

## Neuropedagogical and Psychological Aspects of Play

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**Abstract:** *A new article by Ukrainian experts in ethno-pedagogy for the first time in science maximally summarizes the neuro-pedagogical, psychological and social potential of human development through the reproduction of folk games. The aim of the article is not only to consider the thematic diversity, but also to demonstrate how Ukrainian folk children's games and ancient adult games have a natural influence on the formation of worldview, socialization and maturity with the involvement of physical, neurophysiological and psycho-pedagogical mechanisms. Using general scientific, historical and neuroscientific methods, we proved the imitative, compensatory, sublimational, imitative, ritual and entertaining nature of folk games. Within the limits and possibilities available to the authors, neuroscientific commentary is presented to substantiate the underlying functions and mechanisms of folk games. The main result of the article is the creation of the fullest possible classification of the developing educational potential of folk games at two levels of generalization (general pedagogical aspects and specific functions). The authors were also able to review related literature on the topic, identify valuable observations and gnostic lacunas in need of scientific explication and explanation.*

**Keywords:** *Folk game; archetypal mechanism; simulation activity; neuropedagogical resource; genre diversity; adult games.*

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## Introduction

There are no unimportant topics, methods, and means of educating children (pedagogy proper), youth, and adults (andragogy) for today's pedagogy. After the postmodern experience of the humanities, all historical, traditional and innovative fields must undergo a final re-inventarization, reassessment and revision in terms of a multimodal approach. Such an approach was finally established in the so-called "sociohistoric sciences," to which we can refer educationology in the broad sense. For us, Ukrainian scientists, it is very important to find previously unexplored potentialities of ethnic, folklore, historical and cultural heritage for the formation of a new free and democratic generation against the background of military and political peripeteia. We do not doubt that it is also important for other nations, especially for those who were subject to colonial oppression and have not yet fully disclosed the educational, value and cultural-psychological resource of their own heritage. Therefore, in this article, we will look up and reflect upon a neglected problem - the educational potential of folk games.

The relevance of the article. Clearly, the relevance of this topic is not exhausted by the above-mentioned general philosophical considerations. In reviewing the relevant literature, we found some problems and contradictions that prompted us to write the article.

The first problem concerns excessive attention of scientists to children's games and their classification. As correctly noted by folklorist K. Lázár in his work "Typology of folk games" (1999), it is possible to classify them according to subjects, participants, time of playing, and all elements of the game itself, Lázár (1999, p. 25). However, the researcher himself admits that no classification can be either complete or complete. When we studied the relevant literature, we noticed that behind the participants games are classified most often into child, adolescent, boy and girl games. And almost nowhere are games for adults or games without ages analyzed.

In addition, we have not found any complete classification of folk games by educational potential or other educational aspects. In our study we will try to fill this lacuna as much as possible, and we will consider games as a universal phenomenon.

Another problem is that in the study of folk games scientists mostly pay attention to the cultural and ethno-pedagogical aspects, and the underlying determinants of psychological mechanisms remain without attention. Thus, A. Reid notes that folk physical (motor, game) practices

correspond to either common sense or the folk-psychological concept of a moment in life. The author suggests that in the future the latter correspondence will be reconsidered and interpreted on a conceptual neuroscientific basis, Reid (1999, p. 101). The author makes hypothetical connections between folk rituals and the neuropsychological mechanisms of their efficacy and identifies four perspectives: "conceptual dualism, eliminative materialism, reductivism and non-reductive physicalism", Reid (1999, p. 101). It is clear that all aspects can be valid, but it is clear that there is unequivocally a conventionality, an internal normativity, and most importantly, a naturalness, a need, and an instinctive origin in folk movements and physical exercises.

