

Breslavska, H. B. (2025). Theoretical and methodological foundations for ensuring continuity in national and patriotic education of senior preschoolers and primary school pupils. *Actual Issues of Modern Science. European Scientific e-Journal*, 40, 64–71. Ostrava.

DOI: 10.47451/ped2025-10-01

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Hanna B. Breslavska, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences (Ph.D.), Senior Lecturer, Department of Primary Education, Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding. Mykolaiv, Ukraine.

E-mail: breslavskayaab@gmail.com

ORCID 0000-0002-6144-4890, WoS HHZ-5950-2022

Article history:

Received: October 17, 2026

Revised: November 22, 2026

Accepted: December 1, 2026

Published: December 14, 2026

Theoretical and Methodological Foundations for Ensuring Continuity in National and Patriotic Education of Senior Preschoolers and Primary School Pupils

Abstract:

The article highlights the theoretical and methodological foundations for ensuring continuity in national and patriotic education of senior preschoolers and primary school pupils. The relevance of the research lies in the need to develop civic consciousness, patriotic values, and national identity in young children amid educational reforms and current societal challenges. The object of the study is the process of national and patriotic education of children of senior preschool and early school age. The purpose of the study is to substantiate theoretical and methodological approaches to the implementation of the principle of continuity between preschool and primary school in the system of national and patriotic education. The methods used include analysis, synthesis, comparison, systematization, and pedagogical forecasting. Based on the works of Bekh, Bohush, Sukhomlynskyi, Kuzmenko, and Karamushka, the psychological and pedagogical foundations of the development of patriotic feelings were identified. The result of the study is the definition of a continuity structure grounded in the unity of educational content, forms of activity, and pedagogical partnership. Methodological conditions for ensuring continuity are proposed: harmonization of educational programs, implementation of joint projects, and the formation of a value-semantic space for the child. The practical significance lies in the possibility of applying the results in the professional training of preschool and primary school teachers.

Keywords: continuity, national and patriotic education, preschoolers, primary school pupils, values, civic identity, pedagogical partnership.

Introduction

The relevance of ensuring continuity in national and patriotic education is determined by the social need to cultivate conscious citizens capable of acting in the interests of the state and society, guided by moral values, love for their homeland, responsibility, and readiness to defend Ukraine (Bekh, 2018). In the context of war and globalization, the education system plays a

leading role in strengthening national identity and civic position among children, while the formation of patriotic qualities must begin in early childhood (*Education...*, 2021).

National and patriotic education is understood as an integrated process that combines moral, emotional-volitional, and activity-based components of personal development. It is grounded in humanistic values and the idea of love for one's land, people, language, and culture (*Bobush, 2020*). One of the key factors of effectiveness in this process is continuity between preschool and primary education, ensuring coherence and consistency in the development of the child's value orientations (*Kuzmenko, 2021*).

The transition from preschool to school involves changes in social roles, leading activities, behavior expectations, and learning motivation. It is therefore essential to maintain continuity in educational influences, preserve a positive emotional attitude toward learning, and strengthen the child's sense of belonging to their country (*Karamushka, 2019*). Continuity in national and patriotic education manifests in the unity of content lines, forms, and methods of educational work, as well as shared value orientations and pedagogical traditions.

Modern pedagogy views continuity not merely as a sequence of learning stages but as pedagogical interaction, where preschool institutions and schools act as equal partners in forming a nationally conscious and harmonious personality. This requires a shared educational environment integrating cultural and community resources (*Leshchenko, 2019*).

Key prerequisites for continuity include alignment of state educational standards (*Basic Component...*, 2021), teacher readiness for joint planning, and the development of competencies necessary for effective partnership among educators, parents, and children (*Savchenko, 2000*).

Thus, ensuring continuity in national and patriotic education is a complex pedagogical problem that requires coordination of goals, content, forms, methods, and outcomes across developmental stages.

The subject of the study is theoretical and methodological foundations for ensuring continuity between preschool and primary education.

The object of the study is the process of national and patriotic education of senior preschool and primary school children.

The study aims to theoretically substantiate and define methodological principles for ensuring continuity in national and patriotic education.

There are following tasks in the study:

- analyze the psychological and pedagogical foundations of patriotism formation in children.
- reveal the essence and content of the principle of continuity in education.
- identify pedagogical conditions, means, and forms of implementing educational work aimed at developing national consciousness.

