



Mechanisms of Overcoming School Disadaptation of Younger Schoolchildren in the Multiethnic Classroom

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Abstract

Purpose: The objective of the article is to identify the signs of school dis adaptation of primary school students, the level and qualitative characteristics of their manifestation in multinational classes and schools, as well as to specify school dis adaptation coping and prevention mechanisms on the example of second-grade students. **Methodology:** The leading approach, which allows investigating the inclusion of second-grade students, not only into the educational environment, but also into socio-cultural environment, is a student-centered approach. **Result:** The types and signs of school maladaptation and social maladjustment in a multiethnic educational organization are defined, and the results of the implementation of the identified mechanisms in polyethnic school are determined. The article materials can be useful for primary school teachers, parents of younger students, as well as for specialists working with polytechnic children's groups in the system of additional education, and social teachers dealing with migrant families in order to build a non-conflict educational environment. **Applications:** The scientific novelty of the research is mechanisms for overcoming school disadaptation of younger schoolchildren as subsystems of a unified system of socialization which were considered and described for the first time. They were combined with the purpose and content of the educational process during the school terms. **Novelty/Originality:** The uniqueness of the study lies in the fact that the subtle mechanisms of school adaptation of children of six to seven years old are examined in the structure of the multicultural educational space.

Keywords: school adaptation, individualization, integration, cognitive differentiation, parity cooperation

1 Introduction

The topicality of the research lies in the fact that, traditionally, consideration of the mechanisms of socialization of younger students of a multiethnic educational organization begins with adaptation in the first grade, continues with individualization in the second - third grades, and integration into activities in the third - fourth grades (6). These mechanisms have been rather thoroughly examined in

scientific literature (1,3,32,35). However, most often their characteristics are generalized and defined for an academic year or a longer period, whereas, in practice, these mechanisms change with greater frequency at an individual child's pace, depending on his/her personal characteristics, living conditions, and belonging to a particular national culture (7,31,34).

In this paper, the authors do not set the task of determining, which of the socialization mechanisms relates specifically to the stage of adaptation, individualization, or integration, as all of them, to some degree, affect the processes of adaptation, formation of individualization, and integration of a child in the team. The authors have a different task, namely, to consider how a teacher should organize social and pedagogical activities in a multiethnic classroom in order to timely analyze the involvement of children in one or another mechanism and facilitate the implementation of each mechanism of socialization.

Thus, the aim of the article is to identify and describe the mechanisms of socialization of second-graders in polyethnic school, and to provide recommendations for implementing these mechanisms in an educational organization with a small percentage of a non-indigenous ethnic group.

2 Methodological Framework

Signs of school disadaptation are very diverse, so it is logical to divide them into types that are listed below.

The physiological type manifests itself mostly when the child is under physical exertion, that is, during and after the break, as well as during PE classes and the classes immediately following them. This type manifests itself verbally, in the form of the child's complaints of fatigue, headaches and abdomen pain, lack of appetite at breakfast in the school cafeteria, or at a snack during the break. In non-verbal form, the manifestation of physiological signs may be observed in a sharp and inexplicable reddening of the skin, in discrete redness or paleness of the skin, and in general pallor; in relaxed posture, chaotic movements or, vice versa, sluggishness and slow response. Combination of verbal and non-verbal signs can occur, such as: voice trembling and tremolo in fingertips, obsessive ((stereotype) word repetition and compulsory movements, stuttering, etc.

The cognitive type manifests itself in three forms: the first one - signs of disadaptation in the course of educational activities at school; the second - in the process of doing home assignment; and the third - in the child's attitude to cognitive process in the system of additional education. Each form has its own signs of disadaptation, as well as generalized ones, manifested in any kind of cognitive activities. Thus, the first signs of school disadaptation are: lack of cognitive interest in the forms and content of learning, that the child's classmates find interesting; lack or decrease in achievement in those activities that the student has so far easily managed; deliberate forgetfulness, when at home the child easily reproduces poems and applies rules, etc., however, in class s/he is unable to present the same educational information.

