



Urszula Ordon-Mizera

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9674-321X>

e-mail: u.ordon@ujd.edu.pl

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, Poland

Reception of Froebelian Pedagogy Yesterday and Today in Poland and Abroad

Recepcja pedagogiki froebrowskiej wczoraj i dziś w Polsce i na świecie

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Friedrich Froebel is recognized as the founder of the modern preschool. Despite his indisputable contributions to raising awareness among education policymakers and the general public about the need to establish preschool institutions, the reception of his ideas has had a turbulent history. The aim of this article is to provide an overview of the current state of research on Friedrich Froebel's work in Poland and abroad. The study employs a historical-pedagogical analysis and a critical review of the relevant literature, including scholarly studies and examples of contemporary educational initiatives in Poland and abroad.

The article begins by presenting the history of the early reception of Froebelian pedagogy in Poland during the period of the Partitions and the interwar period, followed by a review of the latest research and initiatives promoting Froebelian pedagogy in Poland and abroad. The analysis showed that the reception of Froebel's pedagogy was dynamic in nature and subject to social, political, and cultural influences. Following a period of marginalization in Poland during the People's Republic of Poland, there was a marked increase in interest in his work, as evidenced by academic research, educational programs, the activities of associations, and pedagogical practice. The conclusions indicate that Froebelian pedagogy remains a relevant source of inspiration for preschool education, particularly in the areas of play, children's independent activity, creativity, and a child-centered approach to the educational process.

SŁOWA KLUCZE ABSTRAKT

przedszkole,
Fryderyk Froebel,
freblizm

Fryderyk Froebel jest uznawany za twórcę współczesnego przedszkola. Mimo jego bezsprzecznych zasług w upowszechnieniu wśród decydentów oświatowych i społeczeństwa przekonania o potrzebie zakładania placówek wychowania przedszkolnego recepcja jego poglądów ma burzliwą historię. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest przybliżenie stanu badań nad dorobkiem Fryderyka Froebela w kraju i za granicą. Zastosowano metodę analizy historyczno-pedagogicznej oraz krytyczny przegląd literatury przedmiotu, obejmujący opracowania naukowe i przykłady współczesnych inicjatyw edukacyjnych w Polsce i za granicą.

Na wstępie przedstawiono historię wczesnej recepcji freblizmu na ziemiach polskich w czasach zaborów oraz w okresie międzywojennym, następnie dokonano przeglądu najnowszych badań i inicjatyw propagujących freblizm w Polsce i za granicą. Analiza wykazała, że recepcja pedagogiki Froebela miała charakter dynamiczny i podlegała wpływom uwarunkowań społecznych, politycznych i kulturowych. Po okresie marginalizacji w Polsce w czasach PRL nastąpił wyraźny wzrost zainteresowania jego dorobkiem, czego przejawem są badania naukowe, programy edukacyjne, działalność stowarzyszeń oraz praktyka pedagogiczna. Wnioski wskazują, że pedagogika froebelska pozostaje aktualnym źródłem inspiracji dla edukacji przedszkolnej, szczególnie w zakresie zabawy, aktywności własnej dziecka, kreatywności i podmiotowego podejścia do procesu wychowania.

Pre-school pedagogy as an independent discipline in the area of the broader educational sciences has been experiencing significant development in the last two decades in Poland. Its manifestation is the appearance of new monographs, articles, journals and associations promoting the ideas of preschool education, as well as an increase in the number of students studying this field. Many theoreticians and practitioners are looking for new solutions and inspiration, diversifying the offer of alternative kindergartens and the methodology of traditional kindergartens. This situation is conducive to returns to the roots and new readings of the work of representatives of preschool pedagogy, now considered classics. Among them is Frederick Froebel.

