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Alexander Neill's «Summerhill» School as an Example of Successful Extrapolation of Psychoanalytic Theory into Pedagogical Practice

Школа «Саммерхілл» Олександра Нілла як приклад успішної екстраполяції психоаналітичної теорії в педагогічну практику

The article explicates the experience of successful extrapolation of psychoanalytic theory into pedagogical practice using the example of Alexander Neill's «Summerhill» free education school. It is argued that the basis of A. Neill's concept of education are psychoanalytical concepts, namely: classical psychoanalysis of S. Freud, individual psychology of A. Adler, character analysis and body-oriented therapy of W. Reich, humanistic psychoanalysis of E. Fromm. It was established that A. Neill managed to integrate the leading humanistic ideas of the psychoanalytic movement, enriching pedagogical theory and practice and expanding the influence of psychoanalysis on interdisciplinary research. The main principles of A. Neill's educational system, its general (basic) and special characteristics are clarified.

The article traces A. Neill's pedagogical progress, the evolution of his ideas from the first free education schools «Helleraw» in Dresden to the world-famous «Summerhill» school. Special attention is focused on the peculiarities of the activity of the «Summerhill» school. The organizational foundations of school functioning; approximate daily/weekly schedule; the basic principles of the education system at school; the organizational structure; the role of a teacher in the school education system; peculiarities of the educational process; positive results and achievements of the school education system, contradictions in the «Summerhill» school education system and its criticism are demonstrated.

It has been proved that the essence of A. Neill's concept of free education consists in giving children the freedom of emotional development, the right to independent organization of their lives, the possibility of natural development, ensuring a happy childhood by eliminating fear and pressure from adults. It is shown that the «Summerhill» school represents an interesting and innovative model of the organization of education and upbringing, which is based on the principles of freedom and self-governance and has its advantages and disadvantages, which require further research and discussion.

Keywords: *psychoanalytic pedagogy, psychoanalytic tradition, pedagogical concept, educational process, free education, freedom.*

У статті експліковано досвід успішної екстраполяції психоаналітичної теорії в педагогічну практику на прикладі школи вільного виховання «Саммерхілл» Олександра Нілла. Аргументовано, що підґрунтям концепції виховання О. Нілла є психоаналітичні концепції, а саме: класичний психоаналіз З. Фрейда, індивідуальна психологія А. Адлера, характероаналіз і тілесно-орієнтована терапія В. Райха, гуманістичний психоаналіз Е. Фромма. Встановлено, що О. Ніллу вдалося інтегрувати провідні гуманістичні ідеї психоаналітичного руху, збагативши педагогічну теорію і практику, та розширити вплив психоаналізу на міждисциплінарні дослідження. З'ясовано основні принципи виховної системи О. Нілла, її загальні (основні) й особливі характеристики.

У статті простежено педагогічний поступ О. Нілла, еволюцію його ідей від перших шкіл вільного виховання «Хеллерау» у Дрездені, до всесвітньовідомої школи «Саммерхілл». Особливу увагу зосереджено на особливостях діяльності школи «Саммерхілл». Продемонстровано організаційні засади функціонування школи; орієнтований розпорядок дня/тижня; основні засади системи виховання в школі; організаційну структуру; роль учителя в системі виховання школи; особливості освітнього процесу; позитивні результати та досягнення

системи виховання школи, протиріччя в системі виховання школи «Саммерхілл» та її критику.

Доведено, що сутність концепції вільного виховання О. Нілла полягає в наданні дітям свободи емоційного розвитку, права самостійної організації свого життя, можливості природного розвитку, забезпечення щасливого дитинства за допомогою усунення страху і тиску з боку дорослих. Показано, що школа «Саммерхілл» являє собою цікаву та інноваційну модель організації навчання й виховання, яка ґрунтується на принципах свободи та самоврядування і має свої переваги та недоліки, що вимагають подальшого дослідження й обговорення.

Ключові слова: психоаналітична педагогіка, психоаналітична традиція, педагогічна концепція, навчальний процес, вільне виховання, свобода.

