unexplored and hidden, which requires a deeper intellectual and creative look into the existing reality, and appreciation of its aesthetic value.

Education offers meaningful constants in the perception of the world aesthetics, it is a major source of socialization, which shapes the students' attitudes to different activities, a life stance on the surrounding world of nature and objects, and its rational transformation.

At the same time, a distinctive feature of the modern society is its digitalization, which causes changes in all processes occurring in the student's behavior: perception becomes more superficial, there is no time enough for emotions to take proper form, self-reflection becomes something impossible, which poses a risk of gradual decephalization of personality (Budanov & Aseeva, 2017).

Philosophersd define the term cephalization as an improvement of the whole central nervous system, its forward development (Vernadsky, 1991). A.D. Ursul (2017) defines it as "an irreversible progressive evolution of the nervous system, expressed in the nerve cells concentrated at the front end of a body producing the head region" and specifies that human evolution is almost entirely shifted toward the field of culture, where accumulation of the positive cultural information is driven by an aesthetic environment (p. 3).

Researchers point out that the correction of deformations caused by digitalization becomes possible by creating conditions strengthening the aesthetic value orientations of students.

The relevance of this research is attributable to the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence, when it becomes particularly important to create the learning space responding to the imperatives of our times for solving the encountered problems.

2 Literature Review

Researchers share the opinion that "the human mind is increasingly being forced out by the pseudo-mind of computer systems" (Smirnov, 2012, p. 18). When discussing computer systems, V.G. Smirnov (2012) emphasizes that, despite the regularity of this process, such systems have limitations, both in cognitive potential and in resources, and seeing this transient form in absolute terms may lead to disastrous consequences.

V.G. Budanov and I.A. Aseeva (2017) wrote that "the behavior and the styles of thinking common to the new generation of high school and college students "born to the web" are strongly deformed" that "in the conditions of uncontrolled human immersion into the digital worlds, the irreversible personality changes can occur, especially in children" (p. 125).

S.V. Afanasiev (2020) confirms that "the processes of upbringing, education, and training" require from "a modern person to switch between different information and communication processes, to change the masks, roles, and images", and this results in a mosaic mentality and causes gradual decephalization of personality (p. 10).

P.A. Kislyakova, A.L. Meerson, O.A. Silaeva, E.E. Dmitrieva (2020) identify the following two types of threats associated with the digital transformation of society:

- social (growth of cybercrime, loss of the personal interactions, higher aggression and asocial behavior, stress caused by the burden of information);
- cultural (decline in the cultural level of society, higher number of interpersonal conflicts, erosion of traditional values).

A.S. Galchenko, P.E. Grigoriev, L.V. Poskotnikov (2020) having examined the relationship between the Internet addiction and the cognitive style of students concluded that "the established specific features of thinking, memory, attention show a more productive functioning of the elementary (involuntary) mental processes and the lesser use of higher mental functions" (p. 7).

A.A. Strokov (2020) notes that "the risks of digitalization for society lie in the dehumanization of educational, and further of all other social relationships, the possible deepening of the crisis of people's intellectual culture, their capacity for creativity, the dominance of pragmatism and individualism based on the values of personal comfort and self-centered consumption" (p. 15).

G.G. Kolomiets (2020) emphasizes that integrity of "the spiritual environment of a man" gets severely disrupted, which points to the ongoing process of "decephalization" of the human species: a diminution in the desire to comprehend the genuine ethical and aesthetic values (p. 125). It is possible to counteract the negative trends that erode the "human worth" in a man, provided that the emotional, sensory and value-based attitude to the world underlies each discipline taught in the educational system.

Researchers argue that the deformations in personality related to digital information lead to rapid monitoring of virtual space, perception is speeding up, and no time is left for deep reflection, thinking becomes more clipping than categorical (Budanov & Aseeva, 2017; Galchenko et al., 2020; Kolomiets, 2020; Smirnov, 2012).

N.V. Syrova (Zimina et al., 2020; Petrova et al., 2020), E.K. Zimina (Zimina et al., 2020; Petrova et al., 2020; Scherbakova et al., 2020), and N.S. Petrova (Zimina et al., 2020; Petrova et al., 2020) mention in their works that creativity may reverse such changes when the process of evaluation, empathy, or feeling the connection to the piece of art comes to the fore.

Education is the tool in transmitting the culture, and by acquiring education a person not just adapts to the conditions of a constantly changing society, but also becomes capable of non-adaptive activity, of going beyond the given, and developing own subjectivity (Slastenin, 2003).

Having analyzed the scientific sources, the authors concluded that, despite the close attention of the scientific community to the relationship between digitalization of society and all-round personal development, the impact of the learning space on the aesthetic and value orientations of students is insufficiently covered.

3 Research Methodological Framework

The research purpose was to study the impact of an aesthetic learning space on shaping the value orientations of students.