The German pedagogue is considered the founder of the modern kindergarten. Although almost 200 years have passed since the founding of the first children's garden, his pedagogy still arouses keen interest among scientists, teachers and parents. In Poland, it has even experienced a kind of renaissance in the last decade. The purpose of this article is to introduce the history of the early reception of freblism on Polish soil during the Partitions of Poland and in the interwar period, when the structures

of preschool education in Poland crystallized (the 1932 Jędrzejewicz reform incorporated kindergarten into the school system).

Works Enriching the State of Research on the Early Reception of Freblism in Poland and Around the World

Freblism was promoted on Polish soil initially in the Russian and Austrian partitions. So far, no study has been written on the development of kindergartens in the Prussian partition. The reception of Froebel's pedagogy on Polish soil in historical terms was the first to be addressed by Bella Sandler. In her 1959 article, she presented the fate of kindergartens in Galicia (Sandler, 1959). They were introduced there with the teachers' seminaries established by the National School Board in Galicia, at which freblian courses were launched. The first gardens were established in 1874. According to the latest research findings, the first garden in the Galician capital was the result of a private initiative, that is, in 1871 this type of institution was opened by Paulina Pietraszewska (Łapot, 2016, p. 65). Probably the first text on frebling establishments on Polish soil was published in the Galician "School" in 1868 (Bęczalski, 1868). The author considered gardens to be more progressive than orphanages; he emphasized that there was less rigor in them (Bęczalski, 1868, p. 267).

Froebel's system was initially approached with distrust or unconcealed reluctance. Over time, elements of his play methodology began to permeate into day care centers (Sandler, 1959, p. 217 et seq.). More recently, Barbara Kalinowska-Witek, taking a closer look at the views of Polish pedagogues of the second half of the 19th century and the turn of the 20th century in the Russian partition, drew attention to Jan Władysław Dawid's interest in Froebel's pedagogy – he appreciated the place of play in the theory and educational practice of the young child (Kalinowska-Witek, 2019, p. 19). Dawid's journalistic activities had a great impact on the popularization of preschool education and Froebel's ideas. Similarly, Wiesława Leżańska, in her text on the beginnings of preschool pedagogy in Poland before World War II, noted the interest of the most prominent Polish pedagogue of the Positivist era in the achievements of the creator of kindergartens (Leżańska, 2020, pp. 49–50). It is also known that in the Russian partition Froebel's methodology was first used in 1867 in the Father Baudouin orphanage in Warsaw, while the first kindergarten was established by Teresa Pruszek-Mleczkowska in 1870 (Loyola Opiela, 2014, p. 109).

In the Kingdom of Poland, Froebel's ideas were difficult to adapt at the beginning of the 20th century, even during the adaptation of the concept of new education in the educational practice of the time. Aneta Bołdyrew and Monika Nawrot-Borowska, who researched this issue, stated:

In the best-funded nurseries, children were introduced to Froebel's games and activities. However, the artistic activities recommended by educators (e.g., working with paper, cardboard, boxes, clay, modeling, sculpting, pottery, building bricks, weaving, puzzles, mosaics, arranging shapes and pictures from peas, broad beans, beans, corn, coffee) was only fully implemented in kindergartens for children from wealthier backgrounds; such institutions were very few and far between in Congress Poland until the First World War (Bołdyrew & Nawrot-Borowska, 2022, pp. 32–33).

Knowledge of the reception of freblism in the Russian partition was enriched by articles by Grzegorz Michalski (2016) and Stefania Walasek (2015). It is known that the first mentions of the theory and practice of kindergartens appeared in the press, including in *Przegląd Pedagogiczny*, *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, *Kłosa*, *Opiekun Domowy* or *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* in the Kingdom of Poland and in *Szkola* in Galicia. F. Froebel's theory of play was analyzed by Polish theorists and researchers of children's games and toys and presented in the press in the Kingdom of Poland, including *Bluszcz* (Miaskowski, 1868; D.K., 1913; see also: Bednarz-Grzybek, 2011). Aneta Bołdyrew, Marta M. Kacprzak, and Monika Nawrot-Borowska, in their selection of press articles in the Kingdom of Poland, noted 20 items referring to Froebel's preschool pedagogy (Bołdyrew et al., 2024).