Introduction / Вступ. The relevance of the problem of our research is determined by two positions: the importance of critical analysis of constructive interaction of psychoanalysis and pedagogy; the need to integrate psychoanalytic ideas into the overall picture of psychological and pedagogical ideas about human nature. Despite the wide popularity of the psychoanalytic theory, clinical, general psychological, socio-psychological aspects of psychoanalytic concepts are mostly explained in scientific discourse, and pedagogical aspects, unfortunately, remain outside the scientists' attention. Moreover, the problem of extrapolation of a huge corpus of original and innovative psychoanalytic ideas into pedagogical practice is still not sufficiently studied. Of particular interest is A. Neill's concept of free education, which is based on psychoanalytic ideas about the nature and peculiarities of the child's functioning.

Aim and Tasks / Мета та завдання. The article aims to explain the experience of extrapolating psychoanalytic theory into pedagogical practice using the example of A. Neill's «Summerhill» school.

Methods / Методи. The research used methods of disciplinary, general scientific and philosophical levels. The methodological basis of research is a systemic interdisciplinary approach. When using authentic texts by A. Neill, we use general scientific methods: analysis and synthesis, induction, deduction and analogy, abstraction, generalization, idealization, formalization.

Results / Результати. A. Neill graduated from the University of Edinburgh, worked in the publishing house of various magazines, including the international magazine «New Era», taught in rural schools and «free education» institutions of Bertrand Russell, «King Alfred's School», was engaged in educational work in correctional prison, which was managed by the teacher-psychoanalyst Homer Lane, under whose influence he became interested in the use of psychoanalysis in the educational process. He had a sharp negative attitude towards his contemporary English school, where corporal punishment was a common means of instilling obedience, good manners and strict discipline in students (Neill A., 1937).

After being at the front from 1916 to 1918, he suffered a severe nervous breakdown and on the recommendation of his psychotherapist, until 1920 he worked as an educator in an institution for juvenile delinquents, studied the works of psychoanalysts and the practice of psychoanalysis. In this institution, students were allowed to talk during lessons, enter and leave the classroom without permission, study the subjects that the students chose themselves. Teachers also taught the subjects they liked and knew best. Since 1920, A. Neill headed the «New Era» magazine, published sharp articles about pedagogical experiments and achievements, participated in congresses of the «new education» league. Thanks to his polemical articles, in the European pedagogical community, A. Neill began to be called the «terrible child» of extremist pedagogy in Great Britain (Ferriere A., 1950).

In 1921, A. Neill came to Dresden to prepare a series of articles about the «most interesting» experimental schools in Germany. In Dresden, he not only wrote several articles and books that made him a widely known writer-educator, but also worked for three years as a head of the school complex «Helleraw» (Neue Schule Helleraw), which became the prototype of his future first school «Summerhill».

Before the start of the First World War, «Helleraw» became the center of reformatory pedagogy in Germany. An architectural ensemble of art workshops, museums, theaters, «House of Festive Games» (a center for rhythmic gymnastics, hygiene, and training of gymnastics and physical culture teachers) was open for visitors. The «Helleraw» complex included: «Teacher's House», a forest school for children from 3 to 14 years old with nervous diseases, a vocational school, «Rural Educational Home Helleraw» – a «new boarding school» for teenagers from 14 to 18 years old, a full-time folk school for students from 6 to 16 years old, girls' and boys' schools with real gymnasium curricula, which included the study of two foreign languages, a wide range of natural and scientific disciplines and subjects of the aesthetic cycle. Punishment, examinations and evaluations in all types of «Helleraw» education

institutions were abolished (Neill A., 1972).

All schools employed teachers-reformers who widely practiced Socratic, heuristic, debating, research-experimental methods of work, and the work of student self-government was established. Students maintained friendly relations with students from other «new schools» in Western Europe. After the end of the First World War, during the years of the Weimar Republic, the folk school «Helleraw» became one of the most famous schools in Europe.

