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Philosophical background of experimental pedagogy (based on E. Meumann's concepts)

Svitlana Shandruk*

Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian State Pedagogical University
25006, 1 Shevchenko Str., Kropyvnytskyi, Ukraine

Mariia Foka

Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian State Pedagogical University
25006, 1 Shevchenko Str., Kropyvnytskyi, Ukraine

Olena Habelko

Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian State Pedagogical University
25006, 1 Shevchenko Str., Kropyvnytskyi, Ukraine

Liudmyla Lysenko

Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian State Pedagogical University
25006, 1 Shevchenko Str., Kropyvnytskyi, Ukraine

Yuliya Arkushyna

Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian State Pedagogical University
25006, 1 Shevchenko Str., Kropyvnytskyi, Ukraine

Abstract

Relevance. The problem of classical philosophical pedagogy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is analyzed in the article.

Purpose. The issue of the basis of experimental pedagogy and the philosophical and pedagogical principles of E. Meumann are highlighted.

Methodology. E. Merman's undeniable merit is that the educator pointed out the substantiation of the content and place of pedagogy in the system of sciences and the correlation of pedagogy with psychology, philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, culturology, religious studies, logics, etc.

Results. E. Meumann formulated the main tasks of experimental pedagogy and declared that the classical philosophical pedagogy, state and society should remain the definition of the general tasks of education and training. According to E. Meumann, philosophy can provide many important and necessary preliminary data for solving pedagogical problems, and therefore the philosopher should be of great importance in pedagogy as a representative of the science of values and norms.

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*Corresponding author



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Conclusions. The philosophy as the main part of pedagogy ought to be accomplished in upbringing because it combines the religious, ethical and aesthetic values that are the foundation for the full development of personality and society.

Keywords: Ernst Meumann; classical philosophical pedagogy; experimental psychology; experimental pedagogy; pedagogical reform.

Introduction

The qualitative education is the foundation for the development of personality, society, and country. The requirements of the modern stage of reforms both in the world and in Ukraine, the search for new effective models of the school of the future necessitate further modernization of the system and the content of education. Specifically, Ukraine's aspiration to enter the world of educational space makes a relevant appeal to the experience of the western school and pedagogy, their achievements and teaching methods.

The development of the independent Ukrainian state is associated with the formation of a new society, the transformation of all social institutions. Changes in the content and structure of general secondary education are profound and require the solution of the teacher training problems, who recognizes own social responsibility in the process of the future human development, constantly cares about his own personal and professional growth, is able to achieve new pedagogical goals [1]. Therefore, new goals for the higher education have emerged that focus on new competencies that secondary school students should acquire [2], such as cultural awareness, lifelong learning skill, social and civil competencies, sense of entrepreneurship, etc. The most effective way of developing these competencies at the present day should be found in the past experience, with a view to experimental pedagogy [3; 4].

At the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, a unique experience of rather rapid development of new pedagogy and the reformation of education system on its basis were observed. The core and driving force of those changes was primarily connected with the experimental pedagogy. By introducing new experimental methods of research, representatives of experimental pedagogy were engaged in the search for effective ways of democratization and individualization of the educational process, building such relationships between the teacher and the student, which would maximally contribute to the realization of the opportunities for development and creative potential of each child. At the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, experimental pedagogy has gained worldwide popularity [5; 6]. At that time, thousands of specialists and researchers worked in this area and published thousands of publications. In the first instance, such researchers as A. Binet [7], E. Claparede [8], V. Kilpatrick [9], V. Lay [10], E. Meumann [11; 12], M. Montessori [13], W. Wundt [14] etc. contributed greatly to experimental pedagogy. The purpose of the article is to systematize and generalize the philosophical aspect of experimental pedagogy based on E. Meumann's concepts. The main research methods are analysis and generalization that are most appropriate for studying the philosophical aspect of E. Meumann's experimental pedagogy.

The problem of classical philosophical pedagogy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries

The general public attention to classical philosophical pedagogy at the end of the XIX and early XX century demonstrated both its tremendous importance in the life of society and its weaknesses. Contemporary society in general and philosophers and educators in particular had a great influence on the development of moral ideas and values. At the same time, different pedagogical approach, based on its intuitive and philosophical vision of the nature of the child, gave diametrically opposite tips for his education. Moreover, rejection of society was caused by the practice of the then school, both folk schools for the poor and secondary schools for the children of wealthy people.