We have tentatively evaluated these considerations and contradictions and formulated our purpose for our article:

**Presupposition of research** we consider the thesis that deep psychological and pedagogical mechanisms governing the game, are similar to those that govern the transformative activity in life practice. Thus, play is imitation, reproduction or rehearsal of life processes and phenomena, and participants do not draw a clear boundary between play and life. This is supported by the opinion of neuroscientists K. Barker and C. Rice (2019): "Taken together as a genre of folklore, folk illusions show that people from a young age have an awareness of the illusory tendencies of perceptual processes, and also an awareness that the differences between illusion and reality are always formed together".

### **Data saturation**

To begin with, we studied theoretical works and collections of folklore materials. We also studied literature describing ethno-game education of youth and even its elements and role in the adult life of Ukrainians. In addition, we conducted a survey of 57 Ukrainian primary and secondary school teachers in the Kyiv region. The sample is not representative because it was conducted only in 4 institutions of secondary education, but it shows the basic tendency of understanding traditional educational gamification. The survey itself was conducted using an open-ended questionnaire, the purpose of which was to identify the educational aspects, methods and expected purposes of the use of folk games. Didactic materials containing folk game elements as a way to influence young people were also studied.

### **Purpose of the article**

The aim of the article is to define, generalize and classify the educational potential of folk games on the material of Ukrainian ethnic heritage. At the same time we will make comments on the following aspects: analysis of materials on the existence and functioning of Ukrainian folk games, accompanying a person throughout his life, illustration of these games by vivid representations, as well as clarification of the psychological and neurophysiological nature of certain principles, attributes and functions.

### **Methods**

In the process of scientific research the following methods were used:

General scientific - analysis, systematization, classification for generalization of information from scientific sources, where the problems of the influence of ethnopedagogy on the formation of a full-fledged and nature-responsible person are presented.

Historical - historical-comparative, chronological, typological and retrospective methods (to analyze the preservation of ancient Ukrainian traditions of game culture and their extrapolation to the newest understanding of human formation).

Psycho-pedagogical - relevant analysis of folklore content, extrapolation of neuroscientific provisions to neuro-pedagogical, psychological and social phenomena occurring during folk games.

### **International significance of the article**

In the article, the authors have summarized the spectrum of educational potential of folk games for children and adults for the first time on a multifunctional principle, taking into account the latest cultural and neuropedagogical theories. This data may be useful for the countries of the Old World, which have recently distanced themselves from the traditional and eternally relevant potential of folklore heritage and excessively extrapolated its artifacts to the newest values. The article may be of interest to psychologists of cultural, behavioral and analytical direction, educational practitioners and theorists of educational science in its actual and diachronic sections.

## **Ethics of the study**

The teachers who participated in the survey gave their voluntary consent. We also notified them about the use of sociological data in writing the scientific article. All fragments of folklore used are quoted with a call to the source, and the scientific conclusions belong to the authors of the article.

## **Neuropedagogical and psychological aspects of play. What do scientists write?**

In scientific discourse there are many publications about child's play as an element of his/her natural behavior from the point of view of psychology and pedagogy, so in this section we will dwell on the less illuminated aspects.

Not so long ago, psychologists proved the mutually stimulating function of children's play and motor activity: play and motor activity stimulate cognitive and creative activity and vice versa. And the lack of one of these spheres causes deficiency in the other. Moreover, scientists argue that physical and play activity increases motivation for cognitive and creative activity (Gearin & Fien, 2016).

It is positive that the traditional, the deep and the ethnomental in the XXI century became a subject of neuroscience study. For example, the importance of play and motor activity has contributed to debunking the myth about the existence of so-called "left-brain" and "right-brain" people. It has been investigated that the connection between hemispheres is much more complex, often complementary and mutually deterministic, which allows a person to solve life tasks in an unconventional way (Lindell & Kidd, 2011).

There is experience in science to classify sensual or visual folklore images as folk illusions. On the purely neurophysiological side, this is characteristic of younger children. However, they may be stimulated in folk acts: *Folk illusions are traditional verbal and/or physical acts performed with the intention of creating a phantasm for one or more participants* (Barker & Rice, 2019). Researchers Barker and Rice created a catalog of more than 80 folk illusions, taking into account cognitive, neurophysiological, and folkloristic parameters. For the study of the neurophysiology of play this is of exceptional importance, because most play attributes and objects do not exist in reality, but are contained in the imagination of participants, even adults.