In 1921, A. Neill opened the «International School – Boarding School of Free Education» with a psychological, labor and artistic majors. When starting work, he declared that the key to understanding the behavior of his students, himself and other people was given to him by works of S. Freud «Interpretation of Dreams» and «Psychopathology of Everyday Life». In them he found confirmation of the basic idea that the teacher, the priest hates himself for the constant duty to always instruct. Through the mechanism of projection, they notice their shortcomings in others and continue to lead them – to salvation. In the theory of psychoanalysis, A. Neill was greatly impressed by the postulates of the formation of the mechanism of psychotraumatism and displacement, which he perceived as a dangerous force in the universal explanation of mental processes, which was characteristic of other teachers-psychoanalysts.

At the first meetings of the teaching staff of the school, A. Neill urged teachers to respect the rights of the child, allowed them to freely choose creative educational, craft, artistic, gymnastic and other activities. In pedagogical discussions, A. Neill argued for this approach to the educational process with an emphasis on the child's interests. He considered the child's interests as a central concept in pedagogy and the psychological basis of the «new education» movement, calling the child's interests the only criterion in the activity of a teacher (Neill A., 1922a). Management of Dresden schools gave A. Neill the opportunity to achieve almost absolute freedom in a school where it is not necessary to attend classes, where a student can be absent from class for months if he wants to, where there are no lesson schedules, rows of desks, lessons and classes themselves, and the teacher gives no instructions (Neill A., 1922b).

A. Neill had no doubt that through the consistent realization of his interests, the child would return to the bright, good part of his essence. During the period of the greatest fascination with the psychoanalytic theory of regression, A. Neill repeatedly encountered the phenomenon of aggressiveness in students with deviant behavior. He learned to listen to the child's demands, understand them and respond to them pedagogically correctly. The relationship between him and the students quickly acquired a therapeutic orientation and many of the most «difficult» children and teenagers soon took an active part in psychological discussions, which he often conducted in the evenings. A. Neill tried to combine S. Freud's interest and libido in one concept. He strove for a synthesis of two approaches to this concept – the teacher's and the psychoanalyst's. Through the psychoanalytic interpretation of interest, he unequivocally explained that it is precisely through interest that emotional discharge should occur. The goal of education is to provide an outlet for emotions in such a way that their suppression does not occur, and therefore, neurotic disorders do not arise in the future (Neill A., 1920). If A. Neill believed that the teacher's personal qualities could lead to actions that mentally traumatize the child, he immediately sought to remove the teacher from work. He demanded that the teacher be able to recognize the interests of the child and help him realize them (Neill A., 1945).

Following S. Freud, A. Neill held the opinion that the child lives in society and must learn to manage his instincts, needs with the help of the principle of reality and adapt in the environment. From a psychoanalytic point of view, in order to develop a strong «Ego»/»Self» in a child, it is necessary to give him the opportunity to communicate with those educators who are characterized by love and firmness, thanks to which they form these qualities in children, allowing, as S. Freud demanded, a subtle interaction of love and aggressiveness, which is the basis of the formation of «Ego»/»Self».

A. Neill considered the humanistic pedagogy of Germany to be more progressive compared to English, and was proud that he worked in one of the best reformatory schools in the world. The idea of free education of a child from the standpoint of psychoanalysis was developed by S. Isaacs in Great Britain in the first half of the 20th century. The main leitmotif of its concept was the assertion that freedom in an education institution will help overcome deviations and complexes in the child's development related to the educational process. In her opinion, the current pedagogical system of Great Britain was oversaturated with rules and prohibitions. The child was under total control, developing according to the trajectory clearly adjusted by the teacher, the upbringing of the child was carried out by methods of punishment and condemnation. According to S. Isaacs, the child should not be taught, but only his natural abilities should be revealed, freedom and play should be cultivated and encouraged in the pedagogical process. S. Isaacs proved that the game can play a leading role in

the learning process, becoming the child's main way of self-expression. Neurosis was interpreted in psychoanalysis as a consequence of suppression, oppression of the individual and this became one of the arguments in support of a liberal approach to education in advanced schools of Great Britain. The introduction of elements of psychoanalysis into the theory of education became a new moment in the development of pedagogical thought in Great Britain in those years (Isaacs, 1933).

