

Research on the Value of Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Game Education Philosophy in Contemporary Early Childhood Education

Jiaqi Li¹ Xiaogeng Li²

^{1,2} *Institute of Education and Science, Jinlin Engineering Normal University, Changchun, Jinlin 130062, China*

² *Corresponding author.*

ABSTRACT

The deepening reform of preschool education in the new era, the emergence of numerous early childhood education institutions, and the increasing importance of early childhood education are important opportunities for the revitalization of Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's game education philosophy. Frobel was the first person to articulate the functionality and value of games. Using literature research and historical research methods, and combining Chinese and foreign research results, this study explores Frobel's educational exploration from his youth, adolescence, middle age to old age, as well as his learning and teaching methods, publication of the book "Die Menschenerziehung", and educational practice of opening kindergartens. It is found that his ideas have gone through three stages of "germination, formation, and development". In Frobel's view, education conforms to the principles of nature, early education is crucial, games are important means, and family education is required, containing important implications for the artistic potential, physical, mental, and sensory development of young children, as well as the goals of early childhood education.

Keywords: *Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel, Game, Early childhood education*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of deepening the reform of preschool education, the authors of this paper analyze Chinese and foreign research results, propose the theoretical and practical significance of studying Frobel's game education philosophy, as well as use literature research and historical research methods to sort out Frobel's game education philosophy, analyze their historical value, and complete exploration and thinking in the field of early childhood education.

1.1 Research Background

Early childhood education is an important foundation for cultivating talents and has significant implications for the development of education. In recent years, early childhood education has received increasing attention from the state. The Central Committee of the Communist

Party of China and the State Council have issued several opinions on deepening the reform and standardized development of early childhood education, making significant decisions and deployments on deepening the reform and standardized development of early childhood education in the new era. It is pointed out that kindergartens should widely solicit and select high-quality game activity resources that are suitable for the physical and mental characteristics of young children, and provide them with safe, rich, and suitable game materials and learning tools for learning and exploration.

1.2 Research Overviews

Research overviews are divided into foreign research reviews and Chinese research reviews.

¹ Jiaqi Li, an undergraduate student, Department of Preschool Education, Jilin Engineering Normal University.

1.2.1 Overviews of Relevant Foreign Research

P. John studied ten "gifts" curriculum materials created by Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel for children and believed that courses constructed with "gifts" materials can stimulate young children's potential from beginning to end, and are the guide for today's education. H. J. Klein believed that Froebel's educational philosophy is an evergreen tree in education, capable of overcoming the constraints of time and playing the best role in today's education. Dorothy W. Hewes thought that Froebel's educational philosophy advocates early education with the aim of cultivating young children's thinking and psychological resilience to adapt to the constantly changing social environment.

1.2.2 Overview of Relevant Chinese Research

From the search of Chinese literature, there is currently a lot of research on Froebel's educational philosophy. Li Ming believed that education should conform to the natural nature of children. Introducing the concept of "gifts" into the game process has expanded and deepened the game process. Family life is crucial for children's growth and development. Dan Zhonghui discussed Froebel's kindergarten learning theory, as well as the rich auxiliary tools and game based learning specifically designed for young children.

1.2.3 Review of Existing Research

Overall, research on Froebel's educational philosophy both domestically and internationally has provided abundant resources for the study of Froebel. However, there is relatively little research on Froebel's game education philosophy, which makes the analysis of Froebel's game education philosophy lack basis. Therefore, information about Froebel's game based teaching methods and early childhood education has important reference value for studying Froebel's game based teaching methods and game early childhood education.

1.3 Theoretical Significance

On the basis of existing research, a comprehensive review of Froebel's life and educational activities, as well as the sources and formation of his game education philosophy, will be conducted to elucidate the value of Froebel's game education philosophy for contemporary early

childhood education, which will help lay a theoretical foundation for subsequent related research, deepen understanding of early childhood education, and provide theoretical guidance for future early childhood education.

1.4 Practical Significance

It is of great significance to use literature research and historical research methods to comprehensively understand Froebel's game education philosophy, identify problems, and propose educational values that meet the requirements of the times based on his ideas, in order to test practice, provide guidance for related practices in early childhood education, and fully leverage the advantages of Froebel's game education philosophy to achieve the maximization of the application effect of game education philosophy.

1.5 Research Methods

The research methods mainly include literature research and historical research.

1.6 Research Ideas

Based on existing research on Froebel's educational philosophy, starting from analyzing Froebel's life and educational activities, this study explores the sources, formation, and development of Froebel's game education philosophy, summarizes the main content of Froebel's game education philosophy, and finally proposes its value for contemporary early childhood education, in order to provide useful references for early childhood education practice.