An important pedagogical natural specificity of children's play is its independence and even detachment from adults. Neurophysiological bases of independent creative or transformative activity are found to be based on specific brain chains (Dietrich, 2004; Kosholap et al., 2021; Prots et al., 2021). And one can observe a difference between activities (creativity, play) that are coercive (e.g., by the teacher) and the emotional outburst, insight, inspiration of the children themselves without directive intervention. This discovery explains why children self-initiate in play and avoid ordinary conditions with the presence of adults.

In recent years, neuroscientists, educators and rehabilitators have appreciated the recreational, developmental and entertaining possibilities of games so much that they began to include folk games from different countries of the world in therapeutic programs. For example, D. Santhosh, A. Shanthi, and others have researched some Indian games and concluded: they improve personal and team coordination, help focus, improve children's attention, concentration, memory, and physical health in general (Santhosh et al., 2019). So far, the developmental and therapeutic effect of folk games is applied to children, including as a counterbalance to game gadgets that contribute to scoliosis, obesity, myopia, etc. However, we predict that soon the potential of games will also be applied to the valeology of the adult population in rehabilitation and andrology in general.

Ethnic games of the peoples of the world, honed to the maximum simplicity and effectiveness, attract the attention of psychologists and neurorehabilitologists as methods of play and art therapy. In 2020, for example, a group of neurorehabilitation therapists videotaped and analyzed the ten most common types of Indian folk games for the therapy of children with nervous system disorders, based on a functional conceptual model using a six-point Likert scale. Researchers concluded that these games are neurophysiologically the most appropriate for such therapy: they engage basic neural connections, do not require complex conditions or tools, and are universal for children with different lateral profiles and nosologies (Rahman et al., 2020). It can be assumed that neurophysiological and psychological observations in their naïve form were observed and recorded by peoples long ago, so the development of children without the presence of educators or certain institutions was quite harmonious at that time.

It is interesting to trace the connection between folk games and neurosociology, which has been gaining ground in recent years. V. Chernushevich qualifies a folk game as *a dynamic model of social relations within a*

*cultural tradition*, Chernushevich (2012). In this case the scientist determined that in the game, as well as in social relations, the same psychological and neurophysiological mechanisms of the group operate: a wide range of emotions, conventionality, hierarchy, psychological contagion, imitation, conformism, etc.

The main power and attraction of any game is strong emotions, which naturally act as a stimulus and are anchored in the subcortex. Today's neurophysiologists generally consider emotions to be the most powerful motor of activity in children and adults: *Emotions influence the quality and intensity of such higher cognitive processes as memory, attention, interest. As a result, motivation of independent activity and activity.* Because of the absence in antiquity of out-of-body sources of emotion (electronic games, gadgets) a game next to oral folklore became almost the only virtual reality that could simulate the world.

Let us write a few more opinions on the thematic-problematic current approaches in the regional dimension. We see that the greatest attention to the role of ethnic games in children's education is paid by scholars in the African, Asian, and, to a lesser extent, Eastern European regions, Ismoilovich (2021). We have our own thoughts about this trend: in Western Europe and the United States the relevance of ethno-game pedagogy is minimal, and an explanation can be found.

In the educational traditions of the United States it is customary to consider the educational potential of folk games as a component of general culture, sport, personal activity, and hobby, Cliff (1992). We do not try to downplay the ethnic, outwardly playful culture of the United States, but we understand that it is largely synthetic, with a shorter history than the play culture of the peoples of the "old world" and "philosophical Asia" with its oriental traditions. Moreover, we consider the play heritage of Western Europe and the USA as more open, more integrated into current forms of folk consciousness and come to the conclusion: the more garmetic and/or marginal the folk culture is, the greater the special educational role of its folklore heritage plays. The latter remains "pure", tends to pass on traditions and not multiply them at the expense of newer cultural achievements and artifacts. We also compared the way of the current development of folk games and their educational potential in the United States and Ukraine and saw: for Americans diachrony and polychrony are interesting - the synthesis of tradition and modernity (Grundy, & Rader, 2018). As for Ukrainians, it seems as if they have "stopped" at old games, traditions and rituals and try to

transfer their educational potential, bypassing modernist, postmodernist and post-industrial contamination of folklore heritage.