In 1923, A. Neill returned to Great Britain, where he continued the work started in Germany. He founds a new school called «Summerhill», since 1927 to the present the school is located in Leiston, Suffolk.

Organizational foundations of «Summerhill» school functioning.

1. *Children are enrolled in school at the age of 5*, the oldest enrolled child can be 15 years old, preference is given to 7-year-old children.

2. *The total number of children* is from 40 to 100 people.

3. *By gender*, children are divided approximately equally.

4. *By age*, children are divided into 3 conditional groups: the youngest group – from 5 to 7 years old, the middle group – from 8 to 10 years old, the oldest group – from 11 to 16 years old.

5. *Placement of children* in school is based on age. Younger children are accommodated in a brick building, older children in summer houses. From 2 to 4 children live in the room (boys and girls live separately). Older teenage children have separate rooms (Vaughan M., 2006).

Approximate daily/weekly schedule of «Summerhill» school.

1. *Breakfast starts* at 8.15 and ends at 9.00.

2. *Classes start* at 9:00 a.m. and end at 1:10 p.m. The duration of the lesson is 40 minutes, an average of 5 lessons per day. Classes were held in a specific place at a specific time. With children of the younger group worked one teacher, who conducted classes not only in the classroom, but also in multidisciplinary workshops, changing locations.

3. *After lunch* – free time. At 16.00 – lunch.

4. *Evening creative classes* begin at 5:00 p.m.

5. *The time after classes* during the week was distributed as follows: Monday – watching movies; Tuesday – the author's psychological lectures for the teaching staff and children of the older group and reading with children of the younger group; Wednesday – dance evenings; Thursday – free evening; Friday – theatrical performances; Saturday – Summerhill school self-governance meeting. A new schedule was created each semester, taking into account the children's choices.

Basic foundations of the education system at the «Summerhill» school.

«Summerhill» school, created by A. Neill, is based on a number of principles that distinguish it from traditional education institutions. The main principles of the education system at the «Summerhill» school include:

1. *Freedom and self-government.* Children have freedom of choice and self-governance. They can decide for themselves what to do, how to allocate their time and how to study. Teachers do not impose certain tasks, daily routines or schedules, but help develop their independence and responsibility (Neill A., 1953).

2. *Respect for the child's individuality.* Each child is considered unique and their individual needs and interests are taken into account. Teachers try to create conditions in which each child can develop according to his abilities and preferences. There are no standard programs and requirements, each child can choose his own learning path.

3. *Equality and democracy.* All participants in the educational process have equal rights and opportunities. Decisions are made collectively, taking into account the opinion of each participant. Teachers and students discuss and make decisions together on issues related to school life and learning.

4. *Self-regulation and responsibility.* Students learn to self-regulate their behavior and take responsibility for their own actions. They develop the skills of self-control, self-evaluation and self-organization. Teachers help them realize the consequences of their decisions and actions (Croall J., 1983).

5. *Diversity and creativity.* Diversity and creativity are encouraged. Children can choose from a variety of activities, including arts, sports, science, and other fields. Teachers support and develop the creative abilities of each child (Neill A., 1960).

Organizational structure of the «Summerhill» school.

A. Neill's «Summerhill» school has a special organizational structure that differs from traditional schools. Instead of a hierarchical system, the school uses a democratic approach, where every member of the community has the right to vote and participate in decision-making.

1. *Meetings of the school board.* The main governing body of the school is the school council, which consists of teachers, students and parents. Meetings of the school board are held regularly and

important issues directly related to the educational process and organization of the school are discussed. All community members have the right to express their opinions and participate in decision-making.

2. *Work in small groups.* At school, students are united into small groups called «families». Each «family» consists of students of different ages and a teacher-mentor. In these groups, classes are held, problems are discussed and decisions are made that are related to everyday life and the educational process at school.