At home, signs of disadaptation are: lack of information about school activities or concealment of such information by the child; constant postponing of doing homework, on a far-fetched pretext or without any; recourse to the assistance of parents, even in such types of assignments that the child used to fulfil independently. Therefore, when choosing the level of difficulty or the size of the task, the child wants to choose the simplest and the shortest possible. Constant negligence in doing the task, carelessness in storage, collecting and using educational supplies becomes characteristic of the child.

In a wide cognitive process, signs of learning maladaptation are: decrease in the general level of working

ability and diligence; increased situational anxiety; reduced retention time; a sharp negative change of motivation for participation in sport and after-school clubs. In this case, children may have quick success at the first stage of entering activities. However, with decrease in the rate of achievement and its emotional coloring, cognitive de-motivation of the child for this type of activity occurs. At the same time, if parents let themselves be led by the child in changing the content of additional education, despite the child's abilities and real inclinations, in the long term, it can lead to a complete refusal to participate in extracurricular activities. In a polyethnic classroom, the first and second forms of cognitive maladaptation occur more often, because in additional education acquiring knowledge is emotionally colored and, therefore, more comfortable for the child.

The emotional type of school disadaptation is associated with the development of four psychological constructs of a second-grader. The first construct is motivation for success. When disadaptation occurs, such motivation decreases during unsuccessful studies and in anticipation of possible failures. This kind of motivation gives way to the motivation for avoiding failure, when the child is focused not on getting a high result, accompanied by positive assessment of others, but on the desire not to leave the comfort zone of "totally average". At the same time, s/he makes considerable efforts not to get negative assessment, and, instead of the desired comfort, the child may experience discomfort and embarrassment, and the amount of efforts aimed at maintaining a "C" is even higher than the desire to score victory. Such a striving in polyethnic school is manifested in the child's isolation from learning activities, and, therefore, from the classmates, which further reduces the pace of his/her social adaptation, does not develop the child's stress resistance and readiness to meet challenges.

The second construct is the child's self-assessment in the student's role-playing function. As the study showed, in the situation of school disadaptation, the self-esteem of a younger schoolchild is reduced, which causes a situation of constant anxiety before any form of activity and interaction, a feeling of his/her impotence and secondary infantility. This is most clearly manifested in a polyethnic classroom, when interpersonal cooperation is also multicultural, and capriciousness, tearfulness and bad habits such as nail biting, and biting a pen or a pencil develop.

The third construct is the level of claims. It lies in the fact how complex are the goals the child sets for him/herself. Reducing the level of claims to the zone of actual development does not contribute to development of new types of social interconnections and acquisition of new types of activities. However, school disadaptation often leads to underestimation of the levels of claims below the vital level, and the child ceases to set goals on his/her own, becoming an obedient performer of someone else's, not always good, will. As a result, s/he can get under the influence of informal leaders and, eventually, grow into a problem teenager.

The fourth construct is the locus of control, that is the child's ability to take responsibility for his/her actions or delegate this responsibility to others. In case of successful adaptation, the child's internal locus is expressed by the phrase "I'll do it myself." In this case, the child develops both a desire, and an ability to take responsibility for him/herself, as well as criteria for assessing socially significant activities.

With the external locus of control, which is formed in connection with school disadaptation, the child becomes dependent on the opinions of others and external evaluation of his/her activities. The child has an imbalance in the control and evaluation process, which is expressed in the fact that s/he blames others for his/her mistakes, and attributes all his/her progress to him/herself, that creates a conflict situation between the child and others. This can cause not only interpersonal conflicts, but also inter-ethnic conflicts and can become a security threat in the classroom.

Behavioral type of school disadaptation has the following signs: manifestation of forms of destructive behavior ("the little destroyer syndrome"), early appearance of character accentuations and the rupture of social ties, manifested in distrust, deceit, desire for solitude. All these signs in educational activities are manifested in unwillingness to do work at the request of the teacher or parents, to fulfil official duties of a leader, to master new activities, to interact with successful children, and, as a result, in aggression towards such children.