K. Kornilov [15] specified this feature of classical pedagogy, which before becoming clear scientific ground and using scientific methods, pedagogy survived the period of the invasion of philosophical theories, where, based on general ideas about the nature of a man, they tried to solve the problem by the speculative way of education. But those theories became the most significant contradictions with each other. On the one part, they considered the nature of the child as spoiled by the primordial ancestral sin and directed from nature to evil, and therefore in practical terms they recommended as much guidance and severe influence on the pupil (scholasticism). On the other part, they put forward the principle that everything is beautiful, which proceeds from the hands of the Creator, and everything degenerates in the hands of man, and therefore proclaimed the demand – to bring up in accordance with nature (Rousseau). At the same time, they believed that the child's soul was like a clean sheet of paper on which the educator could write everything he wanted, thus emphasizing the importance of the educational guidance (Locke). By comparison, they denied any educational effect, because the child's soul was so perfect and pure by nature, that no educator can purify his spirit in comparison with a child [15].

Analyzing classical philosophical pedagogy, E. Meumann [16] argued that with insufficient psychological and specialist education of pedagogues-reformers of the past, all these theoretical justifications were largely inadequate. He criticized the fundamental provisions of the pedagogical views of Y. A. Komensky, J.-J. Russo, Y. B. Basedov, Y. G. Pestalozzi, and others. As for Friedrich Fröbel, one of the classics of pedagogy, E. Meumann [11] stated that Fröbel made his main spatial form by which it was necessary to develop the child's mind, which, surprisingly, derived from mathematical and philosophical views; and therefore it was only by accident that the child was psychologically simple and elemental.

Characterizing Y. B. Basedov's "Basic Work", E. Meumann [17] wrote that this voluminous collection of knowledge is written with frivolity and superficiality, and none of Basedov's pedagogical ideas has a scientific justification. And later, E. Meumann concludes that if you

look at the history of our science, you should get the impression that scientific pedagogy was barely dying. The prominent representatives of pedagogy, with all their live and inspired interest in practical educational work, were either amateurs with all the drawbacks that were self-taught who did not even possess the scientific knowledge of their time, or such as Locke, Leibniz, Kant or Fichte, who, engaged in pedagogy, were limited to the consideration of individual, randomly selected issues of education in the form of essays [17]. E. Meumann, criticizing his predecessors, tried to understand the reasons for their failures. He considered that one of them was the discrepancy of their ideas, the unclaimed interest by their contemporary society.

E. Meumann [18] explained the reasons for this situation and underlined that in the past the education system was relatively narrow, interest in education and upbringing, both in the people and in the ruling circles, was inadequate. At the same time, philosophers, thinkers, and scientists were indifferent to the issues of pedagogy, and the success of pedagogy from the Middle Ages, was the matter of the lonely and unrecognized individuals of their time [18].

E. Meumann [11] claimed that in the classical philosophical pedagogy there was no major sufficiently solid and exhaustive scientific substantiation of established norms. In this pedagogy, there is no empirical fundamentalism, which consists of those positive knowledge of the actual conditions on which all pedagogical ideas and norms should be built. Therefore, the first and most important task of the new experimental pedagogy, the scientist considered was the substantiation of a new scientific pedagogy [11].

Classical philosophical pedagogy did not give a convincing answer to why and how to teach and educate the younger generation in order to be fully prepared for life in a constantly changing environment of competition; how to make education effective and successful, and keeping children at school safe for their physical and mental health; on what factors depends on the success or failure of children in education, and so on.

Experimental psychology as the basis of Ernst Meumann's experimental pedagogy

In the context of the classical philosophical pedagogy, new experimental psychology as the forerunner of experimental pedagogy began to develop rapidly. The subject of its scientific attention was increasingly becoming a child, which was also studied by physiologists, anthropologists, and hygienists. Notably, a fairly large amount of factual material about the child was accumulated, systematized and generalized. Inevitably the question arose about the possibility of using this empirical information in pedagogy.

