

## PEDAGOGY

## Conscience as a moral regulator in the context of moral personality's education in J.R.R. Tolkien's literature work

Y. O. Labunets

Boris Grinchenko Kyiv University, Kyiv, Ukraine

\*Corresponding author. E-mail: y.labunets@kubg.edu.ua

Paper received 11.11.15; Accepted for publication 26.11.15.

**Abstract.** The article highlights conscience using as a helpful moral regulator at the implementation process of J. R. R. Tolkien's moral personality's education concept based on the upbringing and moral personality formation impact of his literature works (using for instance trilogy «The Lord of the Ring» and «The Hobbit, or There and back Again»). In order to do so, it gives an overview of conscience in general and in the context of being a special educational tool with regulative function at educating moral personality. The peculiarities of using conscience as a moral regulator by educator's implementation into moral personalities formation has been described with support of the rules and ways of it effective usage.

**Keywords:** *moral personality, J.R.R. Tolkien's literature work, conscience, moral personality's education, moral regulation*

**Introduction.** The issues of morality in society, especially of children and young people's moral personality's education is one of the most discussed topics over the last 20 years. Because in our post-industrial society, which is characterized by excess of service sector in GNP part of material production, when knowledge becomes the decisive production factor we notice the explosion of high technology, information revolution and the foremost factor is human capital.

The importance of moral personality's formation in educational process today is properly understood at the governmental level which is proved by the system of the laws and standards adopted from the European community recently and what have been implemented into series of new one, which are connected with family, preprimary, primary, secondary, higher and further education in Ukraine.

The relevance of this topic is in the well realized by educators' point of people's loss of their own moral regulators, and as a consequence the degradation of communicational values and rules for effective interaction with society as a whole thing. We support the J.R.R. Tolkien's ideas and concepts of moral personality's education in his works because of the great implementation possibilities in Ukrainian for educational philosophy and practice. This idea is supported by the current trends and orientations in modern educational space that makes high demands to moral qualities and principles, personal values in the context of its focus on the importance to service to society, ethics of relationship, its own attitude and ways of behaving and interacting with the surrounding people, the environment and education in general. The majority of the state documents are highlighted these educational trends: the decree of the President of Ukraine "On urgent additional measures for strengthening morality in society and the adoption of healthy lifestyles", the National doctrine of education development and in particular focus on the order of "Basic standards of education of pupils of grades 1-11 educational institutions of Ukraine" (of the Ministry of education and science, youth and sports of Ukraine) No.1234 (31.10.2011) that focus on the moral personality's education in the context of the formation of independent and democratic Ukraine in its aspiration to become a full member of the European community, to provide a comprehensive consolidation of the public and the individual civilized

life that are based on human values and spiritual, moral and cultural foundations of Ukrainian people's life.

So as we can realize the moral personality's education becomes one of the important landmarks of the modern educational trends in Ukraine, so modern educators seek to achieve a wide range of methods, tools, techniques and concepts education of the moral personality's education that have been successfully used in Europe. And according to these importance of learning for further implementation we eager to highlight the concept of moral personality's upbringing in J.R.R. Tolkien's works, that to our mind can fully satisfy current social and educational inquiry and determined the relevance of our research topics of this article.

**Analysis of recent achievements and publications** has demonstrated that in general there are a huge number of researchers who are purposefully engaged in the problem of personality's moral values and spiritual orientation formation, that only partly includes conscience phenomenon as a moral regulator since the twentieth century and up to today. One group of them highlighted these ideas through the psychology prism (B. Ananiev, L. Bozhovich, L. Vygotzky, A. Leontiev, S. Rubinstein, D. Uznadze, N. Yanitskiy); other – through the prism of sociology (A. Zdravomyslov, N. Sedov, A. Pen, V. Yadov), the third do that through the prism of cultural studies (P. Gurevich, Yu. Solonin) and the last group most purposefully through the prism of pedagogy (Is. Barba, I. Bech, N. Borichevsky, I. Sasun, V. Kremen, V. Krysko, A. Mishchenko, V. Ognevuc, V. Slastyonin, Y. Peleh, O. Sukhomlinsky, N. Tkachev, A. Yaroshenko).

According to modern educational goals and objectives J.G. Tolkien's art has significant potential for the moral personality's formation purpose and its moral values, because of the proper usage his literature works teacher can provide teaching activities that would have a deep philosophical undertone. This is in some way a reflection of the eternal confrontation between Good and Evil through the prism of communication in the discourse of the author; the accentuation on the importance of the «ordinary person» in the course of world events; the moral personality's education with newcomer meaning of life; foster a sense of personality's moral responsibility to future generations and to those people who are met on the life path of the individual; the promotion of human values: justice, truthfulness, faith-

fulness, the love to others, courage, sincerity, trust, love, selflessness, charity, respect for people, sacrifice, modesty, and tolerance (tolerance) [1; 2; 3].

