

CHARACTERISTICS AND STRUCTURE OF METHODOLOGICAL THINKING OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER

Alsu Saetdzianovna Khakimzianova^{1*}, Asiya Mirgasimovna Ilyasova², Fakhrutdinov Bulat Ildarovich³

^{1,2,3}Kazan Federal University, Institute of International Relations, Russia.

Email: *alsoukh@mail.ru

Article History: Received on 11th September 2019, Revised on 28th October 2019, Published on 14th November 2019

Abstract

Purpose of the study: In this article, we will try to more thoroughly reveal the essence of the phenomenon "methodical thinking" and present its component composition as an object of development.

Methodology: Methodical thinking is a peculiar phenomenon with its own content and structure, its own characteristics and functional links with methodical skills and with the personality of the teacher. In the study of methodical thinking, we were guided by the well-known proposition that mental processes are included in certain specific forms of activity, within which and depending on which they are formed.

Results: The methodical side of a foreign language teacher can be represented as the solution of a long series of methodological tasks that are the object of methodical thinking. The factors influencing the nature of methodical thinking are diverse and heterogeneous, but it is the peculiarities of the methodological task that determine, first of all, its specificity. Training teachers of a foreign language should carry with it the possibilities for the formation of a multitude of socially valuable motives, i.e. there should be a purposeful, consistent education of the motivational sphere of thinking.

Applications of this study: This research can be used for the universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality of this study: In this research, the model of the characteristics and structure of methodical thinking of a foreign language teacher is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

Keywords: university education, methodical thinking, professional training, English language teaching, methodology, teacher training, language.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher training is one of the constant problems of higher pedagogical education since the general level of education is ultimately determined by the level of teacher training. However, it is necessary to note the contradiction, which lies in the discrepancy between the developed level of the specialist's thinking and the requirements that the nature of his activities in and outside the class makes to the teacher. A.M. Matyushkin wrote that "the need to use the psychological laws of thinking is being tested more and more in various areas of practical activity" (Matyushkin, 1972, p. 3). In the field of education, this is noted by many. So, V.V. Davydov believes that "the whole system of education should be reoriented from the formation of rational-empirical thinking in children to the development of modern scientific-theoretical thinking in them". L.M. Fridman adheres to similar views on thinking (Fridman, 1983). The development of technical thinking, professional thinking, historical thinking (by I.Ya. Lerner, 1965) is recognized as necessary.

The question arises: is it possible to solve this problem if the teacher is not prepared accordingly? The answer is unequivocal: only a thinking teacher will educate a thinking student.

This judgment seems to us to be extremely important in relation to the teacher's profession since it is the teaching activity that is characterized by the conditions of constant change. Situations of learning activities, especially when they are based on communication (as is the case of communicative teaching), are extremely multifaceted and multicomponent, so the teacher constantly faces a new situation that requires solving a new task each time.

The problem of the development of thinking is not new for the methodics of teaching foreign languages. It is enough to mention the works of Leonard L.D. (2014), Szobo A. (1992), Wallace M. (2008), Barron F. (2016), Joyce B., Weil M., Showers B. (1992) and, among Russian authors – G.I. Sarantsev (2010) and others. The merit of the authors dealing with this problem is that they made it an object of scientific attention, raised the question on the need for special development of methodical thinking, they tried to determine the essence of this type of thinking, developed tasks for the development of methodical thinking.

The development of thinking is regarded as an essential component of the overall development of the teacher as a professional personality. Our research is based on the strategy for the development of professional thinking, which is the backbone factor of the entire teacher training system.

In this article, we will try to more thoroughly reveal the essence of the phenomenon "methodical thinking" and present its component composition as an object of development.

METHODS

Methodical thinking is a peculiar phenomenon with its own content and structure, its own characteristics and functional

links with methodical skills and with the personality of the teacher. [Shirkhani, S., & Fahim, M. \(2011\)](#)

In the study of methodical thinking, we were guided by the well-known proposition that mental processes are included in certain specific forms of activity, within which and depending on which they are formed.

