

УДК 368

DOI: 10.18413/2313-8971-2016-2-1-46-50

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THE STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
OF A.V. ZAPOROZHETS

This work got the support from FAPEMIG, CNPq and CAPES

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Abstract

This article aims to describe the preparatory analysis of academic heritage and scientific studies left by the eminent researcher in the psychological theory of activity A. V. Zaporozhets. It reviews the resurgence, systematization, organization, and discussion of the most important aspects of his thought and his intellectual production in the field of pedagogical psychology.

The text is associated with the investigations, that *Grupo de Estudos e Pesquisas em Didática Desenvolvemental e Profissionalização Docente – GEPEDI* (english: Group of Studies and Research in Teaching Developmental and Teacher Professionalism) has been doing for already seven years, on the problems related to the psychological theory of human development in the cultural-historical perspective and the conditions of education and teaching necessary for this development.

Keywords: A.V. Zaporozhets; educational psychology; historical-cultural approach.

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О ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКОЙ ПСИХОЛОГИИ
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Аннотация

Эта статья представляет собой предварительный анализ научного наследия и работ выдающегося ученого в области психологической теории активности А. В. Запорожца. Она описывает возникновение, систематизацию, организацию и обсуждение важнейших сторон его идей и научных работ в области педагогической психологии.

Данная работа – результат деятельности «Группы по изучению дидактики развития и профессиональной подготовки педагогов» (GEPEDI) в Федеральном Университете Уберландии в Бразилии, которая уже в течение семи лет занимается проблемами, относящимися к психологической теории развития человека в культурно-исторической перспективе и ее связи с условиями образования и обучения, необходимыми для этого развития.

Ключевые слова: А.В. Запорожец, педагогическая психология, культурно-исторический подход.

A.V. Zaporozhets (1905-1981), even though he was the foremost follower of L. S. Vygotsky, remains practically unknown in the West, especially in Brazil, where only a few years ago his work and his thoughts became a systematic object of study in the field of psychology and education.

The theoretical contributions of A.V. Zaporozhets are in two specific areas of psychology: a) in developmental psychology and ages b) in psychology of pedagogy. In developmental

psychology field and ages has made fundamental contributions in areas almost forgotten in recent researches about children, such as, the formatting processes of perception, sensations, emotions and, especially, the movement or voluntary actions.

A.V. Zaporozhets, along with his colleagues and disciples, created the theory of sensory development and mental of children; he promoted the importance of resolving the problems in the process of formation and education of pre-school children; and introduced

the concept of pre-school pedagogy with the prospect of enriching the child's development by intermediate use of specific activities of the age-group; etc. He defended the idea of extending the period of early school stage for those seven years, considering that childhood extension was the greatest achievement of human civilization.

Precisely, those studies in developmental psychology, especially for those ages, was the fundamental focus of scientific interests of A.V. Zaporozhets and through his practice succeed to be more extensive, original, and creative. His writings in this area, were helpful, especially for the systematization, improvement, expansion, consolidation, and divulgation inside and outside the Soviet Union the main Marxist psychological theses of the Kharkov group, at first and later, in the Institute of Psychology at the Moscow State University.

Through the experimental studies A.V. Zaporozhets confirmed empirically two of the most important theses of L.S. Vygotsky: first, that the domination of social experience of a child does not happen independently, but with the help of adults during the communication process with the people that surround him/her; second, that the domain of this social experience is not a given reproductive way through passive perception, but in an active way through an intermediate of diversified group of activities, such as a play, study and work.

A.V. Zaporozhets and his team of collaborators - T.V. Endovitskaia, Ya. Z. Neverovich, G.H. Kisliuk, N.N. Podiakov, S.M. Kozlovsky, O.V. Ovchinnikova, L.S. Tsvetkova, among others - starting from the these, that the orientation reaction is the functional component is necessary for any type of adaptive activity, concluded that voluntary movements of man are conscious movements and that, therefore, are acquired throughout a life. His acquisition needs the psychological direction through the guidance of the executing activity. This guidance is given through a certain model that determines the "what" and the "how" to do certain movements. However, this is not enough, because the anticipatory orientation alone will neither conduct to the formation of habit engine nor the elaboration of the system of relations, which is at its base. The anticipatory orientation should be followed by a series of additional exercises for training the final habit. At first, the image is formed, at the second stage - the entire system.

