

Psychological analysis of a teacher's activity in class

A teacher's activity is difficult and versatile. Analyzing the lessons given by a teacher his colleagues make an idea of him as a professional. A teacher must give a lesson to provide all necessary conditions for school students to learn, to form the skills, and to develop their abilities. As the whole originates from its parts, as pedagogical mastery should be shown at each lesson. Thus, it is necessary that a functional analysis of a teacher's activity as a professional teacher should be carried out, irrespective of the type of a lesson and subject. The criteria of an elementary teacher' mastery appraisal are worked out according to the notions of the theory of systematic mental acts' formation by P. Galperin [1998] and the theory of an academic activity by D. Elkonin and V. Davydov [1996]:

- 1) As the main method of the analysis is a pedagogical observation, the most definite forms of fixation of this activity's components are educational activities. At first they are marked as „+” and „-” in the respective column of a table. While using them in the process of educational reflection the teacher has a chance to define the suitability of these actions more exactly. In case he gives the foundation that his educational activity in the given situation was not performed and was not suitable, „-” can be changed into „+”.
- 2) Satisfactory level is no less than 17 points (it is half of maximum 33 + 1 point). Good level estimates at 22–27 points. Excellent – more than 27 points.

Table 1

A functional analysis of teacher's activity in class

Evaluable qualities of an activity	mark	
	+	-
1. Creation of an academic motivation:	1	
1) situational	3	
2) task-oriented	1	
3) extrinsic motives	1	
4) intrinsic motives	3	
5) reduction of motives		3

2. Goal-setting:		
1) way of setting a goal: a) declared by a teacher b) defined in the course of academic dialogue b) stated by students r) not declared specifically and never reported to them	1 2 3	3
2) types of goals: a) definite, achievable b) global b) taking into consideration „shift from motive to goal” r) never checked	1 1 2	2
3. Object of activity:		
1) Degree of novelty: a) new b) partly studied b) reproduced a second time	1 1 1	
2) Pattern of use: a) requiring a reproductive activity b) requiring the organization of research	1 3	
3) Total amount: a) integral, systematic b) with fuzzy borders b) incomplete	3 1	1
4. Means and tools:		
1) given by a teacher in a declarative form		1
2) selected in the course of an academic dialogue	2	
3) chosen by the students independently while analyzing the situational task	3	
4) chosen randomly and never reasoned		1
5. Conditions:		
1) generalizational level: a) scientific knowledge b) notions and empirical ideas	3 1	
2) organizational level: a) systematic knowledge b) chaotic, random knowledge	2	1
3) mastery level of skills and abilities: a) general academic skills and abilities of full value b) half-full general academic skills and abilities	3	1
6. Result (product):		
1) direct: a) implementation of a goal set b) non-implementation of a goal set	2	2
2) by-product a) presence of life-long cognitive interest b) absence of life-long cognitive interest	2	2

Conclusion about the quality of a teacher's activity in class

We worked out the criteria of a teacher's mastery appraisal according to the notions of the conceptual notions of the theory of systematic mental acts' formation by P. Galperin [1998] and the theory of an academic activity by D. Elkonin and V. Davydov [1996]: The analysis of a teacher's activity in class must help evaluate the system of conditions promoting the formation of students' academic activity content in full. In this connection educational influences of a teacher can be evaluated as effective and ineffective, helping or impeding the development of children's spontaneous activity. This kind of activity is understood as self-regulation, autonomy and self-control of an academic activity. A teacher's activity in class is an activity for his students. He must help all and each of his students progress in the subject. Thus, any novelty is to be evaluated as effective and suitable only after its results have been thoroughly analyzed and the necessity to introduce it in class has been proved.

The necessary component of a student's activity in class is the creation of conditions for rich-in-content *academic motivation* by the teacher. Unfortunately, there exists a chance for the reduction of motives (content substitution), rather unconscious by the teacher, when he uses compulsion motivation, thinking that it is the necessary educational strictness. As a result, motives for avoidance behaviour prevail in the students (they prefer not to take part in group discussion; they repeat what has been said by the teacher or a smart student without comprehension). The most well-known patterns to create academic motivation are problem situation, dramatization, positive emotional evidence, encouragement in a child's cognitive activity. Motives are connected with the *goal* and the system (hierarchy) of goals, that's why the hierarchy (collateral subordination) of motives is often used as a term. If a motive is understood as a need plus a way for its satisfaction and is correlated with an activity, so the goal correlates with an activity. It is the idea of a future result of an activity before its implementation. The more detailed, full-fledged and conscious the idea is at first, the more effective the child acts. If we speak about „the shift from motive to goal”, when the students only start working, there are extrinsic proofs that the students have no fear to their teacher, and there is no need to stress the importance of this shift.

The *object* of an activity conforms to the goal. The object is a definite kind of reality, being researched with the help of suitable ways and means. At the end of the class it is necessary that a teacher should make a conclusion whether the object was specified by the system of knowledge and means of intellectual activity according to the lesson goal. It is important to note the definite or indefinite correlation between the object and goal, the object, ways and means, used by the teacher in class. The goals and tasks for the lesson could go beyond the object or could be fewer than its possibilities. The way how the teacher sets the goals says a lot about his teaching style.

In practice *means and tools* of an activity are very often declared by the teacher without any explanations or are chosen by the students randomly. In this

respect the use of active methods of teaching does not necessarily have a positive effect, if the child is not given the tools to analyze the task and theoretical attitude to reality is not formed; if he is not taught methods of analysis and general conclusion, and full-fledged content of an academic activity in class is not formed.

It is equally important to examine *conditions* (necessary and sufficient), i.e. the basis of knowledge, skills and abilities, the patterns of implementation, control and assessment, which help an academic activity turn into a creative one (not imitating creativity).

The assessment of a *direct product* is not so difficult, as it is possible to fix the degree of a concurrence of the lesson goal with the result (the total amount of knowledge, the quality of skills and abilities) either set by the teacher or worked out together with the students using the quantitative index. The *by-product* is the attitude of students to a lesson, a subject or an activity category [Ponomarjov 1999] that should be assessed in terms of the result of observations. It is impossible to say there is no developing effect during the lesson judging by one lesson only. Nevertheless, the absence of long-life cognitive interest, positive emotional attitude in many students during long periods of class hours must be evaluated as a consequence of an insufficient attention to some component of an academic activity from the teacher or the neglectful attitude to the educational technology.

It is essential that the teacher should have his own opinion about the lesson you visited. You should ask him questions about his activity in class to make the results of your observations more exact. It will give you a chance to make well-balanced conclusions about a teacher's psychological readiness to organize a spontaneous activity of children.

Literature

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Abstract

In the article written by A.S. Turchin *Psychological analysis of a teacher's activity in class* a diagram of the teacher's mastery appraisal evaluated using the notions of the activity theory by A.N. Leontiev and the theory of an educational activity by D. Elkonin and V. Davydov is given.

Key words: psychological analysis, functional analysis, educational activity, motivation, spontaneous activity.