Methods

The methodological framework of this study is grounded in the principles of systematization, continuity, and value orientation that underpin modern Ukrainian pedagogy. The research employed both general scientific and specific pedagogical methods to ensure comprehensive analysis and theoretical substantiation of continuity in national and patriotic education of senior preschoolers and primary school pupils.

At the general scientific level, analysis and synthesis were used to deconstruct the phenomenon of national and patriotic education into its structural and functional elements and to integrate them into a coherent theoretical model. Induction and deduction allowed the formulation of general pedagogical regularities based on empirical and theoretical premises. Comparison enabled the identification of commonalities and distinctions between preschool and primary educational systems in terms of content, forms, and methods of patriotic upbringing. Systematization and classification facilitated the organization of data concerning the conceptual and methodological approaches applied within Ukrainian educational standards and pedagogical practice.

Pedagogical forecasting served as a tool for determining the expected developmental outcomes of implementing continuity between educational levels, focusing on the moral, emotional, and civic maturity of children. The structural-functional method provided a basis for mapping the interrelations among goals, content, activities, and results of national-patriotic education, thus illustrating the mechanism through which continuity is achieved.

At the level of specific methods, content analysis of legislative and normative documents (e.g., the Law of Ukraine “On Education” (2017); the Basic Component of Preschool Education (2021); the State Standard of Primary Education (2018)) was conducted to determine the regulatory alignment between preschool and primary education. Comparative pedagogical analysis was applied to educational programmes and teaching materials to reveal cross-level coherence in developing civic and patriotic competencies.

Additionally, historical-pedagogical analysis helped trace the evolution of the concept of continuity in the works of Ukrainian scholars such as Sukhomlynskyi (1977), Bekh (2018), Bohush (2020), and Savchenko (2000), allowing the identification of its moral-axiological and humanistic foundations. Modeling was used to construct a conceptual scheme that integrates the emotional, cognitive, and activity-based dimensions of patriotic education across both educational levels.

Finally, expert evaluation and pedagogical reflection were employed to verify the internal logic and applicability of the proposed methodological conditions—harmonization of educational programmes, joint preschool–school projects, and formation of a unified value-semantic space. These methods collectively ensured that the study rested on a triangulation of theoretical, normative, and empirical evidence, thus providing reliability and validity to the conclusions drawn.

Literature Review

Scholarly attention to the continuity of national and patriotic education in Ukraine has intensified in the context of modern social transformation and state reform. Bekh (2018) formulated the concept of personality-oriented education, stressing that patriotism is a moral construct rooted in the emotional experience of belonging and moral responsibility. His approach establishes the ethical and psychological foundation for fostering national consciousness in childhood.

Bohush (2020) expanded on the notion of continuity as a pedagogical category that ensures the coherence of goals and content between preschool and primary education. Her research identifies the key mechanisms of maintaining emotional engagement and motivation during the

child's transition to school. Similarly, Savchenko (2000) underscored the need for pedagogical succession (“perspective and continuity”) between the first two levels of education, highlighting teacher cooperation and curricular coordination as essential factors.

The legal and normative framework of continuity is set out in the Law of Ukraine “On Education” (2017) and the Law “On Complete General Secondary Education” (2020), which guarantee lifelong learning and institutional articulation. The Basic Component of Preschool Education (2021) and the State Standard of Primary Education (2018) specify learning outcomes and competencies that align developmental expectations across stages. The Concept of National and Patriotic Education of Children and Youth (2015) and the Strategy for National and Patriotic Education 2020–2025 (2019) define ideological and methodological priorities, orienting educational institutions toward the formation of civic identity and national values.

Leshchenko (2019) examined pedagogical continuity as a condition for holistic personality development, emphasizing that the unity of emotional, cognitive, and social experiences is crucial for cultivating patriotism. Karamushka (2019) analysed the psychological aspects of patriotic education, arguing that children's patriotic feelings evolve through integration with moral, aesthetic, and labor education, echoing Sukhomlynskyi's (1977) principle of educating “through the heart”.

