

**DEVELOPING ACTIVE THINKING COMPETENCE IN PRESCHOOL-AGED
CHILDREN**

Yuldasheva Dilshoda Tulkinovna

Fergana state university

Department of preschool education Lecturer

Annotation: This article examines the psychological and pedagogical foundations of developing active thinking skills in preschool children. The study provides an in-depth analysis of cognitive processes such as sensation, perception, imagination, memory, and thinking, highlighting the importance of sensory development and the role of speech in fostering intellectual activity. Based on the theories of J. Piaget, L.S. Vygotsky, and other scholars, the stages of cognitive development in preschool-age children are explained. Special attention is given to motivation, individualized approaches, and play-based methods as key factors for enhancing cognitive engagement. The findings indicate that a well-structured educational environment, teacher competence, and the use of national and cultural values contribute significantly to nurturing an independent, creative, and cognitively active child.

Keywords: preschool education, active thinking, cognitive processes, sensory development, speech development, motivation, Piaget's theory, creative thinking, cognitive activity, pedagogical technologies.

INTRODUCTION

The future of a nation largely depends on how effectively the education of the younger generation is organized within the country. The foundation for school education is formed during early childhood, particularly in the preschool period. Therefore, the more attention is paid to preparing children for education from an early age, the more positive the outcomes of their learning at school and later in other educational institutions will be. According to current legal and regulatory frameworks, state preschool educational institutions are required to admit children from the age of three. This is justified from medical, pedagogical, psychological, and methodological perspectives, as children at the age of three are generally capable of expressing their thoughts, eating independently, engaging in play activities, showing interest in objects and phenomena in their environment, and establishing communication with their peers. Such conditions contribute to the physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional development of children, help preserve and strengthen their health, and expand opportunities for fostering independent and creative thinking. They also support the development of moral and spiritual values and aid in shaping a well-rounded personality capable of living independently and consciously in the future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term active (from the Latin *activus*) is defined as someone who engages in work with enthusiasm, diligence, and initiative.[1]

In Volume 3 of the Pedagogy Encyclopedia[2], thinking is interpreted as follows: "Thinking is the process of reasoning aimed at drawing certain conclusions about a specific event or phenomenon, a concept that reflects the act of thinking." It is an active, integrative process that encompasses judgments about a particular truth.[4]

In Russian psychology, the issue of intellectual development has been extensively studied by B.G. Ananyev, S.L. Rubinstein, B.M. Teplov, V.N. Myasishchev, N.S. Leites, D.N. Bogoyavlenskaya, Ya.A. Ponomaryov, A.N. Leontiev, P.Ya. Galperin, V.A. Krutetskii, A.M. Matyushkin, N.F. Talizina, Z.I. Kalmikova, O.K. Tikhomirov, A.A. Brushlinsky, and others.[5]

Among Uzbek scholars, M.G. Davletshin, E. G'oziev[6], B.R. Qodirov, Z. Nishonova, L.S. Vygotsky[7], E. Usmonova, R. Sunnatova[8], and others have conducted research on issues related to intellectual ability.

The psychological aspects of the thinking process were thoroughly examined by E. G'oziev. He emphasizes that thinking is the product of brain activity and analyzes how all processes-from the simplest movements to the most complex problem-solving tasks-take place in the brain.

J. Piaget[9] identified a number of psychological phenomena related to the development of intelligence in middle preschool-age children. These phenomena later came to be known as Piagetian phenomena. They manifest in children's incorrect reasoning about the abstract properties of objects and are associated with measurable characteristics such as quantity, size, volume, etc. Piaget noted that preschool children do not yet understand the reversibility of operations and do not grasp the principle of conservation-that the quantity of matter or objects remains unchanged despite alterations in shape or spatial arrangement.

N.N. Podyakov[10] distinguished a specific type of child thinking-experimental thinking-which reflects the unity of visual-practical and visual-figurative thought. This type of thinking is directed toward identifying the hidden properties and relationships of objects through exploration. In his pedagogical work *The Great Didactic*, Jan Amos Comenius described instruction as "a universal art of teaching everything to everyone" and outlined clear classifications of educational activities. In his work *The School of Infancy*, he emphasized that systematic upbringing and education must begin in early childhood, and he defined the content of preschool education.[11]

K.D. Ushinsky provided psychological foundations for children's learning during instructional activities and developed principles of teaching. He emphasized the necessity of distinguishing serious learning from play starting in preschool, stating, "children cannot be taught solely through play; learning is labor." According to Ushinsky, the tasks of preschool education include developing intellectual abilities-such as sustained attention and conscious memory-as well as enhancing children's speech and preparing them for school. At the same time, he argued for the unity of education and upbringing in preschool childhood.[12]