As the final thesis of this section we give a functional generalization: the psychotherapeutic role of folklore games is *an opportunity to experience in a safe environment the difficulties of life, such as fears, acquire the ability to give in, rejoice, worry for another, tolerate, unselected and simply physical pain*, Chernushevich (2014).

### **Ukrainian folk gamesphere: themes, features, functions, current dimensions**

The historical role of Ukrainian games extends from mythology and the first crafts (hunters, fishermen, farmers) - to socialization and spontaneous pedagogy, necessary for people in the absence of formal institutions in these areas. However, we believe that all previous historical roles of Ukrainian folk games remain to this day in an atavistic, somewhat hidden form. New functions are layered over the old ones and nourished by their ritual, mythological or other ethno-cultural content. At the same time, the main gamified environment has traditionally been the family. Researchers of Ukrainian ethnopedagogy define the traditional Ukrainian family as follows: *it is a small social group, predominantly two- or several-generational, whose main tasks in the pedagogical context were reproduction of the ethno-national community, teaching and education of children, retranslation of cultural values, recreation, socialization*, Rusyn (2021, p. 17).

All peoples have a stereotype that folk games are something childish or related to entertainment. However, our scholars have proved that in no culture of the world folk games acquire new functions even while preserving their general archaic and stereotypical nature, Davyduyk (2014, p. 179). It is now clear to everyone that folk play is a primitive simulacrum and a "rehearsal" of the traditional way of adult life with its obligatory or possible components.

Before making important pedagogical and psychological generalizations for our article, we would like to briefly go over the thematic-ideological and plot specificity of the most typical Ukrainian folk games and make our own observations and reflections on their formative influence on children and adults.

Note that almost all games derive from childhood, some from ancient rituals and ceremonies. The neuro-pedagogical nature of children's games is most clear, but scientists have noted: *A notable place in the development of speech of preschool children is children's folklore, consisting of works of adults, which*

*later became children's, and combining such genres as appeals, prithets, choruses, game songs and songs, Stelmakhovich (1985, p. 260).*

We qualify such games as accompanying games. They are not an end in themselves and are meant to optimize a routine process or other play. Such procedural ethnic artifacts have lost the original meaning of adulthood or its accompanying simulation and are now completely transferred to the children's foundation. It is in this adult-child parallel that we see powerful pedagogical and subject-oriented neuropsychological potential. Here we refer to peculiar folk "game applications" to life: "Grushka", "Gorobeiko", "Perepilka", "Kryvyi tanets", "Koza", "Kray dolyny mak", "Zhenchychok-brenchychok", etc.). The place of choruses in the game and their compositional functions are quite diverse. The neurophysiological aspect of such games consists in increased subjectivity and responsibility. Such games have obligatory components. With them the game begins or ends. In them we can observe an expressive projection on the future adult activity and life: they can connect different play styles, actions, give instructions on the organization and course of the game, distribution of roles between its participants. However, the children's psyche is still syncretic, so children simultaneously play, sing and verbally comment on their actions.

*Games-rituals* are aimed at the symbolic reproduction of the praxeological aspects of life and are often associated with the annual or life cycle. It is clear that now such cyclicity is practically "smoothed out" by the jump-like nature of life today, but participants still play these rituals, understanding the conventionality of cyclicity and the importance of practice. Scholars qualify such games as a folk drama with a plot, a culmination, a goal, etc.