3 Materials and Method

The research was conducted in a polyethnic educational organization of the second type: secondary schools # 6, 52, 62 of Nizhny Novgorod, as well as in several schools in Nizhny Novgorod region (Bor, Dzerzhinsk, Kstovo). The subjects of the study were 864 second-grade students. The survey and experimental activities also involved 1,124 parents of second-graders. The leading approach, that allows investigating the inclusion of second-class students not only in educational environment, but also in sociocultural environment, is a student-centered approach based on the humanistic paradigm of education. The characteristics of school disadaptation and the degree of manifestation of its types were determined through observation and analysis of students' work, and testing using Sonin technique.

4 Results

The experiment included two stages: ascertaining research and "forming" experiment, in the structure of which the main method of implementing adaptation mechanisms was a counseling system with the use of an interactive manual for younger students and their parents (Table 1). Judging by the results of the ascertaining study, emotional-psychological factors of the teacher's motivating a schoolchild for activities, public approval or disapproval, resulting in emotional discomfort at school and acute perception of educational difficulties, have the greatest potential in provoking school disadaptation. The remaining types of school factors are somewhat less significant for students of monoethnic schools. For students of polyethnic school the factors of intellectual type are significant. These factors are associated with the language barrier of children in a polyethnic classroom, their poor educational cooperation and the fact that children of non-indigenous nationalities cannot expect their parents' high-level educational assistance. Based on the adapted Sonin method of registration, the most evident signs of school disadaptation of second-grade students in polyethnic school were identified (Figure 1).

The data presented in Figure 1, demonstrates that disadaptation according to the physiological type mostly manifests itself in unmotivated headaches, abdominal pain and drowsiness. Emotional type – in the level of claims and motivation for achieving success. Intellectual type - in lack of retention of knowledge, when children are unable to reproduce what they know and reproduced at home, and in postponing of doing homework. In terms of behavior, second-graders demonstrate anxiety and a little less often aggressiveness.

Table 1: The results of the ascertaining study of problems in social and school adaptation of second- grade students

Type School	Physiological	Emotional	Intellectua l	Behaviora l	Level
Monoethnic	8±1.32%	32±2.1%	10±0.98%	21±2.2%	14±3% average
Polyethnic	9±1.12%	33±2.2%	27±1.67%	18±2.05	19±2% above the average

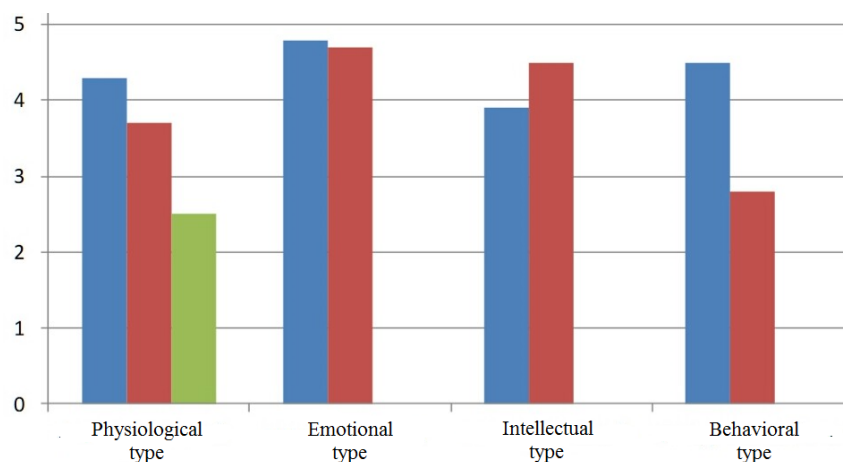


Figure 1: The intensity of school disadaptation indicators in second-grade students of multiethnic school

Table 2: The results of “forming” experiment in overcoming problems in social and school adaptation of second-grade students