3. *Self-government and self-regulation.* Special attention is paid to the development of self-governance and self-regulation of students. They learn to take responsibility for their actions, make decisions and resolve conflicts. Teachers help students develop self-governance and self-regulation skills so that they can function successfully in society (Neill A., 1949).

The role of the teacher in the education system of the «Summerhill» school.

1. The teacher in the educational system of A. Neill's «Summerhill» school performs a special role. He not only imparts knowledge and teaches academic disciplines, but is also a mentor, advisor and partner for each student.

2. The teacher does not just set the rules and demand their implementation. He sets himself the task of helping students develop their individual abilities and talents, as well as teach them independence and responsibility.

3. The teacher acts as a facilitator who creates conditions for independent learning and development of students. He helps them define their goals and objectives and then supports them in achieving those goals.

4. Teachers actively interact with students, listen to their thoughts and ideas, take into account their needs and interests. Stimulate children to independent, critical and creative thinking.

5. The teacher acts as a moral model for students, he demonstrates the principles of democracy, justice, respect and tolerance. He inspires students to self-development and self-improvement (Neill A., 1939).

Peculiarities of the educational process at the «Summerhill» school.

A. Neill's «Summerhill» School offers a unique approach to the educational process based on the principles of democracy, freedom and self-government. We can highlight 5 features of the educational process at this school:

1. *Self-government and democracy.* Students have the right to participate in decision-making that affects their learning and everyday life at school. They can express their opinions, propose ideas and participate in discussion and decision-making. This helps to develop their skills of self-governance, responsibility and participation in public life.

2. *Individual approach to each student.* The school adheres to the principle of an individual approach to each student. Teachers take into account the individual needs, interests and abilities of each student and help them develop according to their potential. This allows each student to achieve his personal goals and develop his unique abilities (Neill A., 1932).

3. *Freedom and independence.* Students have freedom of choice and independence in learning. They can choose the subjects they want to study and determine their curriculum. Students also have the opportunity to plan their own time and work at their own pace. This helps to develop their independence, responsibility and initiative.

4. *Learning through games and practical activities.* The learning process is based on games and practical activities. Students learn through experience, experimentation and hands-on work. They can participate in various projects, research and creative tasks, which helps them better absorb knowledge and develop their skills.

5. *Equality and respect.* All participants in the educational process, including teachers and students, are equal and respect each other. Students have the right to express their opinions and be heard, and teachers respect their opinions and individuality. This creates an atmosphere of mutual respect and support that promotes effective learning and student development (Neill A., 1966).

Positive results and achievements of the education system of the «Summerhill» school.

The education system at A. Neill's «Summerhill» school demonstrates a number of positive results and achievements. Here are some of them:

1. *Development of independence and responsibility.* Thanks to freedom of choice and self-governance, students develop independence and responsibility. They take an active part in making decisions, planning their time and organizing their studies. This helps them become independent and self-sufficient individuals.

2. *Development of social skills.* The education system at the «Summerhill» school emphasizes the development of students' social skills. Through equality and respect, children learn to listen and respect the opinions of others, cooperate, resolve conflicts peacefully, and make decisions in a group.

This helps them become tolerant, empathetic and constructively interact in a team (Neill A., 1926).

3. *Development of creative thinking.* The school pays great attention to the development of students' creative thinking. They have the opportunity to independently choose the topics and forms of their projects, experiment and express their ideas and views. This contributes to the development of creativity, innovation and self-expression (Ayers W., 2003).

4. *Success in education.* The education system at the «Summerhill» school promotes the success of students in their studies. Thanks to the individual approach and freedom of choice, each student can develop according to his abilities and interests. This helps them achieve high results and develop their potential.

5. *Formation of democracy and citizenship skills.* The education system at the «Summerhill» school helps students develop their skills of democracy and citizenship. They learn to actively participate in decision-making, express their opinions, respect the rights and opinions of other people, and take responsibility for their actions. This helps them become active and responsible citizens (Purdy B., 1997).