The analysis on the problem studies have shown also that the phenomenon of conscience has interested people since ancient times right from the Socrates's first writings up to the present, when the question of conscience constantly confronts modern man and is connected with education, morality and people's values. That is why we support the J.R.R. Tolkien's idea that conscience and its phenomenon of being a moral regulator for each person no matter the profession or age, nor the social or personal status of life and should be formed as a moral orientation for person in its life, especially in the context of moral personality's education.

**The objective of the article.** The main objective of the article is to provide the investigation of using conscience as moral regulation at the moral personality's education (formation) which is based on the J. R. R. Tolkien's literature work and could be definitely based on his works and to show up the phenomenon of conscience as a moral regulator in personality's life. On the basis of the objective the following tasks are distinguished: 1) to specify the definition of «conscience» as an effective moral regulator; 2) to distinguish in understanding the impact for moral personality's education between different ways of comfortable conscience formation and its improvement; 3) to discover the peculiarities and advantages of using conscience as a moral regulator in the context of moral personality's education in J.R.R. Tolkien's literature works.

**The material and the methods.** There is J.R.R. Tolkien's favorite Latin saying about conscience: «conscience is a thousand witnesses altogether». If it would be fair for every modern person, perhaps the world would be different, because we don't really think that each and every person would be able to act the way that he or she acts with conscience in the meaning there are thousands of witnesses, which should be understand as ability to feel other people's opinions, feelings, thoughts and hopes before making some choice [4; 5].

That is very relevant in the context of J. R.R. Tolkien's moral personality's education concept. According to our point of view J.R.R. Tolkien's moral personality's education concept, which is central to his literature works and our study includes several aspects: personality's free choice opportunity; power challenge for dignity; personality's moral obligations; defining own hierarchy of moral values; defining the personal meaning of life; promotion of human values: justice, courage, mercy, sincerity, courage. sacrifice and others; the idea of kindness and justice combination in the personality's moral choices and behavior.

In his or her life every man needs a regulator, it is what it is at least relatively stable and allows person to navigate the constant changes in the conditions of our society. J.R.R. Tolkien claimed the idea that conscience is a moral regulator, a special way of social thinking in the context of understanding, analysis and generalization processes. Conscience is the moral basis of human existence. As an ethical category, the conscience characterizes the ability to exercise moral self-control and self-esteem (on the basis of existing moral duties). In J.R.R. Tolkien's literature works we can find the point in which he admitted that conscience

serves as an internal monitoring mechanism of consciousness.

There were various approaches based on the finding the definition of conscience: inherent human quality which is not subject to review; and this divine revelation, which refers to the sinner; and this internal voice in humans (remember "daimonon" Socrates, "inner voice" of the Pan); this and "guardian" of the human soul; that the "sanctuary" (so was called the conscience on the second Watchescorn Cathedral), defining conscience as a moral lamp that illuminates a good way (G. Hegel); highlighting conscience as a microscope, which magnifies things to make them clear and visible to our blunt senses" (L. Feuerbach), etc. [5].

Our meaning of «conscience» should be defined as a common vision, the ability to look at your actions through the eyes of others or from the position of the highest moral imperatives. The phenomenon of conscience from the point of view of its definition and structure is one of the most difficult to conduct. The conscience is the real identifying characteristic of a particular society of a certain socio-historical imperativeness, a measure of how deeply such an imperative is rooted into the inner world of the individual. Conscience is formed in the process of socialization and education, where there are first factors and the prohibition of external authority, which gradually become intimate and personal regulators of human behavior (or human moral chemoregulators). In this consequences using conscience as a moral regulator becomes a point of great importance in the context of moral personality's education.

Speaking of what exactly is manifested in moral importance of conscience using as a moral regulator in the context of moral personality's education in J. R. R. Tolkien literatures work and how it contributes to the person's ethical characteristics, we distinguish such points:

1) being guided by his or hers own sense of justice and moral values common in society, based on conscience, man can understand the most complex moral situation and make the right, morally justified decision;

2) because of people's conscience personality can resist various immoral or morally dubious temptations and not to violate moral prohibitions;

3) the voice of conscience warns of evil threats from saving a person from tore off false membranes;

4) person's voice of conscience and a moral conscience are given person the ability for intuitive recognition of good and evil;

5) moral conscience encourages moral self-personality improvement, that arises moral «concern» (because «the quiet conscience is an invention of the devil» was said by the great humanist of the XX century. A. Schweitzer [4]). So as we see the higher moral level the person has got, the higher inner spiritual «concern», a strong sense of conscience and remorse.