The appearance of experimental psychology was objectively determined by the entire course of the historical development of society, production and science, and the important role of education and pedagogy [19; 20]. In the second half of the nineteenth century, child psychology achieved significant success, which was due to the introduction of an experimental method of research. Experimental studies yielded significant results, greatly expanded knowledge about the peculiarities of the child's mental state, corrected hypotheses, confirmed or destroyed

them. Realizing the possibilities of the experiment, the educators-researchers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries associated great hopes with it [21-23].

E. Meumann [18] called experimental psychology as "Spiritual mother" of experimental pedagogy. At the same time, communication and the relationship between them are rather complex and are marked by the problem of separation from the side of pedagogy. In the educator's view, the difference between pedagogy and theoretical psychology lies only in a certain angle of view. Meanwhile, experimental psychology regards "the person as an object" whose psychic phenomena are described and explained, but pedagogy considers the child and its peculiarities as an infant [18]. That is, for a scientist, the theoretical limit between psychology and pedagogy lies in the emphasis and in the formulation of questions. The psychologist tends to investigate the state and regularities of the child's psyche by themselves, and the pedagogue with regard to the tendency of the child's mind to extraneous influence and its development.

E. Meumann [24] stated that any mental process of a child's development is of a great interest for a psychologist, who observes its natural process, as it is, but for the teacher, it is interesting only to the extent that it can be influenced in accordance with educational tasks, or how much he serves as an educational purpose. The child psychologist asks: how does a young person develop? Whereas, in contrast, the educator asks: how exactly should we intervene in this process, so that it leads to a certain goal?

Insisting on the autonomy of pedagogy as a science, on its fundamental difference from psychology, E. Meumann [18] wrote that mainly three branches of pedagogy, which deprive psychology of meaning, can be singled out: 1) the doctrine of materials and teaching methods, 2) practical issues of school organization, 3) the teaching of the conditions for the implementation of pedagogical measures and the teaching about the task of education.

The success of the new pedagogy was not related only to the mastery of its experimental methods of research, but, according to E. Meumann, with the fact that all necessary conditions were ripened for this purpose. Firstly, time equipped new pedagogy with new experimental methods, a new methodological basis, which was not implemented in old pedagogy. Secondly, time put in front of new pedagogy a number of urgent issues of school reform, which required prompt and scientifically based responses. This was the correspondence of the new pedagogy to a new time that was underlined by E. Meumann [18]. He wrote that modern pedagogical science is in close connection with pedagogical practice [18] as well as that the history of pedagogy shows that a powerless teacher is inspired by the best reform ideas and practical intentions if social life of his time does not go towards him. Thus, the experience of the past manifests that victory remains only after those reform ideas, on the side of which there is a social request, interest and will of the public and state power.

In addition to the scientific provision of reforms in education, the new pedagogy engaged in a comprehensive study of the child in terms of anthropometry and anthropology, medicine, psychiatry, psychopathology, and psychology of childhood [18; 25]. E. Meumann [12] considered another mission of a new science, its unifying mission, when it combines all directions in a single

scientific research on the basis of experimental pedagogy, which serves the theoretical and practical work of education, when the pedagogical concept will be based not on ideological positions of the authors, when the reforms in education will be done, not from a political conjuncture, but from scientifically grounded principles. E. Meumann argued that such an instance exists in attempts to substantiate the pedagogical reform projects, and the more it will have the character of an objective solution, the more it will be based on the empirical investigation of facts and will work, using the means of exact research: observation, experiment, statistics etc. [18]. Nevertheless, E. Meumann's [26] desire to achieve "objective non-party decisions" in education and pedagogy was as maximalist as his criticism of predecessors. E. Meumann pointed out the need for new methodological foundations for pedagogy. He noted that either pedagogy uses methodological achievements and results of experimental studies of mental labor, or it cannot claim to be called science.

