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## THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S PORTRAYAL IN DRAMA

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**Annotation:** The article explores the evolution of children's roles in theatrical productions from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment, focusing on the significance of young characters in drama. It begins by examining the emergence of children's theater troupes in England and the development of plays specifically written for young actors. Prominent playwrights, including Shakespeare, are shown to have created child roles that often reflect broader societal dynamics, such as familial conflict, innocence, or tragedy. Special attention is given to Shakespeare's nuanced portrayal of youth, particularly in *Romeo and Juliet* and other major works. The article also discusses the dramatic use of child characters in 17th-century French classical theater, particularly in the tragedies of Pierre Corneille. By the Enlightenment, child figures gained new pedagogical significance, as dramatists like Nahum Tate and Friedrich Schiller began to explore themes of moral education and the idealization of childhood. Overall, the article highlights the growing narrative and symbolic importance of children in European theater history.

**Key words:** Childhood, Shakespeare, tragedy, youth, theater, enlightenment, drama, Corneille, morality, protagonist.

**Аннотация:** Статья исследует эволюцию ролей детей в театральных постановках от эпохи Ренессанса до Просвещения, сосредотачиваясь на значении юных персонажей в драме. Вначале рассматривается появление детских театральных трупп в Англии и развитие пьес, специально написанных для юных актеров. Показано, что выдающиеся драматурги, включая Шекспира, создавали детские роли, отражающие более широкие социальные реалии, такие как семейные конфликты, невинность или трагедия. Особое внимание уделяется тонкому изображению юности у Шекспира, в частности в «Ромео и Джульетте» и других значимых произведениях. Также анализируется драматическое использование детских персонажей во французском классицизме XVII века, особенно в трагедиях Пьера Корнеля. К эпохе Просвещения детские образы приобретают педагогическое значение: драматурги, такие как Нахум Тейт и Фридрих Шиллер, начинают разрабатывать темы нравственного воспитания и идеализации детства. В целом, статья подчеркивает растущую повествовательную и символическую значимость детей в истории европейского театра.

**Ключевые слова:** детство, Шекспир, трагедия, юность, театр, Просвещение, драма, Корнель, мораль, главный герой.

**Annotatsiya:** Maqolada Uyg'onish davridan Ma'rifat davrigacha teatr sahnalarida bolalar obrazlarining evolyutsiyasi o'rganiladi. Asosan dramadagi yosh qahramonlarning ahamiyatiga e'tibor qaratiladi. Avvalo, Angliyada bolalar teatr truppalarining paydo bo'lishi va aynan yosh aktyorlar uchun yozilgan pyesalarning rivojlanishi ko'rib chiqiladi. Shekspir kabi mashhur dramaturglar bolalar rollarini yaratgan bo'lib, ular ko'pincha oilaviy ziddiyatlar, beg'uborlik yoki fojia kabi kengroq ijtimoiy jarayonlarni aks ettiradi. Ayniqsa, Shekspirning "Romeo va Julietta" va boshqa muhim asarlarida yosh avlodning nozik tasviri alohida ta'kidlanadi. XVII asr fransuz klassik teatrida, xususan, Pyer Kornelning tragediyalarida bolalar obrazlarining dramatik ifodasi ham tahlil qilinadi. Ma'rifat davriga kelib, bolalar obrazlari tarbiyaviy mazmun kasb eta boshlaydi: Naxum Teyt va Fridrix Shiller kabi dramaturglar axloqiy tarbiya va bolalikni ideallashtirish mavzularini o'rganishga kirishadilar. Umuman olganda, maqolada Yevropa teatr tarixida bolalar obrazlarining borgan sari kuchayib borayotgan syujetdagi va ramziy ahamiyati yoritiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** bolalik, Shekspir, fojia, yoshlik, teatr, Ma'rifat, drama, Kornel, axloq, bosh qahramon.

The emergence of children's theater troupes and the creation of plays in England were closely tied to authors developing roles specifically for young actors. These children's troupes often competed among themselves and even with adult actors, with boys predominantly performing on stage.

The repertoire of children's troupes included contributions from renowned playwrights such as John Webster (1578–1634), Thomas Dekker (1572–1632), John Marston (1576–1634), George Chapman (1559–1634), and notably William Shakespeare (1564–1616). In Renaissance drama, the depiction of children often reflected tragic outcomes, emphasizing the suffering of young characters. In medieval drama, children were frequently portrayed as the eldest offspring, embodying traditional roles within family dynamics. However, the broadening of child-character types and their increasing narrative significance can be observed in Shakespeare's works. Scholar M. Party, in "Childhood in Shakespeare's Plays" (2006), highlights that among the nearly 1,000 characters Shakespeare created, only about 30 are children, and of these, just 13 play significant roles. Despite Shakespeare's extensive character range, his works were primarily written for adult audiences, which was typical for Renaissance playwrights.