In Warsaw, the idea of kindergartens gained popularity through Maria Weryho. She was an educator and publicist, as well as an educational activist. In 1884, M. Weryho worked as a teacher at Henryka Czarnocka's private school, and three years later she opened her own freblock (in 1896 there were 16 such institutions in Poland), where future teachers were also trained (Moraczewska, 2015, p. 219). Her first important publication was *Methodology of work with preschool children*, a manual for educators, which she wrote together with J. Strzemeska. The authors critically analyzed Froebel's system, took over his methods and adapted them to Polish conditions, rejecting excessive rigor and formalism in play, focusing on the role of free play, observation of the environment and the child's initiative in organizing activities (Strzemeska & Weryho, 1895). M. Weryho also published other articles and books on preschool education. She also collaborated with magazines, including *Przegląd Pedagogiczny*, where she ran a column entitled "Kindergarten", popularizing Froebel's pedagogy, as well as Kindergarten Education and Kindergarten (collaboration with Zofia Żukiewiczowa).

In reborn Poland, M. Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa became head of the Department of Kindergartens in the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Education (Ministerstwo Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego). The main task of this state authority was to reorganize the activities of pre-school childcare institutions and standardize the forms of their activities. They were called kindergartens, as opposed to kindergartens and child care centers. Another area of M. Weryho's involvement in the popularization of freblism was related to the preparation of preschool education

personnel. Weryho led to the equalization of the status of preschool teachers with school teachers, which was a breakthrough in the history of Polish preschool education. Her understanding of the role of the teacher corresponded directly with the views of the German pedagogue, according to which the teacher and the kindergartens should not compete with the family in the field of child rearing, but should create a friendly atmosphere similar to the home environment, introduce the child to the world of values and social life. In such a space, the student independently discovers the world in the course of independent exploration (Moraczewska, 2015, p. 227).

In the context of the merits of M. Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa in popularizing the thought and practice of the kindergarten creator, it is worth noting the article by Aleksandra Feliniak, who addressed the issue of the reception of Freblow kindergarten in Poland, focusing on the interwar period and the first professional magazine on kindergarten education published at that time, *Wychowanie 'Przedszkolne'*, established by Maria Weryho-Radziwiłłowiczowa (Feliniak, 2010). Froebel's pedagogy was also popularized in Poland in the interwar period by for example: Stefania Marciszewska-Posadzowa, Natalia Cicimirska, Zofia Bogdanowiczowa, Janina Krasucka-Bużycka, and Zofia Żukiewiczowa (Bilewicz-Kuźnia, 2017b).

Krzysztof Jakubiak (2015) distinguished two trends in the development of Polish preschool education at the beginning of the 20th century – the first was related to Froebel's methodology, the second to the systems of Maria Montessori and Ovide Decroly. The modified Froebel system was popularized by textbooks such as *Podręcznik dla ochraniarek* (Polskie Towarzystwo Pedagogiczne, 1920). Many of Froebel's ideas were included in the textbook by M. Weryho *Wskazówki dla osób zakładających i prowadzących ochrony* (1921). The author recommended familiarizing children with their surroundings through discussions and observing objects and phenomena, developing their concentration. The rules of work for nursery nurses were important, among which the following should be emphasized: that activities and games should be organized on the basis of contrast, for example, after intellectual activities, they should lead to work in the garden or manual work; treating work with children not as a means to achieve a certain effect, but as a factor in their development, and not imposing activities on children, but guiding them.

