

## THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF REFLECTIVE THINKING OF CHILDREN AT THE LESSONS OF HISTORY

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The relevance of the studied problem is caused by the need to improve methods of teaching history for the purpose of reflective thinking development of children. The article is focused on the development of reflective thinking in order to improve educational programs in history. The leading approach to study this problem was the design approach that allows selection and structuring of the basic components of the program, their unity provide an effective development of the abilities of pupils to analyze information and allocate the main thing in it, determine the essential features, etc. The research helps to design the structure and content of the program for the development of reflective thinking of children at the lessons of history. It was found that reflective thinking of children at the lessons of history can be developed efficiently by the targeted psychological-pedagogical influence on the process of assimilation of historical concepts and formation of verbal skills to express the content of the concept of different types of judgments. Methodical recommendations for the development of reflective thinking of children at the lessons of history have been developed. Materials can become the basis of effective organization of educational process at the lessons of history, and can be used by the authors of textbooks and teaching materials for historical subjects.

**Keywords:** reflective thinking of children ; cognitive development ; historical education ; cognition activity.

### INTRODUCTION

Modern educational psychology is substantiated by the fact determining the influence on the educational process of the students' mental development; within the process significant, meaningful and dynamic changes of students' way of thinking can be noticed. At school age the foundations of thinking are being formed, the system of scientific concepts serving as the basis for personal intellectual development is progressing. After this period, the sensitive development of reflective processes that shape and correct the effects on cognitive sphere, that is practically proved, are no longer considered as productive (Rubinstein, 2013).

A major part in the development of thinking is assigned to humanities, and the main role among them belongs to history. One of the goals of the study of history is to develop pupils' thinking ability to get reasonable and prudent opinions. In the course of studying the history students learn the system of various scientific concepts

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that form the basis of reflective thinking, for example, develop cognitive abilities. Reflective thinking is actively developing in growing age (Vygotskiy, 2005).

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Formation and development of reflective thinking basis of students is carried out under the guidance of teachers. Therefore, a significant role in educational psychology was assigned to studying of learning conditions conducive to the achievement of students with respect to the development of high-level thinking (Leontyev, 1983).

Within the framework of this research certain requirements were formulated such as the ability to forecast the dynamics of students' development in relation to the adequacy of the deployment of the program material (Fayzullina and Saglam, 2014).

In addition, the researchers emphasize that the process of learning and development of thinking are seen as the productive interaction in the teacher-student system, which involves not only the reproduction of knowledge but also educational cooperation. One of the most important issue is the problem of overcoming the factors that reduce mental activity of students (Fayzullina and Saglam, 2015; Stolyarov, 2015).

In spite of the fact that there are certain requirements for the level and characteristics of the students' thinking, which are reflected in the programs on history and other documents, reflective thinking development of students is currently continuing under difficult and contradictory conditions.

Textbook authors and teachers of history and try to make the different approaches (civilizational, cultural, stadial) in order to deal with the vacuum occurred after the collapse of the communist paradigm; each of such approaches is focused only on certain sides of the historical process and includes a specific conceptual apparatus. Many teachers are not methodologically prepared to work in changed circumstances, they tend to transfer a certain volume of knowledge without any understanding of the educational material, they do not equip their students with different thinking strategies that can help students to interpret events by themselves and describe the content of historical concepts with meaningful judgments. The consequence of this practice can be seen in undigested or poor-assimilated content of scientific concepts by students that determines the insufficient level of the development of their reflective thinking (Leontyev, 1975; Fayzullina and Saglam, 2015; Tuhvatullin, 2015).

### **METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **Requirements for the development of programs**

As methodological bases of reflective thinking for the development of the program of development at the lessons of history, we proceeded from the following requirements:

It is necessary to create challenging situations that require an active independent search. In these situations, you need to put the students in front of the need to perform certain mental activities and operations, first theoretically and then practically; to identify signs that determine the type of a problem or situation, and formulate them in concepts; to determine the best ways to perform system operations and actions for different types of tasks and situations; to monitor continuously the operational performance of all tasks; to summarize and consolidate the discovered types of mental activities to perform various tasks, united by common concepts.

The applied principle of visibility intended to perform not only an illustrative, but also a forming function. Visual aids are symbols, charts, graphs, maps, which help students to discover the relationships and properties of the objects being studied.

