

Attitude Towards Learning Activities at Primary School Age

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Abstract—The article shows that during the four-year primary school age, the dominant position of the components determining the motivational orientation of primary school age pupils is changing from intellectual-volitional to communicative and emotional-volitional. From the results of our research it follows that the transition period from primary school to early adolescence is a sensitive period for the formation of students' perspective attitude to future professional activities (first stage of career guidance). The article briefly presents the characteristics of primary school pupils with an active-positive and passive-positive attitude to learning activities, which vividly shows the attitude to themselves, other people, schooling.

Keywords— *primary school age; motivational orientation; intellectual-volitional; communicative; emotional-volitional; career guidance*

I. INTRODUCTION

Primary school age is the age of mastering the basics of learning activities, this is the initial stage of becoming a person in the conditions of purposeful learning activities, which is the main need of a younger student. In the process of learning activities younger students should learn:

- a) to allocate and to keep the training tasks mentally, that means, the samples what it is needed to grasp and what should be mastered;
- b) perform subject and mental actions (in particular, analysis, reflection, which involves awareness of the mode of action and the conditions for its implementation, some personal characteristics, including qualities/traits of their own and their peers);
- c) mentally hold the purpose of the activity, plan and organize the conditions for its achievement, trace the connection of their actions with the results obtained, monitor and evaluate them (prognostic, procedural and final control and evaluation), as well as adjust, correct their actions in accordance with the task or samples, that means, learn to control, evaluate and adjust their own work (educational, training and labor) and behavior in

the process of both individual and joint educational work.

The arbitrariness of mental functions (arbitrary perception, arbitrary memory, arbitrary behavior) continues to form in the process of learning activities in primary school age.

In the performance of various learning tasks a teacher should help the children to understand the idea and purpose of the action, to teach them to analyze the sample (the target) and to determine the terms and means of its implementation, of decision, i.e. the method of action, to evaluate the possibility of implementation of the task, which in turn requires the randomness of mental processes. The arbitrariness of mental functions and the internal plan of action make it possible to form the ability to self-organization, self-regulation of younger students' activities, which ensures the preparation of their transition to adolescence.

With the general mental development in educational activity develops pupil's attitude to it, the structural organization of which includes a set of emerging qualities and individual traits, including motivation and self-esteem, as well as skills to ensure the success of educational activities [18]. In turn, emerging attitude to educational activity defines cognitive activity and a vector of the overall development of the child, development of his/her educational activity and self-regulation [16].

Of course, the attitude to educational activity develops not only in the process of the activity itself, there are many other factors outside the school, the most powerful of which is the family [1]. Consideration of these factors is also necessary in the analysis and formation of the attitude of younger students to learning activities.

II. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The study of personal relations requires a system-structural approach based on the theoretical and methodological principles of psychological theory of activity [7, 9, 11, 19, 21 and others] which are, from our point of view, the most appropriate for the study of this problem. The category of

relationship is included in the concept of the activity itself [11, 17, 19, 20, 21]. With this approach, the relationship of the individual can be viewed and studied at all levels of activity.

The relation, being the integral characteristic of the personality, can be considered and studied on any socially significant type of activity in which the personality is included.

The system-subject approach allows to find out the connection between the features of activities and psychological characteristics of its subject [8, 10, 12, 18, 21, 22] which promotes the implementation of a systematic study of a person as a subject, as a real carrier of activity with personal attitude to it.

In understanding of educational activities, we proceeded from the theoretical provisions developed in the works of L.I. Aidarova [6], L.I. Bozhovich [9], V.V. Davydov [11], D. Elkonin [26], etc., in which it is defined as an activity for self-development, the formation of subjective qualities of students, components of self-regulation of activity. Educational activity is an activity organized and regulated by the student himself, which provides the assimilation of new experience for the student in the form of knowledge, skills, promotes the development of abilities, the formation of structural components of educational activity, providing the need for cognitive activity. It contributes to the development of other types of human activity – practical, cognitive, value-oriented, aesthetic, etc. Age-related sensitivity of a specific age is affected on the process and result of educational activity [15].