Contradictions in the education system of the «Summerhill» school and its criticism.

Although the system of education at A. Neill's «Summerhill» school has its positive aspects, it is also criticized, and there are some contradictions that need to be noted.

1. *Lack of strict structure and discipline.* At «Summerhill» school, students have a lot of freedom, which can lead to unruly behavior and a lack of responsibility. Some critics believe that this can lead to chaos and indiscipline (Hart H., 1970).

2. *Limited attention to academic subjects.* In this school, the emphasis is more on the development of personality and social skills than on academics. Some parents and experts believe this could negatively affect students' future success and limit their opportunities to enter universities or obtain skilled employment.

3. *Limited role of the teacher.* Another contradiction in the education system of the «Summerhill» school is the limited role of the teacher. In this school, the teacher acts as a facilitator and mentor rather than a traditional teacher. Some critics believe that this can lead to gaps in knowledge, lack of systematicity, and insufficient preparation of students for academic demands and cause problems in the future (Barrow R., 1978).

The analysis of the genesis of A. Neill's pedagogical concept makes it possible to assert that his system of free education is closely related to the leading psychoanalytic concepts of S. Freud, A. Adler, W. Reich and E. Fromm. It is safe to say that A. Neill integrated the main ideas of representatives of the psychoanalytic movement of the 20th century into pedagogical practice. A. Neill managed to extrapolate the main humanistic ideas of psychoanalysis, enriching pedagogical theory and practice and expanding the boundaries of the influence of the psychoanalytic tradition on interdisciplinary research.

While substantiating his theory of free education and organization of the practice of teaching and raising children at the «Summerhill» school, A. Neill relied on the following conceptual provisions of the following psychoanalytic theories.

1. *Classical psychoanalysis of S. Freud:*

a) A. Neill, like the founder of psychoanalysis, saw in the unconscious part of the human psyche the main driving force of the personality development and its fundamental manifestations (behavioral reactions, mental states);

b) A. Neill considered the main task of a teacher to be the identification of the child's unconscious motives, which are the cause of frustration and neurotic disorders;

c) A. Neill considered children's aggressiveness as a specific protest against hatred, indifference, hostility and unkind, insincere attitude on the part of adults;

d) A. Neill integrated into the educational system Freudian ideas about the protective mechanisms of the psyche (projection, introjection, sublimation, rationalization, displacement);

e) the use of methods that help free the child from neurotic states and complexes – the method of free associations (individual lessons of A. Neill);

f) A. Neill shared the Freudian concept of stages of psychosexual development) (Vertel A., 2022a).

2. *Individual psychology of A. Adler:*

a) recognition of the Adlerian idea about the social nature of the individual;

b) using the idea of the uniqueness of a person's creative individuality;

c) the idea of human life as a constant active pursuit of perfection;

d) support of the idea of the development of social feeling as an important condition for a child to overcome various complexes and his problems of re-education;

e) use in the educational process of understanding the child's lifestyle, his awareness of his problems (Vertel A., 2022b).

3. *W. Reich's character analysis and body-oriented therapy:*

- a) support of W. Reich's idea about anxiety and fears in children as the cause of neurotic states and mental disorders;
- b) the possibility of psychological and pedagogical correction in general and treatment of neuroses by removing muscle tension from the child;
- c) sexual education of children (Vertel A., 2024);
- d) W. Reich was a friend, mentor and personal psychoanalyst of A. Neill (Placzek B., 1981).

4. *E. Fromm's humanistic psychoanalysis:*

- a) A. Neill integrates into his educational system E. Fromm's idea that personality is a product of dynamic interaction of innate needs and the pressure of social requirements, norms and rules;
- b) the idea of positive freedom, which is based on spontaneous activity in accordance with one's own inner nature, and not in accordance with social norms and prohibitions;
- c) recognition of love and work as the main means of developing positive freedom (Vertel A., 2023);
- d) the idea of unique existential needs inherent in human nature; e) refusal to absolutize social influences;
- e) supporting the idea of shifting the focus of psychoanalysis to interpersonal relationships;
- f) A. Neill, like E. Fromm, considered the development of a child's inner independence and unique individuality to be the goal of education;
- g) the extrapolation of E. Fromm's ideas into A. Neill's pedagogical system is confirmed by the fact that E. Fromm wrote the preface to his book «A radical approach to child rearing» (Neill A., 1960).