2. FRIEDRICH WILHELM FROBEL'S LIFE AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

During his youth, Froebel was deeply influenced by nature. In his youth and middle age, he entered university to study and publish monographs. In his old age, he actively worked for the education industry. He has accumulated a wealth of teaching practice experience, including learning the teaching methods of the Pestalozzi school, publishing the book "Die Menschenerziehung", and opening kindergartens.

2.1 Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Boyhood

Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel was born on April 21, 1782 in the German countryside of Thuringian. He was the son of a pastor and the youngest of five children in the family. Frobel's mother passed away nine months after his birth. Due to changes in the environment and mental isolation, Frobel developed an introverted personality and did not like to make friends.

2.2 Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Youth and Middle Age

In 1800, Frobel entered Jena University with the support of a forestry officer, but two years later he had to leave due to financial difficulties. In 1805, he began his academic career. In 1817, Frobel opened a school in his own home, where he realized his educational ideas. From 1820 to 1824, Frobel wrote seven papers and published "Die Menschenerziehung" in 1826.

2.3 Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Old Age

In 1837, Frobel opened a kindergarten in Brandenburg and published a monograph called "Mother's Songs and Singing Games". In his later years, he was persecuted for actively participating in the progressive teacher conference demanding state subsidies for kindergartens. He was declared an opposition to the government and was no longer allowed to serve as a teacher in Prussia. In 1852, Frobel passed away.

2.4 Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Early Educational Activities

In 1805, Frobel went to Switzerland to study the teaching methods of the Pestalozzi school. Pestalozzi's teaching attracted him, and his teaching methods were vivid and attractive, pointing the way for the future of students. Frobel studied Rousseau's Emile theory that "experience comes from children", reflected on the education of Pestalozzi and Rousseau, and drew lessons from it. He was determined to devote all his time to education.

2.5 Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Mid-term Educational Activities

In 1811, Frobel entered the University of Göttingen to study, feeling that he needed to study a wide range of subjects to study human education. In 1812, Frobel came to the University of Berlin to

study minerals, crystallization, and physics under the guidance of Professor William. In 1826, he published "Die Menschenerziehung".

2.6 Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Late Educational Activities

In 1836, Frobel returned to his hometown in Thuringia, where he began providing advice and assistance to his mother in educating young children. In 1837, Frobel established an institution in Blankenburg to educate preschool children aged 3 to 7, which was renamed kindergarten in 1840.

3. THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FRIEDRICH WILHELM FROBEL'S GAME EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

In the 18th century, Germany was in a "rational era", and the formation of Frobel's ideas on game education was deeply influenced by his family and society. His childhood experiences planted seeds for Frobel's thinking about humans, nature, and God. In this context, the formation of Frobel's ideas on game education went through stages of germination, formation, and development.

3.1 The Family Background of the Formation of Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Game Education Philosophy

Frobel's young soul was gradually attracted by flowers, plants, and trees, experiencing the truth and mysteries of the universe in nature, and sprouting the seeds of game education philosophy. Uncle not only warmed Frobel's soul, but also subtly conveyed powerful and sincere messages. This led Frobel to the idea that humans, nature, and the Creator are inseparable in education, and education must establish harmony between them.

3.2 The Social Background of the Formation of Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Game Education Philosophy

At that time, Germany presented a very complex and diverse form. Under the influence of such an era where rationalism and romanticism coexist, Frobel's educational philosophy underwent new changes and developments.

3.3 *The Embryonic Stage of Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Game Education Philosophy*

In 1792, Frobel was sent to live with his pastor's uncle, who "preached with love and kindness, making Frobel believe in a more compassionate way of understanding God and gaining recognition from Christian doctrine. This acceptance and participation completely liberated Frobel's soul, making his love for nature increasingly integrated with his love for God.

3.4 *The Formation Period of Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's Game Education Philosophy*

In the summer of 1805, Frobel visited Pestalozzi's school. During this period, Frobel gained basic knowledge about the school system, but this experience did not satisfy him. The main reason why he was dissatisfied with the Pestalozzi School was that the curriculum was insufficient and inconsistent. In 1807, Frobel became the tutor of three boys. The biggest gain among them is that Frobel discovered the consistency between early childhood development and natural development in practice.

3.5 *The Development Period of Friedrich Wilhelm Frobel's game education philosophy*

In July 1811, Frobel entered the University of Göttingen and studied there for a year and a half. In July 1814, he was appointed as an assistant to Professor Weiss at the Museum of Mineralogy at the University of Berlin. In 1826, "Die Menschenerziehung" was published. At that time, there was no general German ideological content that reconciled religious, philosophical, and artistic education, as seen in Frobel. Thus, Frobel's game education philosophy gradually developed.