Western researchers are also interested in how Froebel's ideas were received in their countries. For example, Ann Taylor Allen (2006) subjected to comparative analysis the reception of Froebelian pedagogy in the United States and Germany between 1840 and 1914. It turns out that initially the American kindergarten became the first class of the elementary school, open to five-year-olds on a voluntary basis. Kindergarten teachers insisted that this class was not part of the school, but maintained its integrity. Kindergarten classes were often separated from other classes and placed under separate, usually female, leadership. They emphasized preparing children for

school, especially for poor or immigrant children who were considered backward. In the xenophobic atmosphere created by World War I, the pure pedagogical idea was subordinated to a program to Americanize children. Particularly in poor or immigrant neighborhoods of large American cities, Froebel's pedagogy was quickly abandoned in favor of practical exercises aimed at teaching English and job skills. In crowded and underfunded urban schools, preschool teachers often had to teach overtime, leaving little time for interaction with parents. The price of kindergarten's acceptance was the erosion of its special character and assimilation into the school. Taylor Allen is inclined to conclude that the potential inherent in the German educator's (2006) idea of preschool education has not been realized in America.

A manifestation of interest in the early reception of Froebelism is the article by Jane Read (2013), in which the author analyzed the implementation of new methods of educating young children in day-care centers in London between 1890 and 1930. She focused on the work of Elizabeth Shaw and Frances Roe, as their experimental method, based on Froebel's pedagogy, changed the approach to the education of working-class children in England. The day care centers were initially designed for children between the ages of five and seven. In 1900, 178,244 children between the ages of 3 and 5 were enrolled in London's daycare centers, and another 169,244 children between the ages of 5 and 7 were subject to compulsory schooling. English kindergarten departments at the time were not a convenient ground for transplanting Froebel's ideas. Nevertheless, there was a thriving Froebel Society in London.

The promoters of freblism in England sought to influence key figures in the Department of Education and were successful in doing so. Under the leadership of George Kekewich, permanent secretary of the Department of Education (1890–1900) and the Board of Education (1900–1902), the Department of Education issued a circular in 1893 encouraging teachers to adopt freer methods of educating the youngest, based on Froebel's pedagogy. Froebel's lobbying thus proved effective, and Kekewich's liberal political stance made him a natural ally of Froebelian methodology. By introducing reforms, London school principals Elizabeth Shaw and Frances Roe proved themselves effective implementers of educational reform (Read, 2013).

The approach of F. Roe's approach to Froebel's methodology was experimental, involving a revision of his principles to adapt them to the conditions of London's pre-school institutions, which were struggling with excessive numbers of students in the 1930s.

In addition to the similarities, however, there were differences in the two pedagogues' approaches to froebliism. Although E. Shaw's methods were designed to arouse children's interest (they were aimed at learning about basic objects, tools and phenomena), her curriculum was designed to provide a central role for the teacher. Unlike E. Shaw, Roe's methodology expressed the ideas of the "new education," which

was dominated by pädagogocentrism. The influence of Montessori was evident in her individualization of methods for working with children. Roe's experimentation with individual and group methods, however, does not change the fact that in her teaching practice, Froebelian methodology was at the forefront. Jane Read found that Froebelian pedagogy remained dominant in early childhood education in England despite the influence of Montessori, especially in the period up to 1939 (2013, p. 93). Nevertheless, the child-centered approach was constantly confronted with an attitude that gave the teacher a leading role in the educational process. The articles discussed argue that the process of reception of Froebel's achievements in Western Europe and the United States was stretched over time, with its acceptance and creative use occurring relatively late, only in the interwar period.

The Latest Research on Froeblianism and its Implementation in Contemporary Preschool Practice

After World War II, Friedrich Froebel's pedagogical concept was criticized by Polish educational circles for the routinization of gift exercises and the misuse of stories to impart knowledge about the real world. The communist regime in Poland suppressed the idea of play, replacing it with the concept of education through work, and shaped the vision of an autocratic teacher who guides the student, corrects his mistakes and has a monopoly on knowledge. The differences between childcare centers and kindergartens disappeared, the work of kindergarten educators began to be schematic and focused on didactics. This position was polar opposite to Froebel's views on children's self-education through free cognitive activity. Froebel, like his gifts, disappeared from preschool curricula, his presence was marked only in publications of a historical nature. B. Bilewicz-Kuźnia (2017b), a researcher of Froebel's pedagogy, notes that echoes of Froebel's pedagogy were felt in the idea of developing preschool gardens in the People's Republic of Poland. However, there were financial difficulties in implementing the idea, and there was a lack of properly trained staff, which resulted in the idea being adopted in a simplified and literal version, leading to the mechanization of children's work in the gardens. Polish pedagogy of the communist era practically deleted Froebel from all areas of action, ideas and philosophy (Roszak, 2018, p. 157).

