



The new school of Ukraine and the problems of provision of the qualitative education of the special children

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Abstract:

The article talks about the problems and the prospects of the development of school education of children with psychophysical violations placing the emphasis on the professed inclusive orientation of the new Ukrainian school. We analyze theoretical conditions and their practical implementation in the Ukrainian special education's history. It enables the author to conclude on the main condition for providing the education quality for children with abnormalities of different

nosology. Here, we speak about the special medical, psychological, and pedagogical provision, staff assistance and methodological support of their social and biological needs in rehabilitation and personal fulfillment, the necessity of compensatory and correctional work where there is a violation of the development and socialization of children.

1. Introduction

In their vision of the new school of Ukraine, the authors of the concept fairly highlight the main tasks that need to be resolved for a radical improvement of school education so that the latter, at the modern and promising world quality level, realize its state and socially important functions of ensuring the development and socialization of students.

These tasks are tied to such conditions:

- Reformation of the education content; directing it to arm the students with a system of competencies necessary for them to dynamically personalize self-realization in their lives and professional activities;
- implementation of the educational process where education and fostering are joined on the basis of the partnership interaction between its subjects – students, teachers, parents;
- realization of the child-centric approach in the education;
- the staffing of the school with such teachers that are personally and socially motivated for professional success, self-realization, self-improvement, and consider every child as the highest value, profoundly feeling the social and human responsibility for their activities and its results;
- schools' provision with the real autonomy that has decentralized education management, financial support for equal access of children to quality education, etc.

Studying this document inspires not only educators but also representatives of other professions (in fact, most of the citizens are linked with the education in some or other way). It is so thanks to the deep belief of the authors that the ideas of the new school reforming will be implemented in the prospective development of Ukraine in the first part of the XXI century.



2. Problem statement

Everybody who knows the conditions of our modern middle (and other) education, is conscious of the quantity of the heaviest theoretical, practical, technological, and financial problems that need to be solved to transform noble aims, expectations, and prognoses into the educational realities.

I will dwell on one side of the discussed problem. It concerns the implementation of the right to qualitative education of children with significant complications of development and socialization processes. This right is determined with biological (the forms of developmental disability caused by diseases of different nosology like underdevelopment, detained, deficient, distorted, disharmonious development) and social (pedagogical neglect, significant psychogenic complications of behavior, long deprivation of needs for self-realization, approval, love, and care, negative influence of the microenvironment) factors. In most cases, however, they are determined with violations of the adequate interaction of the biological and social factors in the personality formation.

3. Results and discussion

The processes of the development and socialization last all life and cover three main spheres of human functioning as a personality – behavior, communication, and self-consciousness. They can develop spontaneously and unorderedly. Nevertheless, these processes follow the goal-oriented human behavior. Education is designed to prepare an individual for the effective realization of socially and individually meaningful kinds of behavior and conduct¹. For reaching its goal, education needs to provide convergence (agreement) of the two processes of human formation as personality, consciousness carrier, and social being. We highlighted these processes above; they are biological development and socialization – the ones non-antagonistic to psychics' nature if taking into account person's concrete abilities when being socially influenced.

It is a pity that we do not often see such an agreement; instead, something opposite appears – the divergence of social and biological factors that have a negative influence on the psychophysical development and personal (social) growth of a human.

Speaking about the provision of the new Ukrainian school with quality education for the people with specialties of the development and socialization, I remind the thought of L.S. Vygotsky – the classics of world psychology and defectology. In 1920-s, he wrote: “Normal child's rooting in a civilization is joined with its natural growth processes entirely. Both sides of the development, the natural and the cultural, mutually correspond and interconnect. Both rows of the changes converge, interconnect and create the single row of social and biological personality forming. A disordered child does not demonstrate such a joinery, both sides of the development usually disagree. A disorder creates violation from the constant biological type of a human; causes a loss of separate functions, defect or damage of organs, more or less important alteration of the whole development on a new basis; naturally violates the normal course of a process of a child's rooting in a culture. That is because a culture is adapted to a normal typical person, adjusted at its constitution, and the typical development caused with a disorder, cannot root in a culture directly, as it happens with a normal child” (Vigotskiy L.S. (1983)).

Such cases demonstrate the necessity of the correctional education – a subject of the correctional (special) pedagogy. Taking into account data from other scientific parts of defectological science – medicine and special psychology, this field of pedagogical sciences has to give proved answers for the two main questions:

- a) how to adopt social culture (particularly education content) to the specialties of children with different defects;
- b) how to provide improvement (correction) of the development and socialization of a child with these processes' disorder in a way to help it master the components of human culture independently and adequately, in their usual, non-adapted form, for the whole life.