A.P. Usova developed the foundations of preschool education both in early childhood institutions and within the family. She defined the essence of preschool instruction and established principles regarding the types of knowledge children are capable of acquiring.[13]

DISCUSSION

During the preschool years, a child encounters new objects and phenomena every day. By observing the surrounding world, the child attempts to draw independent conclusions. The educator's task is to gradually expand the child's knowledge base, organize it, clarify it, and systematize it. A child must develop clear concepts regarding surrounding objects, their functions, certain qualities (color, size, shape), and characteristics (fragility, breakability, tearability, spillability, etc.), as well as the materials from which they are made. The child also acquires knowledge about natural phenomena, their interrelations, and underlying regularities (the distinguishing features of the seasons and their interrelations; the unique characteristics of certain animals and their connection to the animals' lifestyles, etc.).

Through observing inanimate natural phenomena and the growth and development of plants, insects, and animals, the educator forms the child's material representations of the world. Preschool children are introduced to social events and situations that they can understand: the labor of citizens, national holidays, the capital city Tashkent, and various ethnic groups residing in Uzbekistan. They are also introduced to the lives and contributions of prominent individuals. Familiarizing children with social phenomena cultivates interest in the socio-cultural life of the country, fosters patriotism, and develops a sense of internationalism.

An important task in fostering cognitive activity in preschoolers during the educational process is the development of cognitive psychological processes-sensation, perception, memory, imagination, thinking, and speech. Knowledge of the surrounding world begins with sensation and perception. The higher their development, the richer the child's possibilities for understanding reality.

Therefore, special attention is paid to sensory education in preschool institutions. In the preschool age, speech development plays a particularly significant role. A person uses their native language to express thoughts and to understand what others say. Mastery of speech enables the child not only to perceive objects and phenomena directly but also to acquire indirect knowledge of reality (through stories, literary works, explanations provided by the educator, etc.).[14]

Within the preschool educational process, the tasks of speech development-vocabulary enrichment, the formation of grammatical structure, and the development of coherent speech-are implemented as part of fostering active thinking. During this age, children develop conscious memory, and their memory capacity expands; the main task is to train involuntary memory and enrich it with useful knowledge. Considerable attention is given to the development of imagination, which is essential for voluntary creative activity.

RESULTS

Taking the above considerations into account, and applying psychological and pedagogical approaches to the issue of optimizing preschool children's cognitive activity, we can identify what cognitive activity consists of and how it manifests.

Thus, cognitive activity is defined as a volitional, goal-directed action, and cognitive engagement is determined not by external (motor) activity or the child's level of busyness, but primarily by internal (thinking) activity that reflects elements of creativity.

In our practical experience, motivation plays a significant role in stimulating children's cognitive activity and is viewed as a unity of intellectual and motivational domains. In the educational process, it is necessary to use situational and intrinsic motivation. We conclude that in preschool education, situational cognitive interest in concrete activities or specific learning material is among the most effective means of increasing children's cognitive engagement. This conclusion is based on the following psychological principles: a child will not display activity in tasks that do not interest them; compulsory actions evoke negative emotions. At the same time, if a task is interesting or surprising, the child is capable of sustaining long-term activity. Situational motivation also includes interaction with the educator: if the child likes the educator and finds their lessons consistently engaging, this also enhances cognitive activity.

Intrinsic motivation refers to opportunities to develop a child's individual abilities within the preschool educational environment. In implementing this approach, educators rely on the unique cognitive capacities of each child, creating individualized development trajectories with the participation of all specialists involved (teachers, psychologists, medical staff).

Thus, cognitive activity can be supported by taking into account each child's interests and individual characteristics. For children with higher levels of ability, we create conditions for expanding and deepening their knowledge. For those with average or lower cognitive activity, individual and supplementary work is essential. This approach enables preschool educators to implement differentiated instruction tailored to each group of children.

Moreover, this approach helps reduce learning overload by eliminating uniform instruction for all children. Most importantly, it enhances a child's capacity for cognitive engagement during learning activities.

Analysis of research conducted in our country and abroad allows us to identify the primary functional aims of quality-oriented preschool education:

Health-preserving function - ensuring conditions for the child's physical and psychological development that take into account age-related and individual characteristics, and supporting the child's stable adaptation to specific ecological and social environments.

Developmental function - aimed at forming the foundation of a "well-rounded personality," ensuring equal starting opportunities for all children to fully develop their intellectual, moral, and physical abilities, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 29).[16]

Corrective function - involving professional correction of deficiencies in children's physical and psychological development.