Kuzmenko (2021) and Yaremenko (2022) provided empirical frameworks for implementing patriotic education in preschool and primary institutions, introducing interactive, project-based, and community-oriented methods as effective means of maintaining continuity. Their findings highlight the importance of cooperative interaction among teachers, parents, and local communities as mediators of civic identity.

Finally, the integration of global educational perspectives, particularly UNESCO's “Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives” (2021), enriches the Ukrainian approach by linking patriotic education with sustainable development, peace, and cultural heritage preservation. Collectively, these studies outline a complex interdisciplinary field where pedagogy, psychology, and civic education converge to form a cohesive national identity from early childhood.

Theoretical Foundations of Continuity in Education

The problem of continuity in pedagogical theory is viewed as one of the key conditions for ensuring a holistic educational process that provides continuous child development at all stages. In the context of national and patriotic education, it is particularly significant as it involves the formation of moral and civic qualities rather than merely the transfer of knowledge or skills.

The legal basis for ensuring continuity is established by the Law of Ukraine “On Education” (2017), which guarantees the principle of lifelong learning, as well as the Laws of Ukraine “On Preschool Education” (2001) and “On Complete General Secondary Education” (2020), which define organizational and content-related links between educational levels. Key regulatory documents include the State Standard of Preschool Education (*Basic Component...*, 2021) and the State Standard of Primary Education (2018), which coordinate expected learning outcomes and ensure developmental progression. Conceptually, the national-patriotic dimension is grounded in the Concept of National and Patriotic Education of Children and Youth (2015) and the Strategy of National and Patriotic Education for 2020–2025 (2019).

Bekh (2018) emphasized that patriotism has a deeply moral nature and its development requires emotional experiences of belonging to one's nation. Bohush (2020) described continuity as a pedagogical category reflecting the natural connection between stages of personal development, ensuring coherence of goals, content, and methods. Psychological and pedagogical research (Kuzmenko, 2021; Lesbchenko, 2019) shows that emotional components of patriotism—love for home, family, language, and nature—are established in preschool, while primary education expands them to the level of civic identity.

Karamushka (2019), following Sukhomlynskyi (1977), asserted that the formation of patriotic feelings cannot occur in isolation from moral, civic, labor, and aesthetic education, since their integration fosters a harmonious, emotionally mature, and socially active personality.

Thus, the theoretical foundations of continuity in national and patriotic education involve developing a coherent value system across educational levels, aligning educational influences, and shaping a child's holistic perception of their national identity.

Methodological Foundations for Ensuring Continuity

Ensuring continuity in practice requires scientifically substantiated methodological approaches that bridge theory and pedagogical activity. The main condition is the systematic coordination of pedagogical actions, curriculum content, and goals (Basic Component..., 2021).

The methodological basis rests on the combination of traditional and innovative educational technologies. In preschool, effective forms include play-based, role-playing, theatrical, and exploratory activities, while in primary school, interactive, project-based, and ICT-based methods prevail (Bobush, 2020). Their integration preserves familiar activity structures for children while fostering autonomy and responsibility.

Joint inter-institutional projects—such as “My Ukraine,” “Treasures of My Land,” and “Heroes Among Us”—ensure continuity of educational influence, beginning in preschool (acquaintance with symbols, songs, folk tales) and continuing in school through research, exhibitions, and creative events.

Yaremenko (2022) notes that joint activities among teachers, parents, and children create a social context where patriotism becomes a lived value, not a declaration. Methodological support includes monitoring systems for patriotic achievements and the development of pedagogical cases and evaluation criteria (Yaremenko, 2022).

Pedagogical Conditions and Means of Implementation

Effective implementation of continuity requires creating pedagogical conditions that ensure process integrity and emotional comfort. These include:

- unity of educational influences among family, preschool, and school;
- coordinated planning of educational activities;
- a value-oriented educational environment;
- partnership-based collaboration;
- age-appropriate variability of forms (Kuzmenko, 2021).

In preschool, leading means include play, folklore, songs, and traditions through which concepts of goodness, justice, and friendship are internalized. In primary school, these evolve into civic education lessons, projects, excursions, and student self-government.

Effective tools include patriotic games, quests, symbolic spaces (national corners, exhibitions), family celebrations (*"My Family – Part of Ukraine"*), and volunteer initiatives (*"Kindness Unites," "Letter to a Soldier"*).