6) Finally, the conscience develops a sense of responsibility to oneself as a moral subject who is guided in his actions by the highest moral values. The conscience awakens in man the capacity for internal dialogue and even dispute with itself, evokes a sense of shame, the irony, allows to show some moral insistence of a man to himself. That is, it shows that the person has achieved a qualitative leap in its moral development, moral autonomy, moral reflection, moral right evaluation and a trial.

The conscience is often referred as another party's debt, a more personal "inner voice" of moral action, the internal regulator of morality in general. The conscience is the capacity for active self-knowledge, self-esteem the attitude to the environment and applicable in the society moral norms. Performing the function of the internal moral controller according to the context of moral personality's education in J.R.R. Tolkien's literature works that operate the conscience:

- as an inducement, guiding us to the observance of moral requirements, creating a certain positive mental attitude;

- as a ban, that is stopping factor, in advance condemning us for valid (possible) choice, for conduct that is in prospect;

- as a correction component (corrects actions during their execution);

- as a moral assessment of personality's actions, expressing a corresponding moral experiences (and this assessment is very important because the conscience is formed on the basis of exteriorization of the moral requirements of the environment and a certain way that reflects their public character, but the conscience is first and foremost a personal evaluation of the facts, the expression of our subjective attitudes to the phenomenon that it is morally evaluated).

In every day conversation quite often the expression «clean conscience» or «good conscience» are defined as the person's comprehension formation made of all his obligations or the realization of all possibilities in a particular situation. If we take these words literally, «pure», «suspicion» conscience is a sure sign of unconsciousness, i.e. the lack of conscience, but the propensity not to pay attention to her judgment. A. Schweitzer, who saw the highest truth is in morality and the highest expediency, refers to the sense of responsibility for the fate of another person: «We must never become blind. We will live in harmony with the truth, if deeper will experience conflicts. A clear conscience is an invention of the devil» [4].

Conscience according to J. R. R. Tolkien's point of view is an emotional phenomenon, it manifests itself through the deep negative feelings, anxiety and concern human morality and humanity of his conduct. As the judge of all our lives the conscience stands for remorse as the shame for the committed or that was only wanted to do with the consequences that could went after.

The conscience is the individual's responsibility towards himself as a personality that brings the highest universal values. However, the conscience as a means of self-assessment is not absolute, because sometimes it can be condescending. Of course, there are situations that justify man, but it also happens that the circumstances are only a cover for self-justification. Life circumstances always put us before a choice and criteria of choice should serve as the conscience.

The proof of the harmonizing impact on personality by the implementation of J. R. R. Tolkien's moral personality's education concept in the context of conscience formation and its further usage as a moral regulator is his position (that is consonant with teachers of the twentieth and twenty-first century literature) that treasury of human values, conscience and experience can meet the personality's spiritual needs and becoming the proper tool for creation

own spiritual life. Personality's moral education in J. R. R. Tolkien's works focused on conscience formation is based on the person's admission to the careful continuous inner work with the height of his morality and moral character and self-identity as well. The sense of moral beauty describes the prevailing moral personality and immutable principles, which it keeps as his honor [5].

We really agree with he highlighted above J.R.R. Tolkien's ideas which could be proved by such meaningful quote with what he finishes the book «The Hobbit or There and Back Again» "do you really think that your adventures and escapes ended happily ever after thanks to pure luck and only in that matter? You are a very nice person, Mr. Beggins, and I love you very much, - however, in the end, Bilbo, you're not the only person in this big world!" [6; p 307], and which accumulates one of the central educational lines in the concept: the importance of every person in the world of history and society, on the one hand, and on the other hand, not specifying a single person as a hero, an idol, an object of blind worship and adoration. Which emphasizes the importance of conscience formation in the context of moral personality's education.

J.R.R. Tolkien's works (the trilogy "the Lord of the Rings, the Hobbit or there and back again", "the Silmarillion", "the great Blacksmith of Wootton, Farmer Gaels of ham" and others) penetrated extremely relevant even for today topic, "moral call" and "risk". In the context of its importance for many people in the modern world, this condition becomes habitual, but does not necessarily imply the adoption of proper moral and informed decisions. Personality tests risk every day in relationships with others, the acquisition of material goods or the creative realization of personality. Supporting the opinion of the author of Lord of the Rings, we accept that risk, and when choosing "standing pat" (if there are templates that lay over time and even in situations that should motivate us to new activities, to improve their own positions, principles), and risk when moving forward (if unimpressed, and not the will of the heart and critical thinking). Actually, risk is everywhere, as demonstrated by the creativity of the teacher, the personality of the risks and lose, and find something inappropriate to its vision values. In such way-for a comfortable understanding of the harmonious and organic connection with society and oneself, it is necessary for the education of the moral personality to form moral orientation. Of course, we do not invest in this idea stereotyped moral orientations and their arrant same for all, but nevertheless the needness for their subordination to the universal values and moral qualities of personality that allows you to contribute to the prosperity and well-being of society and every citizen is clear and important.