The research objectives were as follows:

1. Analyze the research literature and elucidate the concept "an aesthetic learning space" which has an impact on the value orientations of students.
2. Explore the impact of the art objects on perception by students of their learning space with the help of the questionnaire survey.

Research methods:

The research material consisted of the publications of authors focusing on the development of value attitudes and orientations of personality in the learning process, and creation of the most favourable conditions for this.

The range of employed methods included theoretical-methodological methods, such as analysis of psychological, pedagogical and methodological literature, data systematization, consolidation and comparison; and the empirical methods, such as observation (direct and indirect) and diagnostics (questionnaire survey).

The methodological basis for research was constituted by the works of V.G. Alekseeva (1984), M.A. Koskov (2001), G.G. Kolomiets (2020), R.E. Ponomarev (2014), A.V. Shapovalov (2009), T.N. Scherbakova (2011), who use a substrate approach to optimizing a system of aesthetic evaluation of the space from the perspective of emotional and sensory perception and shaping of value orientations. This research relies on the principles of objectivity, scientificity and essence analysis.

The experimental base of the research was the learning space in the Design Studio "Ochertanie" of the Art Center for Children named after V.P. Chkalov in Nizhny Novgorod.

4 Results and Discussion

For assessing the impact of the learning space as one of the prerequisites for fostering a personal attitude to the world and own self based on the aesthetic values, the authors have clarified the concept *"an aesthetical learning space"*.

R.E. Ponomarev (2014) has an opinion that education is a process of cultural enrichment of a person, and the learning space is "a special kind of space, a place uniting a man and the environment in the process of their ongoing interaction, which results in the enriched individual culture".

T.N. Scherbakova (2011) notes that "the aesthetic environment of an educational institution is a microenvironment corresponding to the pedagogical principles. It is characterized by a high level of aesthetic culture, flexible dynamics and holds an enormous potential of influencing the subject's creative motivation" (p. 195).

S.A. Ostanina (2011) defines the creativity facilitating space as a specially organized educational environment of an educational institution, which enables various types of creative activities

supporting the creative development and self-development of students.

The content of the educational space results in a certain attitude to the world of objects, which under different circumstances may lead to the development of humane or anti-human worldview, i.e. may have a powerful reverse impact (Klimov, 1985).

From the perspective of culturology, the world of objects represents the entirety of artificially created things and objects intended for various functions. This entirety of artifacts is also called the material environment, the material culture, "the second nature" or the physical culture (Koskov, 2001).

The paper illustrates that "the aesthetical learning space" is a space filled with the objects from the material world created under the aesthetic laws and rules. This kind of space may have an impact on the value orientations of students.

A.G. Zdravomyslov, V.A. Yadov (1965) view the value orientations as the "personal directedness to certain values of the material and spiritual culture predetermining the attitude to the surrounding world and as a system of orientations that govern the behavior" (p. 199).

V.A. Alekseeva (1984) believes that the value orientations is "the main channel of translating the cultural values to the triggers and motives of the practical behavior" (p. 64).

According to S.H. Rappoport (2000), "aesthetic refers to the creative and humanistic attitude of a person to the world and to own self, the acquisition of universal values" (p. 27).

The Thematic Dictionary of Philosophy defines that "aesthetic values are the values of visual comprehension of the world through any human activity based on the laws of beauty and perfection" (Nekrasov et al., 2009).

An effective means of building the value attitudes helping a man to reach harmony in its interactions with the world of objects is design, through which the harmonious physical environment is built, most fully satisfying the material and spiritual needs of a man (Minervin, 1975).

In the study, the authors examine the role of purposeful aestheticization of the learning space through the introduction of art objects and their impact on the aesthetic and value orientations of students.

Fourth-year students of Kozma Minin Nizhny Novgorod State Pedagogical University, Department of Decorative and Applied Art and Design were offered a creative task: to develop the art objects for the learning space of Design Studio "Ochertanie" for children and to analyze the impact of the created art objects on the value orientations of students attending this studio by conducting a small survey.

Creative projects implemented by the Design Studio "Ochertanie" of the Art Center for Children named after V.P. Chkalov in Nizhny Novgorod are based on the aesthetic values that are the pillars of training. At the same time, it was taken into account that students of the studio are 10-15 year-olds who are active users of the modern digital space, and communication with computer devices and programs has become integral to their lives.

Art object is an object of art and design, which represents not only material, but also artistic value.

It is important to note that the process of designing and creating art objects filled with meaning and intended to trigger positive emotional responses and to make an aesthetic informational effect requires the creators to know the axioms of sustainable visual perception strategies and "specific features inherent in visual evaluation" (Shapoval, 2009).