The speed of the emergence of experimental pedagogy, its dissemination in the leading countries of the world, the growth of its popularity, the involvement of leading scientists contributed in the development of new pedagogy. Educators actively implemented new methods of experimental pedagogy and all the necessary conditions for its emergence were matured. Public trust in experimental pedagogy and hopes for a scientifically grounded solution to urgent social problems were enormous, especially since its first successes were encouraging. In addition, the popularity of experimental pedagogy contributed to the inability of the classical philosophical pedagogy to give clear ideas about the directions of the late reform of education, as well as the maximalism of the proposals of some representatives of reform pedagogy and the theory of free education, which caused rejection not only among the authorities, but also among certain social strata.

Philosophical and pedagogical views of Ernst Meumann

The motherland of experimental pedagogy is Germany, and Ernst Meumann is called the founder of experimental pedagogy. He was a teacher and psychologist, a professor of philosophy and pedagogy at a number of German universities, a pioneer in the study of child psychology. His basic fundamental works – "Lectures on Experimental Pedagogy", "Essay on Experimental Pedagogy", "Introduction to Experimental Pedagogy", "Economics and Memory Technology" – in fact, served as the basis for the further development of experimental pedagogy [27; 28].

At the turn of the century, subjective idealism was quite popular among the German scholars. E. Meumann's teacher W. Wundt characterized this trend and explained that mental experiences are valid in the form in which they appear in self-observation; that we add concepts to them in the formation of concepts or receive from them by abstraction is a false way, a simple fiction of consciousness [29]. Some contemporary researchers believe that E. Meumann was also the follower of the theory of subjective idealism, but it is necessary to note that he repeatedly emphasized the knowledge of the psychic world of a man

and a child. Thus, he claimed that observation serves as a valuable means of identifying facts [12].

E. Meumann [18] witnessed what revolutionary changes occurred in pedagogy. He underlined that the distance, separating modern pedagogy from the present, is greater than in any other field of research and life. But even the first half of the nineteenth century represents a completely different picture of scientific and practical pedagogy. Such a nihilistic attitude to classical philosophical pedagogy was inherent both for E. Meumann and for many experimenters. In our opinion, this hypertrophied criticism and disrespect for the recognized authorities of old pedagogy had several reasons. Firstly, it is the general spirit of nihilism, which was quite common at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and which found its manifestations not only in pedagogy, but also in art, science, politics, morals, etc. Secondly, for the rapid establishment of experimental pedagogy, the belief in its supremacy, in the public consciousness it was necessary to free space from the old idols, the classics of pedagogy of the past. This phenomenon can be considered as additional factors that contributed to the rapid acquisition of experimental public education by the teacher and to its emerging as well.

The undeniable merit of E. Meumann [12] is that he justified the content and place of pedagogy in the system of sciences. Arguing those, who believed that pedagogy had no internal integrity, that it splits into quite remote fields from ethics to hygiene, he claimed that pedagogy, like other sciences, is combined in one integral system by common point of view of research and this point of view is the upbringing of a young person. Opposing to those, who claimed about absence of autonomy of pedagogy, its dependence on other sciences (ethics, psychology, etc.), he emphasized not on dependence, but on borrowing, using the information of other sciences for the tasks of pedagogy and concluded that pedagogy can be considered dependent on other sciences only in this sense, as well as any other science, which, thanks to a peculiar viewpoint of pedagogical processing of the material, a special, peculiar combination of its scientific fields is received [12; 30]. E. Meumann enumerated the sciences which are closely interrelated with pedagogy. These are psychology, philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, cultural studies, religious studies, logic, in addition, some natural and historical sciences and mathematics. E. Meumann formulated the main tasks of experimental pedagogy. Let us mention some of them.

The investigation of spiritual and physical development of children of school age. Such studies he considered to be "the foundation of all pedagogy"; all pedagogical activities, the entire pedagogical curriculum, the gradual growth of the requirements for the spiritual work and the mental capabilities of the student should be based on this, as well as on the clear idea of the possibilities of each child. E. Meumann wrote that only thanks to the modern child psychology one can see how great is the difference between the mental organization of an adult and a child in certain well-known years of school life [11]. He put forward the task of investigating whether the development of the child is gradual or saltatory, whether there is a connection between physical and spiritual development, how the gradual approach of the child to the spiritual and

physical level of the adult happens. It was also necessary to establish the deviation of the individual child from the average level of development of children of a certain age. Thus, a picture of an average or normal child would be obtained and it would be possible to recognize a developed, extremely capable, gifted, normally developed child, as well as a spiritually or physically retarded, weak child.