Nevertheless, Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" (1595) stands out as not only the first drama to focus on the lives of young lovers but also as the earliest literary exploration of youth. Literary scholar V.A. Lukov, in his article on young protagonists in literature, aptly notes the revolutionary nature of the play, stating:

"The tragedy lies in the youth of the protagonists, their distinctive youthful outlook on events, and their inability to act with measured prudence. Shakespeare masterfully captures the psychology of youth, marked by impulsive decisions and uncompromising convictions, which fundamentally differentiate their behavior and thought processes from those of the 'older generation.' In Shakespeare's works, the theme of childhood emerges either through the presence of young characters or through their references in various dramas. This is evident not only in the tragedy "Romeo and Juliet" but also in historical plays such as "Richard III" (1591), "Henry IV" (1598), "Henry VI", and in other tragedies like "Coriolanus" (1605–1608), "Hamlet" (1600–1601), and the tragicomedy "The Winter's Tale" (1611). According to M. Party in her book "Childhood in Shakespeare's Plays", Shakespeare often portrays children within the adult world, absorbed in their struggles, stating: "Children in Shakespeare's plays are assessed not for their own abilities or internal qualities, but for their significance to adults." The role of the child protagonist varies significantly across genres in Shakespeare's works. In historical plays and tragedies, Shakespeare historically reconstructs childhood, presenting young characters who are often entangled in the dangerous intrigues of adults. Their suffering and death frequently underscore the brutality and betrayal of the adult world. For instance, in "The Winter's Tale", the death of a child is depicted as a punishment for the inhumane actions of an adult character towards their family. In her dissertation "Imagining Childhood: The Social, Historical, and Theatrical Significance of the

Child on Stage" (2013), P.M. Konesko identifies two distinct types of child characters in Shakespeare's plays: the "suffering child," typically found in tragedies and histories, and the "playing child," more commonly depicted in tragicomedies. This categorization highlights the multifaceted ways in which Shakespeare utilized children in his dramatic works.

William Shakespeare was one of the first playwrights to recognize the distinct nature of childhood, portraying it as significantly different from the adult world. The inclusion of child characters in his dramas reflects an early stage in society's evolving perspective on children, capturing a shift toward acknowledging their unique qualities and societal roles. By the 17th century, new directions in drama had emerged in France. The French classical playwright Pierre Corneille (1606–1684) also addressed the figure of the child in his works. In his treatise "On Tragedy: Reflections and Rules for its Interpretation According to the Laws of Probability," Corneille commented on the dramatic role of children, suggesting that their feelings and actions could evoke strong emotional responses from audiences. Corneille's plays, such as "Rodogune" (1644) and "Heraclius" (1647), portray childhood not merely as a phase of life but as a dramatic element within familial and social relationships. He argued that children could serve as tragic protagonists when their emotions and actions contribute to the intensity of a story. In "Heraclius," for instance, children grow up in hostile families under false identities. In "Medea" (1635), children die as a result of their parents' personal and selfish conflicts, while in "Rodogune," children fall victim to the brutal and unnatural enmity of close relatives.

These tragedies use child characters to illuminate family disputes and moral issues in society. Corneille's characters often retain their willpower and inner strength, but these traits are frequently corrupted by egotism, a lust for power, or revenge. At the same time, in 17th-century classical drama, the ideals of goodness and beauty are often associated with youth and childhood, while old age symbolizes moral flaws.

The 17th-century drama also developed a strong "educational" line. Theaters of the time were regarded as "institutions of morality," and through the portrayal of family and societal conflicts—often involving children—drama served to educate audiences and instill ethical and social values.

During the Enlightenment period, playwrights naturally paid attention to the pedagogical and educational impact of their plays. However, they also focused on the behavior and character of children, their ignorance, and their lack of respect for parents. In his article "The Angel Child and the Heroic Child: Some Notes on Pedagogical Anthropology" (2013), D. Dimke notes that the emergence of new dramatic child protagonists was exemplified in the classical reinterpretation of Shakespeare's works by the English playwright N. Tate (1652–1715). In 1681, Tate rewrote Shakespeare's tragedy *King Lear* in a moralistic tone, intensifying the positive and negative traits of the characters. Tate focused on the theme of children's disrespect for their parents, presenting a moralistic interpretation of Shakespeare's humanism, emphasizing the importance of reverence and respect towards parents.

Similarly, Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805) addressed the image of the child in his essay "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry" (1794–1795). He described children as an ideal: "A child represents for us an ideal that we have abandoned—not an idea of deficiency or limitation, but rather of pure and unrestricted strength, integrity, and infinity. For a person of enlightenment, a child is always sacred."

In the first half of the 19th century, European playwrights rarely depicted children as main characters. Even at the beginning of the 20th century, children's social status remained low, and their psychological state, intellect, and actions were of little interest to writers. Young actors participated in large-scale scenes and played minor roles in performances. In Georg Büchner's "Danton's Death" (1835) and "Woyzeck" (1837), as well as Friedrich Hebbel's tragedy "Maria Magdalena" (1844), child characters were given only brief lines, with little focus on their characterization.