The great role in this regard is assigned to formation of informative motivation of students. An important factor in preservation and maintenance of cognitive motivation is the content of educational material. So we consider that the rational structure of educational material is a source that retains and supports learning motivation. An essential element in creation of such a structure is identification of basic concepts and systematic and consistent work on them.

In the process of program development we were guided by the position that the process of assimilation of scientific concepts in educational activity is inseparable from the process of formation of modes of action which influence the formation and absorption of concepts. In other words the ability to use different kinds of learning tools in teaching, taking into account the age of students is in close connection with the peculiarities of the content of concepts. In some conditions, textbooks, manuals on the subject, paintings, documents, excerpts from works of fiction, presentation of new material, working with a textbook, etc. can serve as the establishment of the essential features of visual objects and phenomena; in other conditions - the identification of relationships between phenomena and objects; in the third conditions they can be used to summarize the phenomenon under study by a particular genus or species; in the fourth they should help to bring the phenomenon under study under the general law.

This approach allows solving the problem and meets the requirements of curriculum which includes the need to deepen students' knowledge about the development of reflective thinking based on age of students.

## **RESULTS**

### **Structural components of the program:**

The program combines the gradual definition of objectives, resources, tasks and processes that most effectively contribute to the development of reflective thinking of students.

The aim of the program is to develop students' ability to analyze and synthesize scientific information, to highlight key scientific concepts, to establish relationships

and causal relationships between concepts, to express their thoughts using the content of concepts at a higher level, consistently moving from lower to higher levels.

The task of the teacher is to achieve the adoption of a system of historical notions at those levels of reflection that are needed in accordance with the textbook requirements. Unfortunately, most students demonstrate a low ability to absorb educational material, primarily historical concepts.

This program aims at the development of students' reflective thinking by forming verbalized mental operations and skills that can enable students to study historical phenomena and formulate ideas.

### **Substantial components of the program**

We have developed and implemented a methodical system of tasks aimed at development of reflective thinking and skills of students:

1. Tasks for training students to generalize their knowledge aimed at the development of their ability to perform activities and summarize current knowledge;
2. Tasks for training students to formulate definitions of the notion and develop their ability to perform logic operations;
3. Tasks for the development of the ability to deal with concepts involving the transfer of existing knowledge in new situations.
4. Tasks aimed at performance of inductive and deductive reasoning and obtaining new knowledge by operating concepts.
5. Tasks for explanation that develop the ability to explain phenomena and processes.
6. Tasks for nomination and hypothesis testing that form the ability to nominate, reflect and validate research skills.
7. Tasks aimed at identification of logic errors and logic evidence developing the ability to identify logical errors.

The first type of tasks is aimed at development of the ability to generalize the historical knowledge, expressed primarily through the concepts. The students explain the sequence of mental operations when generalizing, show close relationships of these mental activities to the process of verbalization at the level of reflection. The orienting procedure of generalization and verbalization of thoughts is being formed, which can be seen as follows:

1. Clarification of the nature and requirements of the cognitive task by the teacher.
2. Detachment of the main concepts of the task, understanding the concepts.
3. Selection of basic and typical facts out of the particular subject material. Verbalization of thinking by using the facts of being and the facts of relations.

4. Comparison of the facts, selection of general, generic essential features and detachment of non-essential ones. Verbalization of thoughts at the level of relative and categorical judgments.
5. Selection of specific characters from the facts on the basis of comparison and verbalization of thoughts at the level of separation judgments.
6. Selection of common, essential generic and specific features, their integration in definitions, and verbal formulation of general laws of the development of historical phenomenon at the level causal and reasoning judgments.

The development of reflective thinking is a process of dynamic transition in the process of assimilation of the content of historical concepts of generalization at the level of individual judgments to generalization at the level of particular judgments on the way to generalization at the level of general judgments.

The development of reflective thinking at school depends on the level of mastering thinking skills to disclose the contents of historical concepts of different kinds of judgments: pupils of 5 - 6 grades are able to reveal the content of the concept of historical judgments of being and the judgments of relations, pupils of 6-7 grades are able disclose the content of the historical concept of necessity judgments within all their subspecies, and pupils of 7-8 grades are able to reveal the content of the historical concept of universal judgments.

### **Implementation of the program**

While implementing the program aimed at the development of reflective thinking of children at the lessons of history the students have acquired not just a system of knowledge within the discipline and learned gradually based on the key historical concepts in the course of thinking operations, successively passed from the lower levels of knowledge to the highest, which allowed to internalize the content of educational material, obtain scientific knowledge, and develop reflective thinking, which is the basis for the development of cognitive abilities of the person in general.