Only after the fall of communism were conditions favorable to the revival of the German pedagogue's preschool thought and practice.

At the beginning of the 21st, there is a visible increase in interest in Froebel's pedagogy in Poland, both in terms of theory and practice. Particularly much attention has been paid to his theory of children's play. According to the German pedagogue, play is a form of education. With a view to educating the youngest, he designed special

toys – called gifts. He was convinced that toys with geometric shapes found in nature (sphere, cube, cylinder) provide optimal opportunities to learn and understand the surrounding world, so in the created preschool methodology he used a ball and wooden blocks of various shapes. They had symbolic as well as real meaning. They provided an opportunity to learn arithmetic, trained imagination and construction sense, exercised senses, muscles, physical strength, memory and imagination. Through them, Froebel believed, children gain self-awareness, develop their willpower, a sense of independence and, at the same time, social contacts. Although early in the development of his own methodology Froebel subjected the child to the teacher's invention, before his death he stressed the importance of freedom in play. He expected children to create their own toys, for example, from sand, clay, paper, water and other materials available in the immediate environment (Bilewicz-Kuźnia, 2018, p. 49).

Perhaps the best-known current promoter of Froebel's work is Sylwia Kustos, who has developed methodological proposals using Froebel's theory of gift play (2014). She emphasizes that playing with gifts develops psychophysically, as well as exercises concentration and promotes calmness in the child. Sylwia Kustos points out the potential of Froebel's gifts in developing a child's creativity. The German pedagogue's teaching material opposes toys that impose on the child a way, a scenario of play. "In the age of tablets, digitization, when the child does not have the opportunity to create or give meanings and interpretations, most of the objects in his rolling are ready-made, defined and closed" (Kustos, 2019, p. 13). He also appeals to the preschool education teacher to arrange the preschool activity space in accordance with the spirit of constructivism, which is conducive to the development of the child's creative thinking. Indeed, creativity and creation were an important factor in the concept of kindergartens. According to S. Kustos,

[...] gifts are materials shared by children and the teacher for play, education, and – very importantly – self-education. This means that the creator thought out their construction in such a way that by freely manipulating them, experiencing and observing, the child performs operations of inference, analysis, and also perceives physical laws, similarities, differences and properties of solids in the course of self-directed activity of play (2019, p. 134).

Katarzyna Małek, author of the *Theaters. Great book of inspiration. Proposals for theatrical animations and games based on Froebel pedagogy* (2016). Her study is an original proposal for table theater and shadow theater using gifts to model the content of fairy tales, legends and poems. Thus, we are dealing with teaching through play, shaping the child's creativity, and at the same time directing children's activity by the teacher.

In addition, the so-called "heuristic play", based on the Froebelian idea of free play, gifts of nature, circle games and children's creation of their own toys, was implemented

into the Polish methodology of preschool education. This concept was born in England, in Poland it is promoted by Barbara Bilewicz-Kuźnia (2014, 2017a, 2017b, 2018) and Kamila Pernal (2017).

An important position on the publishing market, testifying to the interest in Froebel in our country is a collective monograph edited by Marian Z. Stepulak and Małgorzata Sitarczyk endorsed *Pedagogy of Froebel – a challenge for teachers, an opportunity for children. Theory and practice* (2017). It collects texts by Polish and Ukrainian pedagogues, sharing their experiences of using Froebel methodology. They are interdisciplinary in nature. The main message of the publication is Froebel's idea that teachers in their pedagogical practice should emphasize the development of thinking, action and work with the child himself, rather than its form (Stepulak & Sitarczyk, 2017).