Unity in these tasks solving on the theoretical and technological levels has a natural positive influence on the development of a special child as an individual in a society, able to regulate itself and show socially normative behavior.

In the introduction to the project “New School”, Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine L.M. Grinevich notes that “to stop lowering the quality and accessibility of education”, we need “to save all the best



we have in the Ukrainian school” reforming the educational sector. Let me remind that in the field of special education of different categories of children with significant developmental defects, Ukrainian science and practices have achievements of international level. Here, I would remind of the activity of I.O. Sokolianskyi in upbringing deaf and blind-and-deaf children; O.M. Scherbyna and I.S. Morgulies in pedagogy for blind and visually impaired; M.D. Yarmachenko in pedagogy for deaf and hearing impaired; I.G. Yeremenko in oligophrenopedagogy; B.V. Sermeyev and N.G. Baykina in adaptive physical upbringing of the invalids; Y.F. Sobotovich in speech therapy; Y.P. Pustovoitova in orthopedagogy, etc. Many Ukrainian special institutions for children with blindness, deafness, mental disorders, heavy speech disorders, and movement disorders can be proud with their graduates finding their own, worthy place in the social environment, and reaching impressive success in their personal fulfillment. Numeral international experts, respectable foreign colleagues highly esteemed Ukrainian defectology achievements. We need to save and multiply these fruits of our native educational science and practices in future.

In the new Ukrainian school’s prospects, it is mentioned that inclusive education will be encouraged as well as the conditions will be created for students with special educational needs to receive education at all levels, considering their individual needs, talents, and abilities.

As the psychological and pedagogical investigations state, persons with developmental defects on biological and social levels show dominating need to compensate their lost or damaged functions. The new school will be oriented on mastering the educational content and vital competencies, where these persons will need special psychological and pedagogical correctional help. In the modern theory of special education, there are important regularities of the development and upbringing that are common for all the categories of children with psychophysical specialties. Here is one of them:

The intensity of the development of psychics and personality with abnormalities depends on the special pedagogical conditions that consider specialties of psychical activity of the concrete child, optimize correctional and compensatory processes and provide prophylactics of negative secondary neoplasms in different substructures and the whole personality.

The main principle for all special education fields, which is the principle of its correctional and compensational orientation, stands on this regularity. Its importance is proved with several other regularities of special development and socialization of children with violations of these processes. Here are they:

- any abnormal development has the specific feature – the violation of interaction with a real environment, and first of all, with another people;
- the uniqueness of the abnormal development is caused by specifics of its social situations, a divergence of the biological and the social factors in this process;
- effectiveness of the correctional and educational influences at a child is higher when the typological and individual quality uniqueness of the defect structure is considered; the more distant of the nuclear (primary, biologically determined) feature of the defect is its other (secondary, tertiary, etc.), mainly socially predetermined features, the better it allows pedagogical correction of the defect.

General defectological regularities show themselves in every category of children with violations of the development and socialization and specify their upbringing directing it at the reaching of special correctional and compensatory goals. These regularities also adjoin statements of the utmost importance for the damaged cognitive development of “special” students in the educational process. Here are they:

- specifics of leading child’s potencies from the zone of proximal development to the level of actual development;
- comparing with the normal development, its abnormalities often lead to the violations of adequacy, the speed of reception and processing information (verbal especially), lowering of the regulatory function of the second signal system;
- the specific passing of the transition from the external practical plans of a child’s activity to the inner speech and intellectual plans of the intellectual activity and back (which means the inconsistency of the processes of interiorization and exteriorization in these interrelationships);
- abnormal children of different categories can have both primary intellectual underdevelopment (which is based on the diffuse damage of the central nerve system) and partial defectiveness of the sensory, movement, emotional or volitional spheres of psychics. Those are primary symptoms of the developmental



damage that is connected with lowering and specific character of the dynamics of mental qualification, a disposition to phases of the so-called “guarding retardation” at the overexertion, etc. It adds complexity to the productiveness of such students’ educational and cognitive activity and demands the specific organization of their educational process. It means, in particular, optimal alternation of the labor and the rest as an element of guarding pedagogical regime, which is obligatory for special didactics.

There is something else meaningful for the implementation of the principle of the children’s having psychophysical disorders correctional and compensational educational direction. It is considering the regularity which outsteps the simple educational activity into a wider plan of personality forming of a special child.

To compare with normal development, developmental disorders are often followed with the appearance of pseudo-compensating personal dispositional and behavioral neoplasms. By pseudo-compensating neoplasms we mean such that do not become compensating, do not help a child to win or weaken manifestations of a defect, but, on the contrary, are not useful for a child and its social environment. These are the inflated self-esteem; the lack of self-criticism in response to negative assessments of the child by other people; refusal to complete the assignment as a reaction to repeatable real and imaginary difficulties in the previous experience; substitution of the assignment for another one, greatly facilitated; slipping into an easier but erroneous way to the result, etc.