A distinctive study of the development of various spiritual abilities of the child, in particular the development of sensations, imagination, memory, thinking, ability to abstraction, manifestations of will and emotions. E. Meumann stated that various spiritual abilities of the child develop unevenly. At a certain age, some of them develop very intensively, others lag behind. He believed that for each type of spiritual activity there appears to be a particularly favorable period [11]. Studying of children's personalities, personal differences between children. E. Meumann pays special attention to the extent to which the individual differences between children are sharply expressed at different stages of their development [11].

Separation from studies of the peculiarities of children in general, the study of individual differences in the talent of students, the development of scientific doctrine of giftedness [11]. From E. Meumann's perspective, the main thing in the study of giftedness was the ability to study and educate an individual, that is, the question of the individual capabilities of students. He considered them to be dependent on the nature and properties. Ability to work, exercise, habituation, adaptability, intellectual susceptibility and their relationship with self-activity, spontaneity, will-power qualities (for example, the duration of desires, self-criticism, self-control, suggestibility), the intensity of the reaction to irritation belong to the character. Properties include intelligence, quality of attention, the overall pace of physical and mental development of an individual, his physiological constitution, as well as the correlation of all these properties with school success and moral and ethical behavior of the student [26].

Studying the state of the child during his/her school work as a separate subject of experimental and pedagogical research. In this aspect, E. Meumann highlighted a series of derivative tasks: it was necessary to investigate what contributes to, and what hinders school work, having received the technique and methodology of school work or technology and the economy of mental work of a child; thinking that every work has a hygienic aspect, mental work is tedious in the same way as physical one. E. Meumann considered important to study tiredness, its various degrees, especially fatigue, conditions of rest, precautionary measures of exhaustion, its harmful consequences and united all this in the research group, which was called "mental health school work"; studying the relationship between the school system and the work of the student, comparing the effectiveness of school work of the child and the home, and how it relates to various stages of development of the child and for various tasks of the school [12].

The study of didactic issues, the analysis of the child's educational work in the process of studying certain disciplines, the comparison and analysis of individual teaching methods, their impact on the effectiveness of educational work. E. Meumann [12] underlined that

experimental didactics should work on the analysis of the child's activity in the process of studying and learning educational material on reading, arithmetic, writing, spelling, constructing sentences according to the rules of language, the study of foreign languages, etc. The study of the teacher's activity, methods of teaching different subjects and their influence on students' work. In these theses the essence of E. Meumann's program on experimental pedagogy is represented. The object of this program is a child, a student, his mental characteristics and spiritual development. From the development of experimental pedagogy, E. Meumann [26] expected significant innovations in scientific pedagogy and the enrichment of school practice.

Having outlined a fairly wide range of problems of experimental pedagogy, E. Meumann [12] also pointed out its limitations. He stated that not all pedagogical questions can be solved experimentally, because not all questions of scientific pedagogy consist of the study of facts.

According to the pedagogist, general tasks of education and training, the nature and special purpose of individual schools were defined by classical philosophical pedagogy, the state and the society [12]. This E. Meumann's [12] statement contradicts his desire to see experimental pedagogy as objective authority, regardless of political, social and religious side influences, who would act only in the spirit of purely scientific research of truth.

Many of the experimentalists were rather contemptuous of philosophy and classical philosophical pedagogy. Instead, E. Meumann believed that the role of a philosopher in pedagogy is exactly the same as the role of a psychologist. Being a psychologist, he can give a large amount of data to solve pedagogical problems, but just as a psychologist, he cannot, from his point of view and by his means, solve a single pedagogical question. According to E. Meumann, philosophy can provide many important and necessary preliminary data for solving pedagogical problems, and therefore the philosopher should be of great importance in pedagogy as a representative of the science of values and standards. Philosophy affects the most important part of pedagogy, the doctrine of the ultimate goal of upbringing, because it contains the religious, ethical and aesthetic values that teachers want to accomplish in upbringing [18]. Some works of E. Meumann [24] can be considered as good examples of philosophical pedagogy, in particular his article "On the question of the purpose of education", in which the teacher gave a sample of the combination of philosophy and pedagogy, analyzed the question of the purpose of education in the historical aspect, contemporary concepts and expressed his vision of the issue.