The most striking, typical examples of folk drama are: Christmas-New Year, Spring-Easter, Ivan Kupala, Wedding, Initial, Kostyk (1999, p. 79). Drama creates/shows the action. Energetic mental resources here enter, in our opinion, two: mystery (sacredness, action) and physical pleasure arising from the exercise of the neuromuscular system. The latter becomes a more or less conscious motive for action, and the latter constitutes play. An indisputable condition of any game is the impulse to move, and the pleasure associated with it is a stimulus for games, but every game must have a vital meaning. In our opinion, imitation of older individuals, a long-standing relic mechanism of acquiring experience for survival, which is characteristic not only of humans, is important in such games.

Games-dances fulfilled the function of socialization, bodily contact and communication in the context of puberty and future dates of youth.

They used to be syncretic and therefore magical: maturing of a body was associated with a call to sow a field, to increase a crop ("Verbova doshechka", "Vesnyanky", "Kryvyi tanets"). We shall not stop on processual specificity of these games, but we shall note: their neurophysiological extrapolation allows to assume: the girls participating in such games were not simply a symbol of youth and new life, but also embodied a natural cycle in a physiological lunar cycle of a mature girl. Such games were often accompanied by "imprisonment" or catching the girl, simulating her unfreedom. The archetypal psychological interpretation of such an action, in our opinion, has mythological roots (sacrifice), but the neurophysiological triggers of *gayevnany* games are in the hidden attraction of a girl to a guy, to marriage ("to paradise"). It is known that in ancient times the level of sublimation of natural energies was very high due to excessive severity of marriage morality.

*Friendly games.* This type of games was carried out on holidays (for example, Easter) between adult girls ("kachechka") and guys ("gambas"). The neurophysiological resource of maiden's game is in the need to form a dexterous and flexible woman-wife, who in the future would have time to quickly and qualitatively serve the family life and flirt with her husband. It is interesting to reflect on the boys' games. They almost always had an adversarial nature of the physical, mental or moral-will plan. They clearly show a subconscious search for the "alpha-dominant" and archaic pack-type relationships, where the biggest choice would be the strongest "male".

*Games of the summer cycle.* We will not dwell on the entire annual cycle, but we will demonstrate this type of games with the example of winter actions. Winter is the richest time of year for adult and children's games, because then the greatest time for resolution. The winter cycle of holidays of the Ukrainian people is also extremely rich in a variety of games with songs: carols and shchedrivkas, as well as cross-dressing with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic masks. These games are simultaneously a cycle of simulations of natural phenomena and a time of "to ask for protection" of the forces of nature, such as "Koza (goat)", "Malanka". The role of the "goat" was played by a guy dressed in a coat with the wool upwards. The tail was made of straw, and horns were attached to the front, to which bells were attached. The goat was led by a bearded "oldman". With the goat went around all the yards. There was singing in the yard:

*Ho, ho, ho, goat,*

*Ho, ho, gray*

*Ho, ho, went*

*And to Nekhailovka*, Kurochkin (1978, p. 80)

The storyline of the song was actually a script by which the action itself unfolded. The carolers sang that "the goat fell down," and it really fell on the floor and rose at the words "oh get up, goat". The unity of a word and action, their synchronous connection is a characteristic and very longstanding feature of Ukrainian folk art.

Ukrainian scientists argue as follows: *Anthropomorphic masks "Oldman" and "Oldwoman" together with zoomorphic masks reflect the picture of the worldview of ancestors in a combination of pagan faith and Christian religious beliefs with animistic and totemistic elements associated with the cult of ancestors*, Shchegelskyi (2011). This can be linked to archetypal representations hidden in the depths of the brain. These representations are characterized by syncretism and "animality" of everything natural (animism). Also the calendar customs of Ukrainians are characterized by a close intertwining of agrarian and marriage magic.

*Rite games.* Let us cite one of the varieties containing thanatological plots with participation of children, and sometimes adults ("Lubok", "Grushka"). If children's play of social gatherings or customs is easily explained by the mechanism of imitation, then the play of themes of death causes a special interest. Sometimes such games were carried out directly at funerals as accompanying. They relieved emotional stress and grief. For example, "Lopatka", "Vugol", "Zmurky", "Grushka".