Research and practical examples of the possibility of using the elements of Froeblian pedagogy in a modern kindergarten are also carried out by Barbara Bilewicz-Kuźnia. In 2013–2015, she implemented a project in several kindergartens, which led to the development of the *Dar zabawy* preschool education program using Froebel's theory of play. This author also prepared a methodological guide with ready-made suggestions for games and activities. They used the concepts of free play and heuristic play, play using Froebel's gift of play, storytelling in a circle, small group work, handwork, movement games and outdoor activities (Bilewicz-Kuźnia, 2014).

In an article reviewing the latest ideas of using Froebel pedagogy, Maria M. Mazur and Agata Jacewicz stated that

[...] modern preschool education shows that the use of gifts in daily work brings many benefits: it allows to exercise all senses, develop manual dexterity, concentration, eye-hand coordination, stimulates imagination and creative thinking. Froebel's material allows children to form a variety of mathematical concepts, sometimes beyond the framework of the core curriculum, such as fractions, geometric concepts. A very important aspect is children's concentration while working with gifts and calming down. Playing with gifts teaches children responsibility and respect for the objects entrusted to them (Mazur & Jacewicz, 2021, p. 47).

Meanwhile, Przemysław Ziółkowski, in an article on alternative concepts of education present in the modern school, mentioned Montessori, Froebel, Freinet and Awakening Schools (*Budzące się Szkoły*) methodologies. In turn, discussing the merits of each concept, he began with Froebel's proposal. Because of his subjective and respectful approach to the child's activity-play, he considered Froebel a forerunner of the New Education (Ziółkowski, 2022, p. 39).

An expression of the new openness to Froebel methodology is also the associations that are emerging in our country. Froebel.pl is a group of educators, teachers,

academics (including Edyta Gruszczyk-Kolczyńska and the aforementioned Barbara Bilewicz-Kuźnia), directors of kindergartens and schools who implement the pre-school education program *Dar zabawy*, prepared on the basis of Froebel's philosophy. Its activities are related to publishing (at the time of writing, 8 items have been published in the fields of general preschool education, as well as mathematics, music and movement, English language and education in the form of poems and drama based on Froebel's work), selling teaching aids (Froebel's gifts are the basis) and organizing training for teaching staff (popularizing Froebel's ideas and the *Dar zabawy* program). The culmination of Froebel.pl's activities is the annual National Froeblian Conference (its fourth edition was held on October 5–6, 2018 in Lublin), bringing together principals and teachers, academics, students and enthusiasts of Froebel's pedagogy. During the event, kindergartens and preschool groups receive a Froeblian certificate, confirming the institution's work using Froebel's ideas (Roszak, 2018, p. 159).

Similar societies are active abroad. Froebel methodology is promoted in the West by, among others, The Froebel Trust (formerly The Incorporated Froebel Educational Institute, International Froebel Society, Froebel Archive Childhood Studies or Froebel USA).

In the context of the foreign reception of froblism, it is worth noting the reprint of selected works by Froebel (2003). It is a collection of fifteen essays, originally published in German in 1861, on the value of the various stages of child's play.

An important position in the contemporary reception of Froebel's works is Joachim Liebschner's monograph (2006), in which he spoke out in the still ongoing debate on methods of educating the young child. Approaching Froebel's ideas, he advocated a pajo-centrally oriented education, questioning traditional approaches to the education and upbringing of the young child. In turn, Tina Bruce (2011, 2012) developed proposals for preschool activities inspired by Froebel's methodology. These included activities in the preschool garden, outdoor activities, songs, rhymes, use of gifts and forest preschools.