An attitude to educational activity is objectified and formed, which in its structure is based on the self-regulation of the student. Self-regulation of students' learning activities involves conscious intervention of the subject in the existing system [15]. This is the process of implementation of internal and external activity of the subject, characterized by the management of behavior and activity, leading to changes in the complex structure of the relationship to it [16].

The results presented in the article are previously unpublished generalization of materials concerning the attitude of younger students to learning activities in the framework of long-term studies [15, 17, 24] revealing the age dynamics of students' attitude to learning activities, as well as its self-regulation.

We studied objective psychological manifestations of students in educational activities (observation, expert survey, analysis of products of activity), proper psychological characteristics of the attitude of the individual to the activity including the qualities and traits of the student's personality (psychodiagnostic techniques), behavioral reactions in situations of successful and unsuccessful performance (laboratory techniques), subjective characteristics as integrative manifestations of objective psychological and proper psychological characteristics (structural analysis).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The content side of purposeful human activity, which reflects the attitude to activity and to a certain extent to himself, to other people, is revealed through the analysis of the system-structural organization of the components characterizing the

motivational sphere of a person: motivational-organizational, communicative, intellectual-volitional, emotional-volitional.

The structure of the motivational sphere is not static, it develops and changes. Thus, in the first year of school according to the results of our research [17], the dominant position is occupied by the motivational-organizational and intellectual-volitional components, the third – communicative and the fourth – emotional-volitional. It is established that in the fourth year of study the structural organization of the components of the students' motivational sphere has a strongly pronounced unity, as indicated by closer correlation between the components of motivation ($p \leq 0.001$). Studies have shown [17] that during the four year period, the dominant position of the components that determine the motivational orientation of students, consistently changing: the second year is intellectual-volitional, the third year is communicative, the fourth year is emotional-volitional. At the same time, the second position in the structural organization of the motivational sphere of students is constantly occupied by the motivational-organizational component.

We have also revealed a certain pattern indicating that at the subsequent stages of age and personal development the above system-structural organization of the components is repeated: 5-8 grades, 9-11 grades, 1-4 years of study at the University. It should be noted that the content saturation of the components of the motivational sphere of students at the designated stages of training is qualitatively changing. It reflects the requirements of the social environment, especially educational, training and professional activities [15, 17].

Attitude to learning activities in primary school age is characterized by a bright representation of psychodynamic individual traits, based on the properties of the nervous system, which is desirable to take into account in the process of organizing and conducting educational work with this contingent of students [17].

In the process of learning activities, especially in the first year of study, it is important to teach a first-grader to ask cognitive questions to himself, an adult, a book, which will act as a criterion of the child's attitude to the activity, to himself, as well as an element of educational independence.

The ability to obey the rules (discipline), the ability to organize himself to perform current educational activities (organization, responsibility), the ability to learn what was heard, read and the ability to engage actively in dialogue through the questions – these are the elements of the ability to learn, which is important to form in children in the early stages of learning, in the first year of training.

In the second year of school, the dominant component in the structure of motivation of learning activities for the child is the intellectual-volitional component, which is in the educational independence and initiative, cognitive activity.

Academic independence is the most important essential characteristic of pupil's activity, it is intellectual-volitional component; the initiative also is emotional-volitional substantial component of pupil's educational activity.

In the third year of school the leading position in the motivational structure of the student's personality goes to communicative component, manifested in sociability, openness, communicative compatibility, mutual assistance.

The fourth year of schooling is associated with the dominance of emotional-volitional component in the structure of motivation, represented by confidence, perseverance, promising goal-setting, vivid emotional reactions to partial evaluative judgments of adults about the results of their activities and behavior.

From the results of our research [17] it follows that the transition period of age and personal development from primary school to early adolescence (study in the 3rd – 4th grade), is a sensitive period for the formation of students' perspective attitudes to future professional activity (the first stage of professional orientation).

