

Topical Issues of Inclusive Education Development in Russia

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Abstract: The article presents the analysis of issues of the inclusive education development in the Russian Federation at the present stage. The author's position on trends, problems and prospects for the development of an inclusive process is described. Analytical review of legislation in the field of inclusive education is given. The author shows that the principle of professional interaction is the basis for the inclusiveness of the pedagogical environment. The need to develop qualitative and quantitative criteria that ensure a high level of education in conditions of inclusion and the effectiveness of the development of the school as an inclusive organization is discussed.

Keywords: inclusion, inclusive education, inclusive politics, disabilities.

The subject of inclusive education still remains the topic of heated debate in our country, despite the developed educational policy, the adopted federal law [13], the approved interdepartmental comprehensive plans. Russia has fulfilled the obligations for ratification of the Convention [12], through the change of normative documents in education sector and the allocation of serious financial means for implementation of state programs on development of availability of education at each level. The vector determined by the Program of development of education till 2020 [9], designated by FSES EGE of students with health limitations [10] gives hope that the main

objectives connected with development of inclusivity of national education will be realized. At the same time the pedagogical community doesn't cease to discuss inclusion problems. We turn our attention to the main tendencies generating key discourses.

Progressive factor is the awareness of the main principle of inclusion development – a process of continuity on each education level [5]. At the same time the principle of continuity demands realization of inclusion technics and psychological and pedagogical support of the student throughout his learning process. The principle of individualization is declared as one of the basic principles of development of modern education assumes the accounting of knowledge of specific children including about children with health limitations, their features and special educational needs, about special educational conditions, necessary for their quality education, including adaptation of programs and the correctional developing work of experts, new forms of interaction in educational process of teachers and experts, new educational technologies and models of psychological and pedagogical support. Therefore, it is obviously necessary to define those techniques, forms and technologies due to which the individual educational course of the student with health limitations will be formed when passing from one education level to another.

Nowadays according to statistics there are more than 2 million children with disability and health limitations (8% of all children's population) in the Russian Federation. Annually the number of children of this category increases. In particular, in 1995 there were 453 thousand children with disability, then in 2016 their number was close to 618 thousand.

Inclusion requires special educational conditions and forms expectation on such conditions in the future. L.S. Vygotsky left us as a heritage the thesis: the child develops from the future perspective [4, page 159]. Taking into account that the main objective of inclusive education undoubtedly lies outside the education, we develop the educational environment as one of those social institutes which is urged to provide opportunities for implementation of person's vital plans. By the results of the large-scale research conducted by the staff of the Center of economics of continuous formation of a RANEPa "the school as the mechanism of reproduction of the so-

cial status keeps the value, the availability of quality education to the lower class grows” [1, page 165-166]. There is a question: where can a pupil who has the experience of an inclusion at school go nowadays? According to research, 62,9% of people with disabilities and with health limitations express desire to have the higher education, 2/3 of them specify “academic degree” as desirable education level. According to statistics, the percent of students with disability and health limitations, with the general growth of number of people with disabilities and limited opportunities of health, in the highest professional educational organizations remains almost invariable. The percent of the accepted students with disability (from total number of the accepted students) over the last 5 years averages 0,4%, and the percent of graduates with disability (from total number of graduates) makes only 0,2%. Thus, according to statistics, a half of students with disability came to higher educational institutions do not graduate. Nowadays all federal standards of the higher education were renewed with: increase of educational terms, adaptation of forms, a special order of development of separate disciplines, the choice of places of practice, providing with the adapted electronic educational resources [11]. The availability of professional education defines extent of participation of people with disabilities in social life. And there will be no positive image of the (a) person with disabilities in our society till the social inclusion is limited.

Regional specifics significantly affect development of inclusive process, the level of social and economic development of certain regions of the country. The question of financing is in powers of subjects of the Russian Federation and is solved very unevenly, – decentralization has lead to lack of the uniform financial formulas influencing providing the state guarantees on the creation of special conditions in education. As level of economic activity of regions may vary in 16 and more times [6], conditions for development of inclusive education can't be equal. Two urgent contradictions demand permission: the first – the principle of equality of access and lack of guarantees of this access, the second – dynamics of process, its intelligence and policy of the fast result.