In Hebbel's play "Judith" (1841), centered on women's liberation, children appear on stage but are silent. Their cries are described by the adult characters, emphasizing that the children lack independence and are portrayed as mere extensions of the female protagonist, a mother figure. However, Judith perceives her potential offspring with her enemy Holofernes—a child that was never born—as a serious threat. This pushes her toward radical actions, presenting her as a woman who has endured violence and humiliation. A.A. Anikst, in his work "The Theory of Western Drama in the Second Half of the 19th Century," interprets Judith's tragic perception of potential motherhood. He writes: "Judith concludes that if her actions are guided by will, the Lord will protect her from the consequences and prevent her from giving birth. If she does give birth, she must die—accepting death from her people to avoid dooming her son to the fate of being the enemy's child, as she has already sacrificed herself for her nation." The development of the theme of childhood and child protagonists in the context of women's liberation issues is reflected in the realistic dramas of Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906) in the second half of the 19th century. In works such as "A Doll's House" (Et Dukkehjem, 1879), "The Master Builder" (Bygmester Solness, 1892), and "Little Eyolf" (Lille Eyolf, 1894), children play secondary roles, serving as a backdrop for the audience to observe their relationships on stage. With the evolution of realism in dramaturgy, writers increasingly turned to the portrayal of children. At the turn of the 20th century, symbolic approaches to childhood began to emerge, prominently featured in the works of Belgian playwright Maurice Maeterlinck (1862–1949). The tradition of the dramatic fairy tale found renewed relevance in Maeterlinck's plays, such as "The Blind" (Les Aveugles, 1890), "The Seven Princesses" (Les Sept Princesses, 1891), "Pelléas and Mélisande" (Pelléas et Mélisande, 1892), "Interior" (Intérieur, 1894), "Sister Beatrice" (Sœur Béatrice, 1900), and "The Blue Bird" (L'Oiseau Bleu, 1908).

At the same time, 20th-century drama remained deeply engaged with contemporary social issues while continuing to draw from archetypal plots and characters accumulated over centuries. It often reflected a backward glance, invoking ancient myths. For example, Euripides' Medea and the myth of Phaedra are reinterpreted in Eugene O'Neill's play "Desire Under the Elms" (1925). The protagonists echo the fates of Medea and Phaedra: ancient Greek heroes are revived on an American farm. Social antagonisms penetrate the heart of nature, and primal instincts clash in internal warfare. Fathers and sons become enemies, and maternal love conflicts with romantic passion, symbolizing the "sacrifice of future generations." The character of Mary Tilford embodies the concepts of corrupted innocence and unique auditory perception attributed only to children. Mary is both a cruel and merciless child-executioner and a saintly child who can perceive what adult characters are unable to see. The young protagonist of Hellman's drama possesses a sensitivity reminiscent of the children in Maeterlinck's plays. Since the 1950s, issues related to gender socialization and problematic relationships between generations have been explored in American drama, as seen in Tennessee Williams' "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (1955), and in English drama, such as J.B. Priestley's "Mother's Day" (1953) and works by the "angry young men" playwrights. These authors were deeply interested in youth issues and brought children, adolescents, and young adults to the stage. Samuel Beckett (1906–1989) diverged significantly from mainstream depictions of children. In "Waiting for Godot" (1949) and "All That Fall" (1956), the symbolism and semantics of child characters rarely drew attention from philologists or theater critics.

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, A.G. Nenilin, in his dissertation, wrote about contemporary literary depictions of children: "The range of characteristics defined by a broad irrational element evokes a heightened sense of realism in the portrayal of children." Modern dramatists explore complex themes, reflecting the behavior of children in relation to the adult world with careful analysis. This shift places dual demands on the child's world: children both resist and respond to these demands with a twofold strategy.

In 21st-century drama, the spectrum of child archetypes becomes increasingly complex, with new characters emerging in the works of German, Swedish, and British playwrights. Given

its development in a postmodern culture and the conditions of global computerization, a new category of "digital" children and "simulacral" children (visual and virtual) has appeared. These characters stand out not only for their reduced traits but also for their ambiguous relationship with authenticity and reality. Such characters in modern plays are often not unique dramatic personas but rather mass media constructs or virtual representations. They possess distinctive "cinemorphic" or "bookmorphic" features and lack an internal essence. Instead, they are reproductions of pre-existing literary, mass media, or cinematic realities already constructed within an artistic context.

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#### EMERGING DIGITAL TRENDS IN FRENCH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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**Abstract** – The integration of digital technologies into French language education has significantly transformed pedagogical practices, enhancing learner engagement and access to authentic linguistic resources. This study examines the emerging trends in digital tools and methodologies employed in teaching French as a foreign language (FLE), with a particular focus on the context of Bukhara State University (BSU) in Uzbekistan.

Drawing upon a mixed-methods approach, the research analyzes quantitative data from surveys and qualitative insights from interviews with educators and students. Findings indicate a growing adoption of multimedia resources, online platforms, and mobile applications, aligning with global trends that highlight the benefits of digital literacy in language learning. However, challenges such as limited access to technology and the need for continuous teacher training persist, echoing concerns raised in broader educational contexts.