The solution to any methodical problem consists of certain successive stages. Initially, the methodical task appears as a cognitive, with an indefinite search area and multiple solutions. At this first stage, a solution is searched, the psychological side of which is the analysis of the initial state of knowledge, skills and abilities of students, the analysis of their intended end state, determined by the goal of solving the task as a whole, hypotheses regarding the tasks and conditions required for solving the problem (if theoretically unknown) or choosing one of several well-known solutions, choosing a strategy and, finally, drawing up a program of teacher and student activities objectified in the plan.

At the second stage, a practical-transformational embodiment of the solution found, the realization of an idea takes place. At this stage, direct interaction of the teacher and students is organized through communication. In this case, contradictions may arise between the planned system of actions and the actual course of the educational process. As a result, new methodical problems arise, with the need to develop new schemes of action.

All of the above said allows us to define a methodical task as an object of methodical thinking, containing the requirement to transform the knowledge, skills, and abilities of students and assuming that the teacher has a search and practice activity that is performed in an intellectual-figurative and effective way. [Shirkhani, S., & Fahim, M. \(2011\)](#)

DISCUSSION

The characteristic of a methodical task determines the activity of methodical thinking, which consists in discovering the connections and relations of the conditions of the task, relating them to the goals of learning, transforming the conditions in accordance with the goals. To ensure such an activity, methodical thinking must have the following characteristics:

- Effectiveness; generalization; concreteness; ability to predict; flexibility; sustainability; independence; efficiency; awareness; self-critical thinking, providing the correct self-esteem.

These basic characteristics of the phenomenon under study give grounds to assert that methodical thinking is a manifestation of practical intelligence. In psychology, practical intelligence (practical thinking) refers to an activity that takes place in direct contact with reality and has the goal of achieving a practically useful result ([L.S. Vygotsky \(2014\)](#), [A.A. Orlova \(1995\)](#), etc.). Apparently, the teacher's methodical thinking is a manifestation of a complex form of practical intelligence, a form in which theoretical thinking is included as a component.

RESULTS

The relationship between the practical and theoretical components of methodical thinking is quite complex and deep. The thought continuously goes into action, and the action into thought, the thought is refined, verified by the action, and the action, in turn, gives rise to a new thought and even partially performs the function of prediction. In the end, the interdependence of these two components moves the methodical thought forward.

In order to assign a certain dimension, a coordinate system to methodical thinking as a subject of this research, it is necessary to represent it logically homogeneous, it is necessary to single out an analysis unit that is adequate to the process itself. Such a unit is a methodical action, a functional unit of methodical thinking, by means of which a generalized theoretical position is correlated with a particular and singular one in a given problem situation, followed by exteriorization through teaching methods and techniques.

In this case, methodical thinking can be described as theoretical and practical activities to transform the knowledge, skills, and abilities of students by performing a series of consecutive methodical actions. This definition, we believe, is constructive, since it indicates two functions of the phenomenon under study: provision of search activity and transformation of the object of impact.

With the assimilation of methodical knowledge (concepts) in the university course of the methodic, the process of generalization is carried out in close connection with abstraction, which is dual in nature: positive abstraction (separation and preservation of essential features) and negative abstraction (discarding insignificant). Elements that are distracted, and elements that need to be distracted, are absorbed simultaneously. In a real pedagogical process, the condition of a methodical problem is replete with concrete data that not only do not facilitate the solution but even make it difficult, because they hide the "positive fund of abstraction" and to the forefront is precisely what should be distracted from "...in the process of applying knowledge, knowledge of general and abstract has already been formed, but it is "masked" by new concrete data". The main psychological task, in this case, is "to find out" a well-known concept or principle in the new concrete data. Psychologists believe that the ability to reject certain elements of this or that content (so as to return to them later) is the higher, the higher the ability of the subject to control his thinking is.