There also appeared a disturbing tendency of imitation mechanisms development – instead of effective development with re-

sources and conditions a lot of education organizations choose an adaptation to formal attributes strategy. Inclusive practice requires complicated and continuous working rather than just exists as an object of exhibitions and competitions. Forbidden ground, import of ready-made solutions restrict chief's and professor's creation, close opened discussions about real process difficulties, while inclusion oriented not so much to accordance, as to projection and creation research. Difficulties, with which educator faces during inclusion practice, should become an object of discussions at school, in professional conversation and methodical analysis. The professional standards accepted in the country containing requirements to competences of the teacher and the educational psychologist have set high reference points of professional development. Training of pedagogical staff and elaboration of programs of professional development demand the detailed analysis of professional deficiencies and results of a professional reflection today.

Inclusive practice gives rise to doubts and fears of teachers, the question of professional readiness for inclusion remains hotly debated. According to researchers, a key factor which holds the teacher in a profession is confidence in his own efficiency [7]. Our research of the relation of teachers to inclusion has shown not only absence of teachers' special knowledge, the critical need for consultations of experts, but also process of doubt increased. We consider a condition of doubt as the mechanism of development of professional thinking of the teacher, as ambiguity of the choice of priority approach in training of children with features as uncertainty which forces to reflect before a call. The Norwegian scientists who wrote about necessary transformation of thinking of the teacher who has undergone experience of an inclusion [2] are right.

The principle of professional interaction is a support for inclusivity of the pedagogical environment. It can be implemented only in open professional communication, which conditions are created at school by culture of a safe discourse. Development of inclusive culture in the organization demands first of all standard and organizational changes which depend on administrative readiness and culture of the head. In modern conditions the position and culture of the head, his relation to the content of changes becomes a priority attribute of success. Now we understand that the school passes

two main stages – a stage of preparation for the inclusive development strategy and a stage of realization of changes in management, culture and practice of educational process. Even due to the existence of management instructions and the general orientation not each school is ready to become really an inclusive school. The presence of the child with health limitations at school does not make it an inclusive one. Often definition of school as inclusive gains formal character and is based only on calculation of children with health limitations that leads to distortion of real idea of inclusion. School becomes inclusive only with the help of special educational conditions for teaching children with various educational requirements, prepared pedagogical collective, organized universal educational environment, applied flexible pedagogical technologies and forms of education. According to the Law “Education act” the educational institution is obliged to provide process of teaching children with limited opportunities of health with special conditions. Special conditions for education by students with health limitations are understood as “the conditions of teaching, upbringing and development of such students including the use of special educational programs and methods of teaching and education, special textbooks, manuals and didactic materials, special technical means of group and individual use, providing the assistant giving all the necessary technical help to students, group and individual correctional courses, ensuring access to buildings of the organizations which are carrying out educational activity, and other conditions without which development of educational programs by students with health limitations is impossible or complicated.” [13]

We consider that there is no alternative of inclusive education in historical outlook. Establishment which practices inclusive education has to become a standard practice. It does not mean that the system of vocational education has to be destroyed, on the contrary, it has to develop, first, in order that children and their parents had an option, and, secondly, to enrich the system of general education, passing to the principles of inclusion with the methods and technologies. It is necessary to develop various models of cooperation and joint teaching of general and special teachers. Vast experience of teachers of correctional schools is a source of methodical support of an inclusion.

It is important to mention one more important tendency which distorts quality of inclusive process of national education. The narrow understanding of a subject of an inclusion, fixing of the norms is focused only on students with health limitations. It is obvious that any categorization involves stigmatization and gives rise to discrimination tendencies. Today the procedure of determination of the status “the student with limited opportunities of health” is standardly fixed, and the formal criterion of its establishment is the conclusion psychological, medical and pedagogical commission that allows to keep account of children with health limitations, to complete classes and groups according to standard requirements, and also to request necessary rates of experts for maintenance and support. But as it is difficult to convince teachers that education will become inclusive only when we learn to support any pupil irrespective of a conclusion of PMPC presence, the certificate of disability or not. The concept “the student with health limitations” is fixed in our country though all international experience of an inclusion is based on the concept “special educational needs”. Discrepancy of category “limited opportunities of health” of social model of an inclusion gives rise to the methodological conflict and contradictions in professional thinking of teachers. The big-picture issue on inclusivity of educational practice demands discussion in the pedagogical environment.