The message carried by the art object is addressed to the students, and this requires knowledge of their

psychophysiological, cognitive and emotional readiness to understand, feel, evaluate and accept the potential positive energy of the aesthetics emitted by the created art object.

Only in the presence of these two components: an aesthetically organized learning space and the readiness of students for its perception, it becomes possible to achieve the greatest effect on the students' value orientations.

It was decided to make the art objects for the children's design studio using a non-traditional technique of arts and crafts: a collage technique "terra". Terra-Bildn ("terra") is a monolithic canvas imitating clay, with pronounced floral and other elements.

The created art objects were used to decorate the learning space in the children's Design Studio "Ochertanie".

Figure 1 Art Object "Silver Feather"

Source: student E. Nigmatullina

Figure 1 Art Object "The Dancing City"

Source: student M. Kolobova

Children attending the design studio were offered a short questionnaire with the following questions (Table 1).

Table 1

Seq. No.	Questionnaire questions	Responses	Result
1	Has the studio interior become more beautiful after its decoration with art objects?	Yes, definitely	77%
2	What do you find as most interesting for exploring in the art objects?	The way how the author expressed their creative concept	85%
3	What emotions are evoked by the art objects created in the "terra" technique?	Positive frame of mind for perception of work	92%
4	Is the art object consistent with its name?	Yes, it is consisent	76%
5	What are the most interesting artistic features of the art objects?	Interesting composition, unexpected combination of materials	80%
6	Do you agree with the color choice for the art objects?	Yes, but it would be interesting to see them in other colors	88%
7	Would you name the art objects differently? If yes, what would you name them?	No	76%
8	How and where may the acquired experience of changing the interior aesthetics with the help of the art objects be useful to you?	Make something similar at home, or for friends	80%
9	Will these art objects look good in a computer class?	Yes	73%

Source: author`s own processing

The survey covered 26 people: 17 junior group students (10-12 year olds) and 9 senior group students (13-15 year olds). The survey was held in January 2021. The table presents the most frequent answers.

The questionnaire survey led us to the following conclusions. In the opinion of most students, the art objects:

- made the space more beautiful (77%);
- contributed to a positive frame of mind for learning (92%);
- were interesting for students in terms of revealing the creative conception of the author (85%);
- allowed to explore and analyze the artistic features, such as overall composition and use of materials different in texture (80%);
- teach to accept the author's choice of colors, but also ignite own imagination (88%);
- teach to understand the author's conception and trace consistency with the object's name (75%);
- inspire for the expression of own creativity (80%).

However, the opinions of children on question 9 turned out to be most insightful. Most students (73%) were firm in their belief that decoration of a computer class with the art object will not only change the aesthetics of this space, but will help to focus and concentrate on the assignment and to find a solution. Students of the design studio were offered a concept of the art object for a computer class: since the digit and nature have no boundaries in space and time, then the art objects of the "digit" purview may be created using natural materials, while the nature-related objects may be created of "digits".

It is also important to note that the art objects have not only contributed to creating an aesthetic learning space. The sensory perception of the art objects sparked a strong motivation in the students to study and master the principles of the "terra" technique, to actively search for the own concept of art object and to implement this concept by their own initiative. And this can already be seen as the shaping of certain aesthetic value orientations.

Purposeful aestheticization of the learning space by means of art objects may have a positive impact on the harmonization of the emotions of students, on the fostering of aesthetic value orientations, on acquisition of the universal ideals of goodness

and beauty, which is a powerful factor in mitigating the personality deformations against the backdrop of digitalization.

This research revealed another important factor. Inclusion of objects with an aesthetic appeal into the learning space not only contribute to instilling certain values in a person. Such objects encourage students to express creativity, which validates the conclusions of R.G. Dzyubenko (2019): the "aesthetic forms" are not only the conduit of cultural values, but are also prompting "the revival of an active subject being the carrier of an aesthetic value". In the process of emotional and sensory perception and examination of the art objects, the mental activity for their aesthetic evaluation is triggered and subconsciously the image is born which is of the greatest importance at that particular moment.

5 Conclusion

The art objects used for decorating the learning space in the Design Studio "Ochertanie" for children highlighted the need of organizing the learning environment for the sake of aesthetic appearance.

The inclusion of art objects in the interior of the design studio created a certain mood, organized the learning space, and filled it with certain meaning, emotional, sensory and aesthetic content. The questionnaire survey among the students of the Design Studio "Ochertanie" led us to the conclusion that the art objects in the learning space are those components that contribute to the aesthetics of the learning space, development of the artistic taste, and activate the aesthetic and value orientations of students.

Thus, when the learning space is filled with objects and things that bring aesthetic pleasure, the students will develop a harmonious perception of reality and the surrounding world that is not limited to the computer characters, games and robots, but is full of interesting, exciting, creative and simply beautiful things created by human and warmed by the flames of his soul.

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