4. THE MAIN CONTENT OF FRIEDRICH WILHELM FROBEL'S GAME EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

The main content of Frobel's game education philosophy starts from the following four aspects: education should follow the principles of nature, early childhood education is crucial, games are

important content and means, and game education requires family education.

4.1 *Education Being Able to Conform to the Principles of Nature*

Frobel's ideas on game based teaching can be traced back to the principle of education conforming to nature. Frobel believed that nature is the best teacher for young children, and he followed the principle of conforming to nature when designing toys, that is, imitating nature, so that young children can understand and understand nature through games. Just like the growth of plants, education is a process of growth, and growth has natural laws that must be followed. Adhering to educational laws means interacting with the environment, allowing young children to discover their true nature when exposed to the external world of people and things.

4.2 *Early Childhood Education Being Crucial*

Frobel fully realized the importance of early childhood education. He believed that the foundation of an individual's understanding of themselves, society, parents, and nature is formed during this stage of life, therefore, he claims that "true human education" begins in early childhood. Early education for young children is nothing more than understanding the entire nature and essence of young children, and comprehensively understanding them as much as possible.

4.3 *Games Being Important Content and Means*

Frobel emphasized that games are important educational content and means in early childhood education. He believed that games play a crucial role in the development of young children. When a child's internal development reaches a certain level, he or she must express himself or herself externally in some way, and games can meet this need. The needs, curiosity, and initiative of young children are mainly expressed through games, which have a direct impact on their lives and education.

4.4 *Game Education Requiring Family Education*

Frobel emphasized the role of the family in early childhood play education, believing that "in early childhood, parents and families still have full

responsibility for their children and their education". Children and family members are essentially a whole and cannot be separated. Family life has a significant impact on a child's development, which inevitably depends on it. A good family life is crucial for a child's development. Children need family education.

5. THE VALUE OF FRIEDRICH WILHELM FROBEL'S GAME EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY ON CONTEMPORARY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The value of Frobel's game education philosophy to contemporary early childhood education mainly includes the gamification of curriculum to develop children's artistic potential, the development of children's physical and mental health through games, the redefinition of the purpose of early childhood education through games, and the training of children's sensory development through games. The authors explore the value of Frobel's game education philosophy in contemporary early childhood education from these four parts, namely inspiring and contemplating early childhood education.

5.1 Gamification of Curriculum Promoting the Development of Early Children's Artistic Potential

Frobel's game and activity theory suggests that games and activities should be considered in the organization and implementation of early childhood education curriculum. In art courses, games are also an effective tool to help early children develop their aesthetics. Early children are self-actualizing creatures. Children learn about themselves and their abilities through games, train their driving forces, and stimulate their potential through activities and work. It is obvious that activities are the essence of early children and their life.

5.2 Games Being Able to Promote the Physical and Mental Health Development of Young Children

Frobel was an educator who placed great emphasis on games and action. Frobel firmly believed that games and activities are beneficial for developing young children's thinking, imagination, and creativity. Games exist for young children from birth and are destined to develop their physical

senses and limbs. "Activities and games are the first phenomenon in early childhood life, and also the external manifestation of their inner essence or creativity."

5.3 Games Being Able to Redefine the Purpose of Early Childhood Education

In Frobel's kindergarten, the basic idea is to help young children express themselves and develop. Children entering kindergarten and receiving their enlightenment education should receive the cultivation of good habits, training their physical and sensory functions, helping them establish good attitudes, and developing their sociality, rather than receiving some language cramming knowledge.

5.4 Gift Games Being Able to Train Young Children's Sensory Development

In his book "Kindergarten Education", Frobel believed that educators need to provide a new and useful game to promote young children's more comprehensive and specific understanding of the world, develop intelligence, and gain life experiences. The name gift means "this toy is a gift from God to children". There are six types of gifts, composed of balls and blocks with different division of labor.

6. CONCLUSION

Frobel was the founder of modern preschool education. Not only he founded the first kindergarten, but his educational philosophy still holds a dominant position in today's preschool education theory. Frobel's educational philosophy and practice have had a profound impact on the development of early childhood education in countries around the world. His game education philosophy has had a profound impact on contemporary early childhood education in China. The game education ideology advocates that "education should conform to nature", "early childhood education is crucial", "games are important content and means", and "game education requires family education". The game education philosophy makes the curriculum gamified and children's potential fully developed, allowing children's physical and mental health to develop through games, redefining the purpose of early childhood education, and training children's sensory development.

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