A. Neill accepts the basic postulate of supporters of free education about the unconditional perfection of children's nature, the basis of which is confidence in the need for education that is in harmony with the nature of the child's essence.

The general (main) characteristics of A. Neill's free education should include:

- 1) rejection of templates and clichés in the educational process;
- 2) belief in the child's creative potential and his desire for self-development;
- 3) conviction that the basis of full-fledged personality development is the accumulation of one's own life experience, on the basis of which the formation of his qualities and properties is carried out;
- 4) refusal of any coercion and violence against the child;
- 5) emphasis on the internal activity of the child, which excludes the authoritarian position of the educator in the pedagogical process;
- 6) sharp criticism of pedagogical traditionalism for authoritarianism and violence against the child's nature (Cremin L., 1978).

The special characteristics of A. Neill's free education include:

- 1) confidence that only in conditions of freedom the proper development of the child, the disclosure of his uniqueness and originality, the non-violence of aggressive tendencies and complexes are possible;
- 2) belief in the child's ability to self-regulate;
- 3) freeing the child from the need to do what he is not inclined to and what his own nature does not require;
- 4) a view of the child as a subject of self-education;
- 5) the organization of the educational process as a process of creating conditions for the development of the child's innate qualities, as well as providing complete freedom for his self-realization;
- 6) refusal to impose the will of adults in the process of the child's acquisition of knowledge, which leads to the acceptance of the freedom to attend classes at an education institution;
- 7) giving the child the freedom to manage his own life in society through a joint discussion of norms and rules of behavior in society (Hemmings R., 1973).

The basic principles of A. Neill's educational system are:

- 1) *the principle of freedom* – the freedom to choose one's own life path (Bailey R., 2013);
- 2) *the principle of self-regulation* – the child's achievement of vitality;
- 3) *the principle of pedagogical support* – acceptance of the child as he is and constant readiness to stand by his side;
- 4) *the principle of dialogue* – the realization by the participants of the pedagogical process of their own freedoms, rights and values;
- 5) *the principle of harmonizing the relationship between the individual and society* – the development of social feeling based on mutual assistance, responsibility and personal dignity (Waks L., 1975).

Conclusions / Висновки. The basis of A. Neill's concept of free education is classical psychoanalysis of S. Freud, individual psychology of A. Adler, character analysis and body-oriented therapy of W. Reich, humanistic psychoanalysis of E. Fromm.

The essence of A. Neill's concept of free education consists in giving children the freedom of emotional development, the right to independent organization of their lives, the possibility of natural development, ensuring a happy childhood by eliminating fear and pressure from adults.

A. Neill's «Summerhill» school is a unique education system based on the principles of freedom and self-government. It was created as a result of many years of experience and research of A. Neill, who sought to create an education institution where children can develop according to their interests and needs. The organizational structure of the school is based on democratic principles, where every member of the community has the opportunity to participate in decision-making and influence the life of the school. The role of the teacher in the «Summerhill» education system is to be a mentor, partner and facilitator for students, helping them to develop their abilities, independence and responsibility, as well as inspiring them to develop and improve themselves. The educational process is distinguished by freedom, self-governance, individual approach, play and practical activities, as well as equality and respect. These features help students to develop the skills of democracy and cooperation. The education system at the «Summerhill» school demonstrates positive results in the development of independence, social skills and creative thinking.

The «Summerhill» school presents an interesting and innovative model of the organization of education and upbringing, which has its advantages and disadvantages, which require further research and discussion. Contradictions in the «Summerhill» education system are important to consider when analyzing and making decisions about the application of such a system in other education institutions.

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