In conclusion, it is important to note a tendency which is the most progressive step in development of the general education, it helps to remove of a postulate of learning disability. The changes caused by introduction of FSES of the primary general education of students with intellectual violations [8] not only give vital prospect to children from orphanage, but also provide that education level which will help them to avoid then a brand “incapacitated”. The special individual program of development is created under each certain child, provides his zone of the next development by necessary conditions and correctly dosed help of the adult; technologies of maintenance and volunteering become a support and the most important condition of pedagogical success.

The analysis of experience of inclusion of orphanage sharply raises a question of vocational education of correctional teachers, variabilities of forms of education and adaptation of criteria for

evaluation of achievements. We still have to learn how to teach such children. This tendency aggravates a problem of preservation of correctional schools, transformations and ensuring modern material level of their educational environment.

In order that inclusion did not remain illusion, ideology, a popular subject, and really became a professional task, it is necessary to look for the effective tools defining quality of inclusive process. For example, scientists of Zurich University, held the systematic review of 25 researches for the purpose of studying effective practices of inclusion and revealed that the strategy of pedagogical interaction with typically developing pupils and the organization of group work in the classroom (cooperative learning and mentoring of peers) are key factors which influence quality of inclusive process [14]. Proceeding from the Russian experience, civil activity of parental community becomes a key factor of public monitoring and the indicator of quality of process.

At the same time the most pedagogical community needs to discuss the qualitative and quantitative criteria providing high education level in conditions of inclusion and efficiency of development of school as the inclusive organization. In this regard we will allocate the main condition, the main change which has to happen in an education system, without which development of inclusive practice will be impossible. Transfer of the center of gravity from result of training on educational process, from the movement by “system” according to the program at the set speed, on individual trajectories. New standards of education provide such opportunity, fixing the individual curriculum for the child with health limitations. But, as V. V. Rubtsov (2010) notes, referring to teachers’ view, teachers are not able to work with various categories of children, to organize group work and to conduct lessons in an activity paradigm yet. Though nearly 80 years passed since the moment as L. S. Vygotsky stated the idea of a zone of the proximal development, shown that for understanding and ensuring development it is more important to know not that the child can do independently, but the fact that he cannot do it by himself, however, can do it in cooperation with an adult. At the same time he emphasized that every child has his own zone of the proximal development. A problem of adaptation of the educational program to features and the pupil’s opportuni-

ties is a new task for a school teacher. However, it is difficult for a teacher to cope with it by himself, so professional cooperation of teachers and school psychologists becomes the best decision.

What is the price of an inclusion? This question is one of the most sensitive issues of development of national inclusive education. Common opinion on this matter is a judgment that inclusive education is extremely expensive. It is expensive, if the scale of necessary changes is considered. However, if we think that the children who got experience of coeducation will grow up and won't be in dependence at the state any more, and will be able to be useful to this state, accepted and understood by those with whom they once studied together, so it is not so expensive.

According to the Russian experts and methodologists of education, in modern conditions of social and economic development of the country it is premature to speak about full development of inclusive education. According to Russian Federal State Statistics Service the size of a living wage of able-bodied population makes 9691 rubles a month. The percent of the population living below the poverty line in Russia for 2016 grew and makes 14,6% today. At such standard of living it is extremely fondly to be guided by the European or American standards of development of social processes.

On the one hand, the experts are right (such position is supported with statistics). From the other hand, Russia is able to find the way out of the most difficult situations and to solve difficult problems. Hopefully, the scientific and methodical base of special psychology and pedagogics, the accumulated experience of special teaching of children with health limitations, innovation and professional works of teachers of the general education, desire of parents to give to the children the worthy future will define development of inclusive education in the right direction, and will allow Russian politicians to make the correct decisions.

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