Meaningful and wise thought that is basic for Tolkien's literature work is that small can be powerful. The most matching scene in trilogy "Lord of the Rings" that encapsulate this principle is a critical point in this sage, at the time when Frodo Baggins (hobbit or halfling) is just about to enter the Dark Lord's territory, where the Ring should be destroyed, he pauses because of being deep in thoughts about Gandalf (good and wise wizard and the affective leader of the Fellowship of Ring) he wondered whether he will see him and his fellows or not. He searches in his mind any chance for some open direction that may have been given for this crucial part of his mission and hasn't found

nothing giving the answer for that, but Frodo concluded that Gandalf had been in the dark realm since the time when Dark Lord's power had come to its fullness.

Raymond J. Laird supports this idea by writing that J. R. R. Tolkien in his depiction of his small hero, has him here expressing his despair while articulating the amazing role for which he has been chosen. Frodo's despair heightens the crucial nature of the operating principle: he is far too weak for the task. He admits to having taken it upon himself, but at this point it was obviously an evil choice. Once more he must choose, and both of the paths before him appeared to lead to terror and death. He cannot do it, but he must make the attempt and die in so doing. He thinks that he has been given a task that is utterly beyond him, a judgment which was both right and wrong. It was a task he had not sought, a burden he had not wanted, but he had been chosen by the consensus of the wise who had ears for the wisdom of the past, and eyes for the workings of providence in their own times [1].

**The results and their discussion.** Therefore conscience is a personal moral regulator of the person which sometimes drives us, sometimes we manage them. In my opinion, it is a tool, a tool for summarizing, rethinking life experience, making life decisions and the accumulation of conscious positions of his own life.

Joseph Pearce characterized J.R.R. Tolkien's literature work «The Hobbit, or There and back Again» as the masterpiece with the deepest level of meaning and defined the main character of it –Bilbo Baggins as a «pilgrimage of grace», who through the discovering personality journey becomes growing up in the most important sense, which is definitely growth in wisdom and virtue [1]. Giving moral commentary in this context, we admit that Tolkien shared the idea that «where your treasure is, there your heart is» which means that the higher moral values, aims, ideas and dreams personality has, the higher spiritual and intellectual level a person would get.

**Conclusion.** In our work we for the first provided the investigation of using conscience as moral regulation at the moral personality's education (formation) which is based on the J. R. R. Tolkien's literature work and could be definitely based on his works and showed up the phenomenon of conscience as a moral regulator in personality's life.

According to our holistic analysis of the personality's moral upbringing potential through the moral value orientations and conscience formation in the J.R.R. Tolkien's literature works. We investigated various forms of conscience based on moral values and orientations formation in the context of J.R.R. Tolkien moral personality's education concept. We have clarified the meaning of the aspects in J.R.R. Tolkien's concept (its components are free choice of the individual; the test of power; moral duty of the individual; determining a hierarchy of moral values; the definition of personal meaning of life, etc.).

We marked the influence on the conscience formation on the nature of the genre of the writer's works and ideas that are directed on moral personality's education and the role of educational influence in the incarnation of ideological and artistic ideas of John Ronald Reuel Tolkien.

It is proved that the author's word is a multifaceted, influential and educational means of raising the personality to a tradition of joining cultural space and making personality to use conscience as a moral regulator. After analyzing a number of works by G. Puccini based on exploring J.R.R. Tolkien's literature works impact on the readers, we came to the conclusion that in the context of the conscience formation moral identity, moral principles and moral quality of the individual significantly affect the understanding of both author's specific works and literary heritage.

We believe that our study will promote further research devoted to the personality's moral education in literature of the twentieth century. The results can be used in teaching the variety of pedagogical courses (history of pedagogy) and seminars, the preparation of new textbooks and manuals for primary, secondary and higher education.

#### REFERENCES

1. Joseph Pearce. Bilbo's Journey: Discovering the Hidden Meaning of The Hobbit / Pearce Joseph. – Charlotte, NC: Saint Benedict Press, 2001. – 143 p. – ISBN 978-1618900-586.
2. Shippey, T.A. J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the century / T.A. Shippey. – Great Britain: Harper Collins Publishers. – 2000. – 353 p.
3. Smith, R. Inside Language: Linguistic and Aesthetic Theory in Tolkien / R. Smith. – Berne and Zurich: Walking Tree Publishers, 2007. – 154 p.
4. Schweitzer Albert. The philosophy of civilization / Albert Schweitzer. – JHU Press, 1980 – 231 p.
5. The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien / Edited by Humphrey Carpenter. – London: Harper Collins, 1995. – 502 p.
6. Tolkien, J.R.R. The Hobbit, or There and Back Again / J.R.R. Tolkien. - New York: Ballantine Books, 1965. – 310 p.