Purposeful human activity associated with implementation of the prospective goal setting, describes his motivational value orientation. As a "sense of value" of something for "I", perspective goal-setting should be correlated with the dominant value of a person, which determines his activity for a long period of time. Being the subject of need, it (perspective goal-setting) reflects and regulates the degree of human activity, determines to a large extent the dominant motive, personal value orientation [13, 15, 17, 25].

The formation of educational activity among younger students is associated with the independent formulation of educational tasks, comparison of different ways of learning activities and the choice of the most appropriate, with the mastery of all types of self-control and self-assessment [23].

Are all primary school students capable to master features of educational activity and to study successfully?

We have found out that younger students tend to actively-positive and passively-positive attitude to learning activities, which is clearly represented by the attitude to themselves, to other people, to learning activities [17].

The positive attitude of children is manifested in the desire to learn, in understanding the need to perform educational activities and actions. Psychological features of junior schoolchildren of the selected subgroups differ from each other by the originality of personal and activity characteristics.

The study of educational activities of younger students with an active-positive type of attitude showed that they are active in the adoption of educational tasks that is the main component of educational activities. Their success in studying largely depends on this. Academic performance and activity of students in the classroom depends on understanding the context of learning activities.

Such children have fun from schooling. They are willing to go to school. Lessons are fast and easy for them. You can hear from these children: "We had hardly come to school as we had to go home." When answering the teacher's questions, they do not feel stiffness, tension, respond briskly. It can be argued that the training activities for them is the means to realize themselves, their abilities. Such students are focused only on good marks. When receiving high marks, they vividly

experience a sense of joy for their success, which they can not hide from others. These children get usually high marks: 4 - 5 ($4,3 \pm 0,1$). The task of the school is to preserve the desire for learning, for knowledge, for the quality of their work in children – a positive attitude to themselves and their activities.

The structure of the personality of such children is dominated by emotional resistance to the difficulties of educational activity and intellectual work. However, we note that the emotional sphere of their personality is dominated by emotional incontinence, impulsiveness. The latter is especially evident in situations of dissatisfaction, failure, resentment. They tend to respond affectively to comments.

Emotional stability to difficulties of school education of 1-2 grades pupils was provided by readiness of children for school: children's ability to read, write and count. The ability to read was the most important among these types of skills that provide emotional stability of children to the difficulties of schooling. The ability to read, the love of reading acted as the main means for the formation of diligence and accuracy of children. The ability to read and love to read provided children with intellectual activity in the classroom and outside of school, contributed to the development of attention, abstract thinking, memory, emotional intelligence, communication skills.

Such students are characterized by high mobility of nervous processes, a strong nervous system with respect to excitation and inhibition. They are characterized by activity with insufficient development of elements of volitional regulation of actions, extroversion.

For younger students with an active-positive attitude to the activity is characterized by the dominance of the result settings, the desire to receive high marks and social assessments for the educational activities results. They are characterized by a tendency to competition, to dominate in the team, involvement in social work. They have high achievements in education, in the physical development. There are no elements of collective interaction in their behaviour and activities.

When carrying out educational work with this contingent of children, attention should be paid to the formation of such qualities/personality traits as discipline, responsibility, responsiveness, collectivism.

The basis for the formation of the passivity of younger students has been the low degree of manifestations of responsibility, of responsiveness with a high degree of discipline and conformity (depending on group opinions), feelings of self-doubt. Passive schoolchildren, as a rule, feel insecure, constrained, tense during the examination at the lessons, which is characterized to a certain extent by the extremity of the situation.

The examination in the classroom is not so much the knowledge control or one of the varieties of the current repetition, as the process of business communication of the student, the process of self-control and self-regulation of his emotional state in an extreme situation of the examination, the process of disclosure of the "need" home training and personal development of the pupil. Note that this is well understood only by the most experienced teachers.

To remove the extremity of the situation during the examination and increase the confidence of the student, a variety of support student (plan, visibility, structural and logical schemes, information and support schemes, notes) should be used, where there is a place of business communication of students, self-control and self-regulation of mental state, personal development, expansion of cognitive-theoretical interest as an important indicator of the intellectual and volitional component of the student's personality.