Continuity function - ensuring smooth progression from one developmental stage to the next, appropriate to the child's age.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, achieving active thinking in children requires ensuring the coherence of several essential components within the integrated content of preschool education: the child's age and individual characteristics (psychological dimension), the social demands reflected in educational programs (social dimension), the specific nature of child-adult interactions, and the organizational conditions under which these interactions occur (pedagogical dimension). Thus, preschool education simultaneously ensures alignment between the developmental regularities and psychological foundations of the child's educational activities, on one hand, and adequate social influences organized by society, on the other.

For preschool children, culturally significant and comprehensible elements of spiritual, national, and cultural values-such as folk tales, tongue-twisters, proverbs, games, folk songs, dances, arts and crafts, labor traditions, customs, and rituals - play an important role. These cultural and historical elements reflect the interests of the nation in ideal form. They embody evaluative perspectives on various phenomena of the surrounding world and serve as the foundation for shaping each individual's moral culture.

REFERENCES:

1. Abidjanova S.D. Sootnoshenie obraznykh i rechevykh sredstv v razvitii prostranstvennykh predstavlenii doshkol'nikov. Avtoreferat. Moscow, 1990, 16 p.
2. Avilova E.A. Vliyanie pedagogii na stanovlenie i razvitie doshkol'nogo vospitaniya v 20-30-e gg. // Upravlenie DOU. Moscow, 2007, No. 8, p. 110.
3. Adamova O'.K. Maktabgacha ta'lim muassasalarida ma'naviy-axloqiy tarbiyaning o'ziga xosligi. // fikr.uz
4. Azizova Z. Maktabgacha katta yoshdagi bolalarda qo'g'irchoq teatri vositasida axloqiy-estetik sifatlarni shakllantirish. Tashkent: O'qituvchi, 2010. 90 p.
5. Arushanova A. Doshkol'nyy vozrast: formirovanie grammaticheskogo stroya rechi: voprosy teorii. // Doshkol'noe vospitanie. Moscow, 1993, No. 9, pp. 58-65.
6. Arushanova A. Formirovanie grammaticheskogo stroya rechi doshkol'nika. // Doshkol'noe vospitanie. Moscow, 1997, No. 2, pp. 58-63.
7. Vygotsky L.S. Pedagogicheskaya psikhologiya. Ed. by V.V. Davydov. Moscow: Pedagogika, 1991.
8. Babaeva D.R. Tevarak-atrofni o'rganishda maktabgacha katta yoshdagi bolalarning bog'lanishli nutqini rivojlantirish. Author's abstract of dissertation. Tashkent, 2001. 25 p.
9. Bakina M. Sovremennye deti, sovremennye igry. // Doshkol'noe vospitanie. Moscow, 2005, No. 4, pp. 58-61.

10. Begmatova N.X. Maktabgacha ta'lim muassasalarida multimedia texnologiyasidan foydalanishning ilmiy-metodik asoslari. Dissertation. Qarshi, 2012. 150 p.
11. Berne E. Lider i grupp. O strukture i dinamike organizatsiy i grupp. Ekaterinburg: Litur, 2000. 320 p.
12. Boboeva D.G. Tevarak-atrofnii o'rganishda maktabgacha katta yoshdagi bolalarni bog'lanishli nutqini rivojlantirish. Author's abstract. Tashkent, 2001. 25 p.
13. Bodalev A.A. O predmete akmeologii. // Psikhologicheskii zhurnal. 1993, Vol. 14, No. 5, pp. 73–79.
14. Bure R.S., Ostrovskaya L.F. Vospitatel' i deti. Moscow, 2003.
15. Bo'taeva U., Oqilova K. Maktabgacha yoshdagi bolalarni shakllantirishda o'yin-mashg'ulotlarning o'rni. Methodological guide. Samarkand, 2009. 24 p.
16. Valikho'jaeva F.B. Talabalarni MTTda bolalarga estetik tarbiya berishga tayyorlash. Dissertation. Samarkand, 2005. 139 p.; Vasil'eva N.A. Problema razvitiya sotsial'noy zhizni rebenka v istorii zarubezhnoy doshkol'noy psikhologii. // Upravlenie DOU. Moscow, 2010, No. 2, p. 102.
17. Vakhobova F.N. Osobennosti lichnostnogo razvitiya doshkol'nika kak faktor gotovnosti k shkole. Dissertation. Tashkent State University, 2000. 136 p.
18. Venger A.L., Tsukerman G.A. Psikhologicheskoe obsledovanie mladshikh shkol'nikov. Moscow: Vldos-Press, 2003. 160 p.
19. Volobueva L.M. Organizatsiya podgotovki detey k nachalu shkol'nogo obucheniya: istoriya i sovremennost'. // Upravlenie DOU. Moscow, 2008, No. 1, p. 98.