As a result of the program, the students developed skills to analyze the information comprehensively and to select the most important part of it, to determine the essential features (visual, general, special), to identify relationships of cause and effect, to sum up their knowledge under general laws (for example, the historical development of society) . In other words, the student in educational process has moved from generalization at the level of individual judgments to generalization at the level of (first) particular and (then) general judgments.

### **DISCUSSIONS**

The problem treated in this study was observed in the works of many Russian scientists such as L.S. Vygotskiy (1999) within the framework of the developed

and experimentally-based theory of thinking of children by analyzing spontaneously formed conceptions of children and their transformation into scientific knowledge in educational process. S. Rubinstein (1973) indicated three stages of development of thinking of students depending their age and individual characteristics. "The age of questions" is typical primarily for preschool children (the beginning of mental activity). "Elementary" and "rational" thinking is mostly typical for elementary school pupils. "Theoretical" thinking is the basis of reflective thinking and typical for high school students. He also pointed out the interrelation of the developing stages of thinking and that with the appearance of higher levels, lower levels do not disappear but transform under the influence of the higher levels. A.N. Leontyev (1981) emphasized the role of generalization in the development of theoretical thinking. The development of generalization provides basis for the ability to make reflexive solutions. He drew attention not only to the relationship of analysis and synthesis, abstraction and generalization, but also to the features of these operations at the level of empirical and theoretical thinking.

However, despite the theoretical coverage of this problem, the lack of its methodical readiness at the lessons of history reveals the contradiction between the requirement to raise the level of mastery of scientific concepts and the low level of mastering the content of the concepts of students at history classes; between the urgent necessity of taking into account the internal conditions and the dynamics of thinking of students, as well as psychological and pedagogical conditions that contribute to the development of reflective thinking and the lack of research in this field. Therefore, in this study, we hypothesize that the reflective thinking of children at the lessons of history can develop productively when creating optimal psychological conditions, consisting in purposeful psychological-pedagogical influence on the process of assimilation of historical concepts and formation of skills to verbal expression of the content of concepts at various levels of judgments.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thus, the study allowed implementation of the structure and content of the program aimed at the development of reflective thinking of children at the lessons of history. It is provided that in order to help simple assimilation of scientific knowledge by students at the first stage it will be more useful to present the educational material in the form of training tasks - this organization of the educational content can encourage independent search, which will help students to assimilate mental actions, principles and concepts that are needed to solve certain types of tasks. In order to solve the problem of learning the teacher offers students a sample of a general method aimed at identification of conditions required for the appearance of the concept as further analysis of the object. Activity within educational problem solving process is preceded by a variety of concrete practical problems, which provide orientation to various individual characteristics of the selected content. This process

of assimilation differs from the process of assimilation of concepts within traditional training. First of all, the teacher does not demonstrate any previously prepared content of the concept, but provides with a way to execute it. Secondly, the content of scientific concepts (even abstract ones) are revealed by children in the form of the material (on the example of various subjects) or materialized (on the example of various models) actions. While performing these actions a student is assimilating the concepts. Previous memorizing of any definition within such training is impossible. In this case, the concept is the result of mental activity of the student, which carried out in the form of certain substantive actions aimed to address the relevant educational objectives. In order to fulfill any objectives students must be equipped with a special set (system) of operations, which are in fact the ways of their implementation. To achieve any conscious operation it is required to understand the activity. Therefore, teachers should organize the analytic and synthetic activity of students: they determine the components of the subject and set a specific connection between them - all this can help to reveal the structure of the concept.

By implementing training tasks the teacher performs the following activities: interpretation of the problem to be solved; determination of the conditions and data necessary to perform the activity; actualization (anamnesis, search, discussion) of suitable principles; disclosure of relations between the objects of educational tasks and their corresponding principles; organization of inspection findings made by the students; performance of similar and different types of activities.

### ***Recommendations***

The material is of interest to history teachers of secondary schools. The practical significance of this study is defined by the fact that its results allow us to give a series of psychological and pedagogical recommendations for the establishment of effective psycho-pedagogical conditions for the development of reflective thinking in the process of teaching history. The development of reflective thinking at the lessons of history has been introduced. The guidelines for the development of reflective thinking students have been implemented on the basis of the program and the data obtained in the course of research.

### ***Acknowledgments***

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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