CONCLUSIONS

Let us draw some conclusions. The methodical side of a foreign language teacher can be represented as the solution of a long series of methodological tasks that are the object of methodical thinking. The factors influencing the nature of

methodical thinking are diverse and heterogeneous, but it is the peculiarities of the methodological task that determine, first of all, its specificity. Thinking is determined by its object not directly but through the internal laws of mental activity. Therefore, we are aware that the characteristics of methodological thinking are described by us in the most general form. Nevertheless, they suggest that methodological thinking is a complex form of practical intelligence. The condition and regulator of methodical thinking are motives, the very emergence of which is determined by the peculiarities of teacher's work. The effective nature of situations in which specific methodological tasks are solved, the efficiency of methodical thinking, and the frequent need to get out of a difficult situation reinforce motivation. Consequently, the training of teachers of a foreign language should carry with it the possibilities for the formation of a multitude of socially valuable motives, i.e. there should be a purposeful, consistent education of the motivational sphere of thinking. Although methodical thinking is accomplished using the same thinking actions that are peculiar to common thinking, the operational structures of methodical thinking possess a number of specific features. Consequently, the entire methodological preparation in all its links must be conducted taking into account the laws and characteristics of methodical thinking.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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

REFERENCES

1. Alkhazishvili, A.A. (2003). Psychology of learning oral descriptive speech, M., 157 p., 2003.
2. Barron, F. (2016). "Discovering the creative personality", *The Behavioral sciences and education*, N.Y., 2016.
3. Boyko, E.F. (2003). Improving the methodological culture of teachers in the system of advanced training, Author's abstract. diss. cand. ped. sciences, Novokuznetsk, 2003.
4. Customs, E.A. (2010). "Methodical thinking as a kind of professional pedagogical thinking", *Bulletin of the Moscow State Regional University: "Pedagogy" series*. № 1, pp. 188–193, 2010.
5. Fridman, L.M. (1983). Psychological and pedagogical foundations of teaching mathematics in school, Moscow: Enlightenment, 160 p., 1983
6. Gardner, H. (1983). Frames of Mind. The Theory of Multiple Intelligences, N.U. Basic Books, 1983.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/3192663>
7. Joyce, B. Weil, M. Showers, B. (1992). Models of teaching, 4th edition, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 492 p., 1992.
8. Leonard, L.D. (2014). Building skills for competency-based teaching, N.Y., 2014.
9. Lerner, I.Ya. Skatkin, M.N. (1965). "On teaching methods", *Sov. pedagogy*, № 3, pp. 115-129, 1965.
10. Matyushkin, A.M. (1972). Problem situations in thinking and learning, M.: Pedagogy, 168 p., 1972.
11. Orlova, A.A. (1995). "Teacher's professional thinking as a value", *Pedagogy*, №6, pp. 64-69, 1995.
12. Sarantsev, G.I. (2010). "Modern methodical thinking", *Pedagogy*, № 1, pp. 31–40, 2010.
13. Szobo, A. (1992). "Teaching development do it yourself", *Modern English Teacher*, Vol. 1, № 3, pp. 33-37, 1992.
14. Vygotsky, L.S. (2014). Pedagogical psychology, M.: Meaning, 119 p., 2014.
15. Wallace, M. (2008). Training Foreign Language Teachers: A reflective approach, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 180 p., 2008.
16. Zeer, E.F. (2002). Personality-oriented vocational education, M.: Publishing Center APO, 43 p., 2002.
17. Shirkhani, S., & Fahim, M. (2011). Enhancing critical thinking in foreign language learners. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 29, 111-115. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.11.214>
18. Burden, R. L., & Williams, M. (Eds.). (1998). Thinking through the curriculum. Psychology Press.
19. Cross, R., & Gearon, M. (2007). The confluence of doing, thinking and knowing: Classroom practice as the crucible of foreign language teacher identity. In *Dimensions of professional learning* (pp. 53-67). Brill Sense.
https://doi.org/10.1163/9789087901257_006
20. Richards, J. C. (1994). Teacher thinking and foreign language teaching. *The language teacher*, 18(8), 31-34.