Self-confidence / self-doubt at primary school age can be considered as a marked experience, the subject of which is the presence or absence of knowledge, skills in a particular subject or set of subjects, high or low degree of perseverance in replenishing the stock of knowledge and skills in the main subjects.

The main subjects at primary school age include Reading, The Russian language and Mathematics. Confidence of primary school pupils depends, as a rule, on their ability to read, write and count. And much more on abilities to read. It is advisable to cultivate love for reading, starting from preschool age. A good example in this case is the evening reading with the family, when someone reads alone or in turn. It is also important not to force to read, and to accustom to daily reading gradually. In this case, the duration of reading is not important, but the constancy and frequency of reading exercises. If we want to master the ability to read and read relatively quickly, understanding the meaning of what we have read, it is not recommended to conduct long-time exercises; it is desirable to conduct them in short portions, but with a high frequency.

Professor V. N. Zaitsev in the book "The ring of acceleration in the education system" [14] gives the following example. "Mom or dad sit his son down, a first grader, who reads poorly, which causes reading difficulty, and say: "Here, read this story. Don't get up from the table until you read it." With such a low reading technique, which has a first-grader, he needs an hour and a half to read this short tale. It's an hour and a half of hard work. Dad and mom made very serious pedagogical mistake here, suppressing the child's desire to read. It would be much better if home training was conducted in three portions of 5 minutes. A small paragraph the child reads and retells its content. One more paragraph in an hour or two. Before going to bed one more paragraph. The effectiveness of such training is much higher than training within an hour and a half at one time" [14, p. 16].

An important step in improving the quality of teaching is to teach optimal reading, writing and numeracy. Once again, the ability to read, write and count is not only the key to successful learning in primary school, but it is also the key to becoming confident behavior of the child in terms of interaction with other pupils, with the teacher, parents and other adults. Confident behavior of the child in the conditions of educational activity and out of school forms his ability to manage his emotions: to direct them, to strengthen, to restrain, which contributes to the formation and manifestation of perseverance in achieving success in difficult conditions of life, the formation of purposefulness and, in general, the strong-willed sphere of personality and active life position.

Mastering the necessary knowledge and skills, dosed adult assistance in mastering the child's amount of knowledge and skills form the child not only self-confidence, which allows the child to perform educational tasks independently, as well as commitment, responsibility, organization, acting qualities/personality traits of the student, determining his motivational-organizational orientation. Among these basic traits / qualities of the child's personality, directly related to the orientation, other intellectual-volitional traits / qualities develop that characterize the intellectual-volitional activity: initiative, determination, perseverance, endurance, businesslike.

The educational activity of a student does not become truly independent for a very long time, since the child's classes are led by adults, teachers for many years [13, 25]. In primary school age there are only elements of educational independence.

The formed independence had close positive correlations with indicators of responsibility, organization, initiative, diligence, cognitive activity and other strong-willed and intellectual qualities of the student's personality [17]. Only independent and creative activities become the most important condition for human development; not reproducing independence, "independence modelled on somebody", but genuine, when the child has the freedom of choice, when he will be able to do independently and something that he has not done before. This is possible only when the child feels comfortable in the classroom, not afraid of difficulties. Overcoming difficulties is one of the conditions for the formation of confidence and the development of motivation of the studying.

The concept of "difficulty" is usually used when a person encounters obstacles in the course of his / her activities or when there is a "gap in activities".

Overcoming the difficulties allows the student to believe in their strength, their potential, the ability and need to act independently, to take the initiative in the activity.

It is known that the effectiveness of training largely depends on the attitude of students to the discipline. The main reasons for the negative attitude to the training sessions are their low organizational-methodological level, insufficient intellectual load of students, stiffness of their independence and creative initiative [17].