There are important researches on the orientation activity of the hands and eyes realized by A.V. Zaporozhets team, especially by V.P. Zinchenko. These studies allowed one to

determine the steps by passing the conditions of an activity orientation task: a) chaotic - the elements of the situation that have indicated meaning still without identification, for the orientation of reactions produce both, the essential conditions as not essential for this action; b) the beginning of the formation of the system of active irritants - in the verbal influence and concrete examples, moves the character to an investigative activity, the orientation reacts in the direction that the irritants focuses on the experimental situation and in the words and actions of the experimenter, and takes place initially as a system of touch-driven orientation reactions; c) verbal communication activation - when the child is able to verbally express the identified situation characteristics during the orientation process or during the demonstration actions and it helps to increase the effectiveness of teaching and makes it more conscious and widespread; d) internalization of verbal activity and reduction of mobilizing engine components in a system of orientation-in a formation stage of the image that supports the further action that anticipates the results and the movements that take place [10, p. 93-100].

From the point of view of pedagogical psychology, A.V. Zaporozhets established that the didactic organization of the processes of assimilation in social experience by students in school contexts should be built on the basis of new scientific research, especially, under the laws of such psychology processes. These laws need to be reputed during the selection of content, organization of study programs and structuring of new teaching methods. According to him, the building of a socialist society depended, in part, on the establishment of a strong public educational system and this, in this case, pedagogy is able to set the bases of the new pedagogical theory and the new organization of didactic processes and teaching.

A.V. Zaporozhets states that "It should be considered that any system for directing the assimilation process is structured on the base of certain psychological conception about the nature of the drive process. Before facing the formalization of the process of assimilation is indispensable to get to understand as the proposed model is suitable for this term. Otherwise, a formalization of this type ends with the danger of false consolidated methodological positions and can deepen weaknesses in the old teaching methods. This way, programs should examine the psychological nature of the assimilation process to solve some problems of methodology and teaching," [3, p. 301].

The biggest concern of A.V. Zaporozhets, in relation to the new didactic organization of teaching-

learning processes, is focused on the content and teaching methods. He realized that the chosen type of psychological conception determined the type and nature of the content and methods. Based on the theories of L. S. Vygotsky and A. N. Leontiev about human learning, which requires the character to make a formation of entirely new abilities, a product of the assimilation by children of generalized operations that are transmitted by adults, A. V. Zaporozhets proved the importance of contents during the structuring of study programs, as well as teaching methods throughout the process of their assimilation. As part of the contents, he highlighted the importance of knowledge or empirical information and skills, and capabilities. In the field of methods, he gave prominence to the more general mechanisms of the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and capabilities, especially to the stages for formation method of mental actions and concepts created by P. Ya. Galperin between the 1950s and 1970s. A.V. Zaporozhets specifically devoted himself to the study of the formation by stages of perceptual actions, sensitive and voluntary movements [11; 12; 13; 14]. Regarding the importance of contents and methods A.V. Zaporozhets says: “During the design of the programs it is indispensable to take into consideration not only the gradually complexity of empirical material, but, at first, the teaching of widespread action procedures with this material, developed by humanity. However, this way, it is only noted that the content should be assimilated; the process of this assimilation, for its part, is subordinated to the specific laws in correspondence with which should be structured teaching methods ... Formation to actions stages, that leads to their conversion external (materials) internal (ideal), constitutes the fundamental content of the assimilation process; the proper organization of the external object activity of the student, which ensures such a transformation, is the fundamental principle because it should be guided towards the rational direction of study process” [3, p. 302].

The research of A.V. Zaporozhets shows that internal psychic processes compose internal ideal actions, mental, from the reflection of external actions and materials that take their final form as a result of successive transformations and abbreviations. He researched the fundamental role of the guiding part in the implementation and training of the action and came to the conclusion that the acquisition process of knowledge and skills from the child is conditioned by proper organization of object-action that responds to the demands of the task. In these actions, he distinguished two steps: a) the

orientation step (also provides the control) and; b) the execution step. During the first, the child, who learns, needs models to explain or guide what to do and how to do it; during the second, that specific child needs to perform actions on object conditions (handling concrete objects). In this regard A. V. Zaporozhets wrote: “The knowledge is formed as a result of actions on objects. The same actions done in the same form become capabilities, and if they become automatic, they are habits. That explains why the organization and formation of the actions on objects constitute the central process of acquisition of new knowledge, skills and habits” [3, p. 304].