Conclusions

The world at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had a unique experience of rather rapid development of new pedagogy and the reformation of education system on its basis. The experimental pedagogy was the core and driving motive of those changes. E. Meumann is called as the founder of experimental pedagogy. He was a teacher and a psychologist, a professor of philosophy and pedagogy at a number of German universities, a pioneer in the study of child psychology. General public attention to classical philosophical

pedagogy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries demonstrated its tremendous importance in the life of society, as well as its weaknesses. The speed of the formation of experimental pedagogy, its outspread in the leading countries of the world, the growth of its popularity, the involvement of leading scientists, educators, and the public under the banner of its leading boss suggest that the seeds of new pedagogy fell into the prepared ground. For the emergence of experimental pedagogy all the necessary conditions have matured.

The undeniable merit of E. Meumann is the fact that he substantiated the content and place of pedagogy in the system of sciences. The educator enumerates the sciences closely interrelated with pedagogy. These are psychology, philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, cultural studies, religious studies, logic, in addition, individual natural and historical sciences, mathematics. E. Meumann formulated the main tasks of experimental pedagogy and outlined a fairly wide range of problems of experimental pedagogy. E. Meumann

believed that the role of the philosopher in pedagogy is exactly the same as the role of a psychologist. According to the pedagogist, philosophy can provide many important and necessary preliminary data for solving pedagogical problems, and therefore the philosopher should be of great importance in pedagogy as a representative of the science of values and standards. Philosophy affects the most important part of pedagogy, on the doctrine of the ultimate goal of upbringing, because it contains the religious, ethical and aesthetic values that must be accomplished in upbringing.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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Філософське підґрунтя експериментальної педагогіки (на основі концепцій Е. Меймана)

Світлана Шандрук

Центральноукраїнський державний педагогічний університет імені Володимира Винниченка
25006, вул. Шевченка, 1, м. Кропивницький, Україна

Марія Фока

Центральноукраїнський державний педагогічний університет імені Володимира Винниченка
25006, вул. Шевченка, 1, м. Кропивницький, Україна

Олена Габелко

Центральноукраїнський державний педагогічний університет імені Володимира Винниченка
25006, вул. Шевченка, 1, Кропивницький, Україна

Людмила Лисенко

Центральноукраїнський державний педагогічний університет імені Володимира Винниченка
25006, вул. Шевченка, 1, м. Кропивницький, Україна

Юлія Аркушина

Центральноукраїнський державний педагогічний університет імені Володимира Винниченка
25006, вул. Шевченка, 1, м. Кропивницький, Україна

Анотація

Актуальність. У статті аналізується проблема класичної філософської педагогіки кінця 19 - початку 20 століття.

Мета. Висвітлити питання засад експериментальної педагогіки та філософсько-педагогічні принципи Е. Френе.

Методологія. Незаперечною заслугою Е. Меймана є те, що педагог звернув увагу на обґрунтування змісту і місця педагогіки в системі наук та співвідношення педагогіки з психологією, філософією, етикою, естетикою, культурологією, релігієзнавством, логікою тощо.

Результати. Е. Мейман сформулював основні завдання експериментальної педагогіки та задекларував, що за класичною філософською педагогікою, державою і суспільством має залишитися визначення загальних завдань виховання і навчання. На думку Е. Меймана, філософія може дати багато важливих і необхідних попередніх даних для вирішення педагогічних проблем, а тому філософ повинен мати велике значення в педагогіці як представник науки про цінності і норми.

Висновки. Філософія як основна частина педагогіки повинна бути реалізована у вихованні, оскільки вона поєднує в собі релігійні, етичні та естетичні цінності, які є фундаментом для повноцінного розвитку особистості та суспільства.

Ключові слова: Ернст Мейман; класична філософська педагогіка; експериментальна психологія; експериментальна педагогіка; педагогічна реформа.