The structure of the training program should be subject-operational. This should take into account some requirements for the organization and planning of lessons:

- communication of theoretical information and knowledge with an explanation of their practical significance;
- availability and affordability for primary school pupils of educational, educational-technical tasks, compliance of educational process planning with the basic principles of didactics, individual and collective search for solutions to educational problems;
- conducting lessons with high collective motivation, assessment of success in content, quality of work and type of promotion, introduction of "game training" tasks;

- selection and alternation of diverse types of lessons that precludes the violation of the pace of learning.

Each period of childhood (life) is sensitive in its own way, and each age level has its own, not peculiar to either previous or subsequent ages, readiness to raise certain aspects of intelligence, behavior, emotions, communication, will. Such preconditions of development, stipulated by sensitive periods, can be considered as age mechanisms of human development, stages of his life.

The transition from one stage of age development (annually) of a person to another is a manifestation of changed and enriched by age personal traits, significant for life, for the development of human personality spheres.

At the end of the first grade, students must be able to:

- keep order in the workplace;
- to observe discipline, as I do-attitude to the educational requirements, the requirements of the teacher, school, parents; to be careful in relation to himself and other people;
- to carry out joint and jointly distributed activities under mutual monitoring and evaluation.

At the end of the second grade, students should know:

- ways of self-and mutual control in the process of educational activities;

At the end of the second grade, students must be able to:

- regulate their behavior, to be attentive, tactful in situations of interaction with classmates and adults, to respect their position and the position of others;
- carry out the transfer of acquired skills and abilities in the new conditions of life;
- plan their labor actions;

At the end of the third grade, students should know:

- information about some mass professions (elements of career guidance).

At the end of the third grade, students must be able to:

- organize their activities and the activities of class students;
- organize and plan the main stages of work;
- to plan and organize collective labor activity;
- to work together, providing mutual assistance in work;
- to carry out self-and mutual control in the process of individual and joint activities;

At the end of the fourth grade, students should know:

- information about mass professions in demand in the region (elements of career guidance).

At the end of the fourth grade, students must be able to:

- to carry out self-and mutual control, to evaluate the results of work, to be responsible in assessing their work and the work of class students;

- to cooperate and provide mutual assistance at all stages of work, to be responsible for the results of collective work;

- independently and responsibly carry out actions of the analysis of the subject of educational work, setting the purpose of action and activity, planning and organization of educational and labor activity, monitoring and evaluation in the performance of educational and labor tasks.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we list the most significant psychological-pedagogical conditions that should be comprehensively implemented in the organization of training and education in school, possibly starting from primary school, and which lead to the formation of psychological readiness for studying, the formation of the foundations of arbitrary regulation of activities, to a positive attitude to themselves, to activities and to other people.

1. Formation of general skills (to analyze the task and the conditions of its implementation, to set a goal, to organize and plan activities, to implement a plan, to monitor, to evaluate the process and the result of activities), which is the basis of self-regulation of activities [15] and self-efficacy of the individual [5].

2. Providing students at each age stage with the maximum possible independence, development of activity and initiative; turning a student into a subject of educational activity [3, 15] (note that dissatisfaction with the content of lessons is most often dissatisfaction with the lack of intellectual load).

3. Systematic inclusion of students in the collective forms of educational activity, allowing to organize cooperation, communication, mutual assistance, activates cognitive activity of students and develops creative thinking and reflective levels of regulation, contributing to the formation of motivational and operational components of self-regulation and positive qualities of the individual [4].

4. Systematic participation of schoolchildren in various types of socially useful work, taking into account accessibility for the given age [2].

5. To ensure the polymotivation of educational activities among schoolchildren it is necessary to form the motivational and operational aspects of the activity in their unity and interdependence. That is, along with the "problematic inclusion" of students in educational activities is crucial "I – inclusion" of each in this activity. According to the research [17, 24], such conditions of "I – inclusion" are: increasing the prestige of the individual associated with the status of students in the group in relation to the original educational subject, and the impact of the new status on the dynamics of this relationship in the course of joint activities; strengthening group cohesion in the conditions of joint educational work in small groups and the impact of cohesion on the education of students' interest to the subject (subjects).

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