In light of the growing importance of Froeblian methodology, the findings of Ann Taylor Allen (2006) seem surprising. Well, in both Germany and America at the turn of the 20th century, there was a shift away from Froebel's methods, which emphasized theoretical learning, toward a pedagogy that turned its attention to practical skills. As part of a broader movement, this pedagogy permeated American school curricula at all levels from that time to the present. It was a disastrous trend that undermined the idea of democracy. The anti-intellectual curriculum was, in practice, offered mainly to the children of the poor and immigrants, while the children of the elite continued to receive a theoretical education. The resulting inequality became particularly apparent in the late 20th century, when the agricultural and industrial occupations for

which most students had been prepared ceased to exist, and good employment began to depend mainly on verbal and mathematical skills.

Today it is important to revisit both the message and methods of Frobel's original kindergarten. He did not differentiate his curriculum according to the ability, race, gender or social status of his students. He insisted that all children maintain their individualism; according to him, all need theoretical knowledge of the natural world and real society to develop their potential (Taylor Allen, 2006, pp. 187–188).

On the other hand, David J. Hargreaves, Sue Robson Sue Greenfield, Hiroko Fumoto, in an article on the issues of a child's sense of ownership and autonomy in the early stages of education using the assumptions of Froebelian pedagogy, noted that Froebel emphasized the development of natural forces and predispositions dormant within the child, rather than shaping him according to the assumptions and requirements of the environment. He believed that the child's personality was not a formless mass subject to arbitrary molding by the teacher, but had its own form and "life". He opposed education based on the transmission of knowledge from outside. The object of the Froebel Research Fellowship (FRF) teaching project, funded by the Froebel Trust (formerly the Incorporated Froebel Educational Institute) since 2002, was to investigate the extent to which the aforementioned Froebel assumptions can be used in contemporary education and care for the young child. The authors pointed out that in the UK, this is a very active and important part of current government education policy. Froebel's ideas underlie the main concerns of the research, which aimed to look at how practitioners carve out space for children's own creativity and thus promote their personal development. The project resulted in several publications (books and articles), about 80 presentations, as well as lectures/workshops for professional groups and practitioners. The results highlighted a number of areas of current interest in early childhood education and care, including the place of creativity in nurseries and preschools, the relationship between parents and professionals, children's participation, and pedagogical issues such as teacher-child relationships and their impact on children's creativity (Hargreaves et al., 2014, p. 310).

The purpose of the characterized research was to determine the extent to which Froebel's ideals, such as the belief that a child's knowledge should develop from within rather than from without, can be met within the requirements of contemporary early childhood education and care. Using an interview and questionnaire, as well as observations, teachers' attitudes and practices were examined in relation to the development of children's personal, social and cognitive skills. Also of interest to the researchers were children's creative thinking and the impact of social relationships on it, as well as the differences between children's, parents' and teachers' views on approaches to play and learning at home and at school.

The cited texts and initiatives are exemplary in nature. However, they convince us that Frebelsian pedagogy is still a living source of inspiration for contemporary educators and educators.

Conclusion

The reception of Friedrich Froebel's achievements went through various stages. After the initial reluctance towards his solutions, related to the fact that he represented a nation hostile to the Polish nation and pursuing a policy of Germanization, his methodology began to reach Polish lands. In turn, the heyday of freblism came during the interwar period. The process was similar in other countries, such as England and the US. During the communist era, gift-giving and the concept of play in Freblian terms were almost completely excluded, and it was only after 1989 that these ideas were revived. The result of increased interest in the thought and practice of the 19th-century pedagogue were publications, curricula and Freblian societies.

Freblovia pedagogy continues to shape the landscape of contemporary thought and practice in preschool and early childhood education. Froebel's gifts and his concept of play are an inalienable feature of modern preschool. The flourishing of preschool pedagogy in Poland is conducive to the intensification of research into the legacy of the German pedagogue and the implementation of his ideas and methods. It seems that thanks to these works, the status of the methodology of the 19th-century pedagogue has clearly strengthened. This process corresponds to the trends in preschool education found in the West, where Froebel is still a vibrant current of research and practical activity.

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