A.V. Zaporozhets and his collaborators L. Vénger, A. Rúzskaiá Ya. Neveróvich, V.P. Zinchenko experimentally confirmed that the sensorial development of the child - hearing, touch, vision etc. - do not simply drill in organs with sense during the process of adapting analyzers to these conditions, presents perceived reality, but the path of assimilation of social sensory experience, sensory culture. This assimilation of social sensory experience does not occur passively but actively, by perceptual specific actions that takes to the formation of images to the object.

However, it was in the field of pre-school education where A.V. Zaporozhets concentrated the largest amount of his investigations. His research conducted in collaboration with L. Vénger, N. Poddiákov, Ya. Neveróvich, confirmed that pre-school children, submitted to educational experiments, whose focus was placed on the formation of the corresponding intellectual processes on the base of practical actions with objects and the previous orientations of the characteristics of the observed phenomena - could produce general reflections to themselves, and establish certain connections and interactions, even when thinking continues to operate at the level of visual images. For this reason, it creates this level the base of representations that contain the premises of scientific concepts that will be formed later in the following evolutionary steps. This process is only possible under the influence of school and from a proper pedagogical orientation from the teacher. Similar studies have also confirmed the possibilities that children have from pre-school the ability to assimilate the basic principles of math and reading from the use of their teachers, new teaching methods. A.V. Zaporozhets [8] mentions research undertaken on children's laboratory preparation for school learning the Preschool Education Institute and says: “The importance is that the use of new teaching methods not only allows children to elaborate on, on

the early stages of their evolutionary development, a certain set of basic habits of reading and mathematics, but also to develop its extensive orientation in the language of the area and qualitative relations, being placed in this way the indispensable base for the aftermost formation of their language and mathematical skills” [8, p. 231-232].

Beyond the capabilities previously indicated, under the base of these pedagogical conditions of education and teaching, are formed skills related to affection, such as social motives of behaviour and moral and aesthetics feelings. His research on the origins, structure and function of emotions are pioneers in psychological theory of activity and still retain huge effect in the didactic field [9].

According to the thought of A.V. Zaporozhets, pre-school education from the point of view of specific aspects that characterize the psycho development of the child, should take the role and function of the establishment of the necessary premises for those global restructuring of children's awareness that define the course of evolutionary development and that will take place later in elementary school. These assumptions are established, he said, by way of performing functional development processes, in which the partial particular changes, that occur during the formation of some isolated actions, generate new knowledge, procedures and skills.

A.V. Zaporozhets carried out studies proving that the pre-school age gives the characteristics of the prevailing psyche of children, the type of learning cannot allow the passage to a new level of evolutionary development, related to new structures of thought and new general schemes. According to A.V. Zaporozhets “It is unlikely that the conceptual scheme guiding mentioned forms-can be in the context of the game activity or practice activity, specific to preschool. Apparently, for formation is essential to pass the school study activity that, by the results of D. B. Elkonin and V. V. Davydov research, present a much more complex content that the activity of preschool, because it is characterized by having procedures, tasks and peculiar reasons” [8, p. 235-236].

Their conclusions could help, taken into consideration, to avoid very serious mistakes made in schools related to the determination of teaching content and methods of pedagogic inadequate orientation of psychological student potential. The content and teaching methods need to be determined, in the last analysis, by the psychological age of the child, the type of main activity it carries out and the place and role that plays itself in the context of a

specific type of social relations. It should be taught and guided based on these principles.

CONCLUSION

It needs to be said that the extensive and rich work of one of the most important theorists of child psychology in the second generation of Russian cultural-historical psychologists is very important for the developmental education. It is fundamental not only for its historical value, but also for its strength and the effectiveness that still retains today. A. V. Zaporozhets works can help to deal with the scientific and methodological problems that school, teaching and education pose to researchers, teachers, school managers and family, in relation to the psychological development of students and their pedagogical orientation.

Without a direct access to the published works of A. V. Zaporozhets it is not possible to scale the magnitude of his thoughts or to use them in an appropriate manner. This is why most of the time of this study was related to the localization, organization, classification and systematization of more than 200 works of A. V. Zaporozhets published originally in Russia.

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