Interesting for our article is the experience of neuroscientific research of death and the experience of death in folklore reflection, carried out this year by scientists S. Zochios, S. Zohios. It turned out that thanatological motifs pervade all folklore genres - fairy tales, folk beliefs and legends, songs, Zohios (2021). The article of these scholars does not talk about folk games, but in our study we see that games and game rituals also contain these motifs and even imitations of the action. Scholar S. Zochios are more interested in transcendental experiences of detachment from the body and subsequent plots of an encounter with the otherworld, and also in neuropsychological explanations of reflection of this theme in folklore. However, we assume that the same mechanisms operate in the ritual reproduction of death scenes, funerals, etc.

*Games-entertainment.* They were often used in conjunction with the performance of boring or daily labor by young shepherds, guards, etc. Children's games and amusements of shepherds, depending on the group, weather-climatic conditions, geographical location of a place of grazing of cattle or birds, acquired an inherited character. The preservation and

prevalence of one or another game were determined by the permanent location over the years of the pasture or herd on a plot of land separately determined by the society. However, the neuropsychological aspect of shepherd's games, in our opinion, was caused by the factor of extra time, and thus boredom to compensate, an excess of emotional and physical energy requiring either sublimation or exit; another factor was the absence in the open space of tools and props for the game. The neurophysiological essence of symbols and attributes is different. The paraphernalia of play must be distinguished from the paraphernalia that accompanied the shepherd on a daily basis. For example, the whistle, knife and stick can be considered from the neuropsychological point of view as symbols, protective mechanisms (amulets, with them not so scary and sad) and ways of self-identification. Also teenage children intuitively found solutions to personal or industrial conflicts.

Let's summarize this type of games in terms of neurosubjectivity: a temporary resource, the presence of a boy's herding team, clear regulation of the rules, and sometimes hierarchy helped initialize the boy through pain, competition, loss, responsibility, teamwork, etc.

Let's also note that participation of adults in actually children's games can be explained by the unrealized children's subpersonality in adults who are constantly busy and could not arbitrarily allow themselves a psychological and physical discharge. To this should be added low frequency and culture of sexual life, lack of "romanticism" in relationships, mentally and energetically stimulating adults to such games.

## **Conclusions and results**

Thus, as a result of the study of Ukrainian folk games we have traced their influence on the formation of the worldview of Ukrainians from pre-school age to adulthood, their mental and artistic abilities, physiological needs and desires. Among the genre diversity we can consistently identify games with songs, chorus, prithets to the youngest dances; calendar-ceremonial: game vesnyanky, theater winter games; family-ceremonial entertainment on dexterity; popular pastoral games and amusements, as well as partly adult games: female games related to marriage theme, which are studied less to date.

We have seen that there is a determinant connection between human neurophysiology and all higher forms of human activity and activities, thus proving scientists' opinion that traditionally physical aspects (movement,

play, dance) and traditionally spiritual (mental) aspects (thinking, attention), motivation, reflection) are in direct interdependence, Gruart (2014). The syncretism of ancient art, where movement and word were realized in a single performance, proves that the lifestyle of the ancestors was largely consistent with today's neuroscientific notions of subjectivity and the holistic "Ego".

The neurophysiological resources of the role in the games, first, were the stimulus of emotional pleasure and muscular discharge. Next we would place the reproduction of adult subjectivity and the sense of archetypal sacrality (agnosticism, mystique). As the level of sublimation of natural energies of ancient Ukrainians was very high, the struggle for alpha primacy, a test of courage and patience is clearly visible in boy games. Girls in mass games demonstrated readiness for marriage and embodied the natural cyclicity in its physiological bodily symbolism. Adult games, having lost their sacredness, were an instrument of mental discharge and diversion.

Phenomenological features (in neuroscience - stages) in the folklore reflection of death have a tendency to typicality, repetition. And according to our observations, they are accompanied not by protective mechanisms of death denial (as it is appreciable in the children's psyche), but on the contrary - acceptance and reconciliation.