A. Sukhomlynskyi (1977) famously stated, *"The heart of education is the shared activity of teacher and child."* Through this interaction, love and responsibility for the homeland are formed (Sukhomlynskyi, 1977).

Discussion

The conducted research confirms that ensuring continuity in national and patriotic education is not merely a pedagogical issue but a socio-cultural necessity for contemporary Ukraine. The transition from preschool to primary education represents a critical developmental period when a child's emotional attachment to homeland evolves into conscious civic identity. Therefore, the educational system must preserve the affective-moral foundations formed in early childhood while introducing structured civic concepts at the next stage.

The main challenge identified is the fragmentation of pedagogical practice caused by insufficient coordination between preschool and school educators. Despite legislative alignment, practical implementation often remains inconsistent: preschool focuses on emotional and symbolic components of patriotism, whereas primary education emphasizes knowledge-based civic learning. Bridging this gap requires methodological integration through joint educational programmes, cross-institutional projects, and teacher training focused on partnership pedagogy.

Another problem lies in the insufficient methodological support for educators. Teachers frequently lack clear instruments for evaluating patriotic competence and assessing continuity outcomes. Developing diagnostic tools, monitoring frameworks, and performance indicators would allow schools and preschools to measure the effectiveness of value-based education more objectively.

The study also highlights the potential of project-based and community-oriented activities in fostering continuity. Programmes such as *"My Ukraine"* or *"Heroes Among Us"* illustrate how children's early emotional experiences can evolve into practical civic engagement when supported by collective creativity and social interaction. Such initiatives strengthen the sense of belonging, pride, and responsibility, transforming patriotism from a declarative idea into lived behaviour.

Furthermore, the discussion reveals that pedagogical partnership—a cooperative model involving teachers, parents, and local communities—serves as the cornerstone of continuity. When children observe alignment between educational values and family or community practices, patriotic feelings acquire depth and authenticity. This corresponds with the ideas of Sukhomlynskyi (1977) that true education occurs through shared activity, empathy, and emotional resonance.

Finally, the relevance of continuity is amplified by Ukraine's current sociopolitical context, where education plays a decisive role in national consolidation and resilience. The unity of educational content, methods, and values becomes a factor of cultural security and social

stability. Hence, continuity in national and patriotic education should be considered a strategic dimension of state policy, ensuring that each educational stage contributes to the formation of a holistic, civically responsible personality.

Future research should focus on developing measurable models of cross-level cooperation and elaborating evidence-based recommendations for integrating patriotic education into broader frameworks of civic and sustainable education.

Conclusion

The study shows that ensuring continuity in national and patriotic education of senior preschool and primary school children is a multifaceted issue and a key component of modern Ukrainian education. Results confirm the need for a continuous educational environment that promotes the child's harmonious development, spirituality, and civic responsibility.

1. Continuity is a holistic process uniting preschool and primary education through shared goals, content, and activities, ensuring a smooth transition from emotional perception to conscious national identity.
2. The theoretical basis relies on humanistic pedagogy, competence-based and value-oriented approaches, focusing on developing moral and civic qualities rather than mere knowledge.
3. Methodological conditions involve coordination of curricula, integration of educational content, joint planning, and partnership between teachers of both levels.
4. Effective implementation depends on pedagogical partnership among educators, parents, and the community within a shared value-semantic environment.
5. The practical value lies in applying findings for teacher education, curriculum modernization, and creating joint preschool–school educational projects.

Ensuring continuity in national and patriotic education is a prerequisite for forming a holistic, civically responsible Ukrainian citizen. Future research should focus on developing evaluation models of cross-level educational cooperation and methodological recommendations for integrating patriotic components across all spheres of the educational process.

Funding

No external funding was received.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements:

Not applicable.

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Appendix

Educational Line	Preschool (Senior Group)	Primary School (Grades 1-2)	Forms of Continuity
Love for the Homeland	Introduction to native land and folk symbols	Study of state symbols and community traditions	 Joint events "My Ukraine"
Family Values	Participation in family celebrations	Topics „My Family“, „My Kin“	 Family project
Civic Activity	Children's games „Good Deeds for the City“	Student campaigns, eco-initiatives	 Volunteer mini-projects

Figure 1. Relationship between content lines of national and patriotic education in preschool and primary school