All the highlighted, and some other known in the modern defectology, regularities describe the connection between an abnormal child’s developmental features and results that it can reach (or not reach) under special educational conditions. They allow us to state that provision of a quality education for a child with special needs has to include correctional and compensational component (it is obligatory).

Real and potential (previously diagnosed) intellectual development of a child is the main instrument for mastering the education contents. If it allows a child to master the competencies, provided by the relevant educational standard, nothing should stop the inclusion of such a child (of any nosology group) into a comprehensive school or a class where it will study together with peers with normal typical development. Of course, it should have personal or group correctional lessons among which the speech-therapeutic, psycho-correctional, ortpo-rehabilitative ones (if necessary).

However, the severity or some other specialties of the developmental disorder can limit the intellectual and cognitive, or social and behavioral, potential of a child to the degree when it cannot master certain educational standards in the conditions of “common” school. This can happen, i.e., in case of primary mental backwardness, and when it is combined with sensory or movement disorders; in most cases of autism spectrum disorders; nuclear psychopathy, etc. For such children, the state must provide a possibility to receive quality education pointed at reaching the best possible for each concrete student results in its school and afterschool socialization, particularly, in the assignment (mainly occupational) sphere.

The results mentioned are meaningful for a child and its macro- and microenvironment. We have bases to state that a child can reach such results studying in the exclusive (special) schools and classes (instead of the inclusive ones), where the correctional and compensational, developmental and educational influence does not only follow a child in class but surrounds it everywhere being strong natural component of all the forms of educational process organization (in classes and outside of classes, in school and outside of school, personal, group and mass).

The authors of the new Ukrainian school conception see the upbringing on the values of moral education as such that “will not be put in separate morality classes ... as forming of the disposition becomes possible through the cross-cutting experience only” [3, 22]. Therefore, we need to focus on the correctional and educational work with the children needing it, taking into account the achievements of science and practices of our native special education that justified the principal statement about the organic inclusion of the correctional work into all parts of the educational process. That is the most important if we see the correction as both “reparation” of separate damages and “improvement” of the integral processes of personality development and socialization. The wholesome implementation of the mentioned statement about the children with developmental disabilities (especially mental) becomes possible in the conditions of special education. At the same time, of course, it is important to provide maximal inclusion of special children into different kinds of common activities with children having no developmental disorders (here, we mean after class and afterschool activities – sports, arts, technical activities, nature care, volunteering and others).



At large, we want to place an emphasis on our principal position about the non-justified, antagonistic division of the “inclusive” and the “exclusive” education for the children with developmental disorders. Whatever the conditions were for such children receiving their educational services, but the quality education for them must be directed at the correction, “repairing” the faults of the development and socialization, caused by the defect, improving these processes, saving and multiplying these children’s health.

In our researches (personally mine and ones of our scientific school members), we developed important psychological and pedagogical conditions for implementation of the principle of the correctional and compensational focus of education of children with the disorders of the development and socialization processes about the improvement of their intellectual and educational activity. We considered many unique experimental materials, classical and modern achievements of the world defectology, progressive experience of our native and foreign special education practices of different categories of special children (mentally retarded and having developmental delay, blind and visually impaired, with speech disorders and hearing impairments, behavioral deviance, psychopathology, limited abilities of somatic health and movement, etc.), and the difficulties of forming in such children the cognitive, labor, aesthetic, law, moral, and other competencies.

Let us take a look at these conditions considering the intellectual development, and the mental upbringing providing it, as the central direction of the school’s activity that highly determines the successfulness of their completing tasks in other spheres of personality development – moral and law, aesthetic, physical, labor, ecological.

We methodologically form the conditions of implementation of the principle of the correctional and compensational focus of children’s with developmental specialties education on such bases:

- the dynamic understanding of such children’s development as qualitatively unique, affecting different characteristics of psychical activity of an integral personality in a different way; complying with the common central regularities of a child’s development, but having at the same time some meaningful, repeatable connections between the developmental dynamics, psychical changes of personality and social conditions of these changes appearance and manifestation;
- the results of the external (pedagogical, at first) influences on a child’s development are determined by its mental specialties as the reflecting ones, which are driven biologically. As the “special” children of different categories show specific psychophysiological features of this system, it leads to huge imperfections in receiving, decoding, saving the information (especially verbal), and using it. Therefore, to provide some qualities of students’ knowledge (objectiveness, the unity of the global and the concrete, consciousness, fullness, consistency, strength, dynamics, transferring ability, and their assembly), we need to implement special correctional influence directed at forming of the contents of children’s consciousness;
- primary features of the defect, connected to pathophysiological specialties of a child’s psychics, violate behavioral characteristics of brain functioning in educational cognition: mastering the intended mental and practical actions, consistency, and conformity of their usage, and saving the work capacity as the energetic basis of studying. Provision of the quality education for children with developmental disorders accordingly to their needs in special psychological and pedagogical support demands special technologies of mind functioning as the activity and saving, at the same time, its intellectual and psychical capacity, prophylactics of nervous breakdowns, prevention the psychosomatic complications;
- the improvement of processes of the development and socialization of students together with working at the correction of some functions’ or their components’ limitations reaches the biggest effect when the correctional and educational influences are oriented at forming the integral personality of a student. In particular, the correction of educational and cognitive behavior of children with developmental disorders provides, first, special psychological and pedagogical influences at the individual components of the intellect: creative focus and self-correction, presence of a motive and active behavior, criticism and self-criticism, adequacy in mutual regulation of intellect and emotions (the so-called “emotional” intellect development), etc.

Therefore, the first condition of education quality provision is unity of the correctional influence onto the consciousness contents, behavioral and individual characteristics of the intellect.

The second condition is the unity of providing the adaptation of pedagogical process’ means to the peculiarities of intellectual development of students, and these tools orientation at the maximal potential development of the ability to absorb human culture throughout all life.



The third condition is aiming of the educational process at higher mental functions, arbitrariness forming in students.

The fourth condition is unity of learning knowledge and their application, ie internalization and exteriorization, inductive and deductive ways of operating information, etc., in the educational process.

The fifth condition is the emphasis on the formation of productive thinking, creativity, activity in solving a variety of cognitive tasks, among which the central task is for the causal links disclosure in educational information and activities.

The sixth condition is the pedagogical orientation towards gradual development of the cognitive independence of students and the transfer of potentials from the zone of their proximal development to the level of actual development. Special skill of the teacher in the management of cognitive activity of a student is necessary, taking into account the truth that is well known in the defectology: the corrective effects should be long-lasting.

The seventh condition is that it is important to provide students with learning disabilities the success in learning activities as they need constant support in their implementation. The special diversified fixation of positive tumors in the individual, with an individual, differentiated approach to children, is also necessary.

The eighth condition for quality education of children with developmental disorders is connected with perspective modeling of a student's personality, his/her post-school adaptation, peculiarities of socialization in various spheres, especially the active one. The study and formation of life plans for special children should start from the adolescence age, and of the individual abilities and preferences – even earlier.

Finally, let us note another special condition for the implementation of the right of children with developmental disabilities to quality education, which lays in the consistent and principled optimistic position of teachers in assessing the possibilities of personal development of “special” students to the level necessary for their full socialization, social adaptation, including labor, in an independent life. However, taking into account the real, and in many cases, the strong influence of biologically determined psychophysical violations on the development and formation of personality traits of man, we proposed a principle of real optimism in assessing the prospects of development and socialization of the individual.

In a context of inclusive or exclusive education, the success of providing quality education for children with learning outcomes and processes of development and socialization depends a lot on the teacher. Recalling the words of my teacher, Rudolf Henrykhovich Kraievsky, that I heard during the student years: “The teacher-defectologist is just a very good teacher”, I emphasize that when preparing such a specialist in different directions of the educational field of knowledge, it is necessary to equip him with a number of special competencies in relation to education, upbringing, development, socialization, which correct (improve) these processes. However, such competences work not only with the special knowledge and the ability to apply them, but also with the education of some of the principally important personalities of the teacher's special children – in particular, the language and intellectual culture, tolerance, perseverance, patience, increased responsibility for the child's share, kindness, love, the desire to help, etc. Therefore, in the preparation of a teacher in general, and a specialist in the field of special education in particular, at the NPU n.a. M.P. Drahomanov we implement a subjective-and-personal approach in which from the first year the future specialist is projected and educated not only as a person – a carrier of high universal values but as a subject of a special type of activity (and appropriate behavior) – correction-and-rehabilitation-directed education of children and adults with different nosologies of violations of development and socialization processes.

4. Conclusions

By discussing the problems of preparing a new teacher for a united Europe of the XXI century, Academician V.G. Andrushchenko notes that the granting of any privileges to one or another person in education is immoral, but this does not apply to children with special needs for which the society has to build a clear policy of providing additional services in order to equalize their opportunities with others (Andrushchenko V.P. (2012)). Such services primarily concern psychological and pedagogical assistance to children in the complicated development and socialization processes.



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