It is possible to make a number of smaller conclusions, but in the end it is appropriate to summarize the thesis of V. Chernushevich that games, fairy tales, songs (all folklore) - are not simply entertainments, and even not simply a way of transfer of national culture. It is a social space in which relationships, hidden desires, and displaced emotions are played out. Here they are found in metaphorical, scriptural, often hyperbolized form, Chernushevich (2014).

The main achievement of the analysis and subsequent generalization we believe that for the first time we have developed a functional classification. We processed the obtained questionnaires by the method of keyword search, which allowed us to identify a wide range of general educated aspects and specific functions of folk games from the perspective of the today's educator. These data complemented the epistemes, which we extracted through a systematic analysis of the thematic scientific literature, followed by a generalization.

**Table 1.** General and specific aspects of Ukrainian upbringing with the help of folk games (multifunctional approach)

| <b>The level of generalization of influence</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| General aspects (according to the research of scientists)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Specific functions (as summarized by the authors of this article)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of the emotional-volitional and activity spheres</li> <li>2. Inclusion in pragmatically important types of communication</li> <li>3. Simulation of future adult life</li> <li>4. Moral restraining function</li> <li>5. Formation of a holistic view of social and life processes</li> <li>6. Inculcation of a traditional Ukrainian axiology</li> <li>7. Mythologization and conceptualization of the main life stages, values and goals</li> <li>8. Emotional coloring in different spheres of practical and spiritual activity</li> <li>9. Personal and group mythologization of the pragmatically important aspects of life</li> <li>10. Internalization of the traditional social order in relation to human practically</li> </ol> | <p><b>Self-formation ("Ego-formation")</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The acceptance of one's own bodily self, inner "selfhood" and existence</li> <li>2. Inclusion of the new subject into the society on the basis of fixed traditions</li> <li>3. Socialization and mitigation of crisis transitions between life roles, stages</li> <li>4. Being prepared for the existentially inevitable phenomena of life (illness, death)</li> </ol> <p><b>Forming attitudes and influencing people</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reinforcing moral group institutions</li> <li>2. Formation of kinship, social, and industrial hierarchies</li> <li>3. Gradual awareness of one's social and genetic role</li> </ol> <p><b>Forming attitudes toward and influences on the object-space environment</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Giving vital material objects a spiritual meaning</li> <li>2. Testing one's own attitude toward professional, transformative, creative and other practical activities</li> <li>3. Acquisition of basic skills of transformative activities</li> </ol> <p><b>Formation of attitudes toward intangible objects (values)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of national and national consciousness</li> <li>2. Development of respect to spiritual and cultural heritage</li> <li>3. Incorporation of traditional morals into personal behavioral guidelines</li> </ol> |

|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| oriented qualities                         | 4. Personal mythologization and axiologization of national symbols and objects ( <i>home, mother, bread, life, freedom, country, etc.</i> )                                                                                                                                            |
| 11. Maintenance of heredity of generations | <b>Formation of the attitude towards natural human needs and their cultural satisfaction</b>                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 12. Aesthetic education of man             | 1. The game fosters mutual responsibility in the process of satisfaction of needs<br>2. The game introduces a conventional way of solving personally significant requests<br>3. Forms the tabooed attitude towards socially unacceptable forms of public satisfaction of natural needs |

Source: Authors' own conception

As can be seen from the table, we were able not only to formulate 12 general aspects of the educational potential of folk games, but also on the authentic Ukrainian material to cluster specific functions within the formation of four areas of attitude: to themselves, others, the environment, intangible sphere and natural human needs. We noticed that the last direction is especially represented in the stories, images and rules of folk games, as it contains the most contradictions, taboos, conventions, ethical stereotypes and other mechanisms of domestication of the natural.

**Limitation of the study.** The authors went little into the specific narrative and textual features of folk games. Such detailed research could have significantly supplemented the conclusions made by the authors.

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