Type Phase	Physiological	Emotional	Intellectual	Behavioral
before the experiment	9±1,12%	33±2,2%	27±1,67%	18±2,05
cognitive differentiation	9,5±2,1%	31±1,8%	19±1,73%	16±2,4%
parity cooperation	7,8±1,3%	22±2,3%	16±2,07%	17±2,17%
individualization of giftedness	8,2±1,7%	25±1,9%	11±1,33%	14±1,4%
“game of maturity”/total	7,3±1,4%	17±2,26%	10±1,81%	12±1,2%

To sum it up, average disadaptation rate in polyethnic school is much higher than in monoethnic, and is above average in all types of disadaptation. The results of “forming” experiment in teachers’ implementation of the system of adaptation mechanisms based on advisory activities are shown in Table 2. Judging by the results of the research, all pitas of school disadaptation factors have a decreasing tendency; however, with the introduction of each adaptation mechanism, they change irregularly and often non-linearly. Nevertheless, after the implementation of the adaptation program parameter values of all the factors reached an average level.

5 Discussion

As a number of studies (8,19) have shown, more than 65% of secondary schools in Central Russia belong to the second type of multiethnic educational organizations, where the number of representatives of non-indigenous nationalities is quite significant. Thus, creating conditions of successful multicultural socialization of schoolchildren and prevention of school disadaptation should not be ignored. In social maladjustment one child demonstrates difficulties in behavior (18), another experiences fatigue and weakness (28), and the third refuses to study to spite the teacher (25), etc.

In order to timely detect and carry out prevention of school disadaptation of second-grade students, the teacher needs to remember the mechanisms and results of social adaptation of these students in the first grade (4,9,10). As research revealed, the primary adaptation of younger schoolchildren during one school year includes several mechanisms, that can proceed sequentially, and, in some periods, simultaneously (16,17). For convenience, they were called: “playing school”, “reflexive mirror”, “talent field”, “cross-cultural cooperation” (12,13,22,24,29,15). If motivation or academic success at the beginning of studies in the second grade is impaired, the mechanisms that will be discussed further, will allow to correct the shortcomings of social pedagogical work during the previous academic year. In this case, integration of teachers and parents in the field of education and upbringing of the child can be beneficial, as reviewed by a number of authors (2,5,11,21,26,30,33). As part of the author's technology, such integration is implemented through a system of consultations for parents and schoolchildren and with the help of an interactive manual on the issues of health improvement, education and upbringing of younger schoolchildren.

So in the second grade, social adaptation of schoolchildren is provided by four mechanisms: The first mechanism is associated with educational activities and is called by the authors “cognitive differentiation” of educational abilities and aptitudes, which has three reasons.

The first is natural predisposition to a certain series of disciplines: mathematics, natural sciences, humanities, and arts (27). The second reason is cognitive interest in a particular academic subject (9). Here, objective and subjective factors are involved. Objective factors - the ability to study the subject, and subjective factors - empathy for the teacher. The third reason is a high level of creativity in the classroom and an opportunity for the student to manifest talent in the context of activities related to the content of the discipline (20). A defect in the implementation of this mechanism in a polyethnic classroom arises from the student, when infatuated by the visual attractiveness of a school subject and its simplicity, s/he unreasonably chooses it as the major one. This happens more often with representatives of non-indigenous ethnic groups. On the part of the parents, an overestimation or underestimation of the importance of the academic discipline in the child's later life and the translation of this assessment into the process of home education may occur.

The second mechanism, implemented after the first one, is connected with the students' team-building, with the child's awareness of his/her rights and duties of a full-fledged student, and with the distribution of roles in the class based on the similarity of goals. This mechanism is initiated through engaging the child in activities, the so-called “infection by activities”. This mechanism can be defined as “parity cooperation”. It is implemented when groups of children carry out educational projects. The skill of the teacher is to find a balance between relying on the child's already revealed abilities and facilitating identification of new abilities; between working in fixed microgroups and forming new creative groups of children. An imbalance in this work can lead to the formation of class groupings and to the emergence of not only leaders, but also outcasts (5,14,23).

The third mechanism begins to operate when students are already aware of their abilities, in particular, in their creative talents; when they have developed their talents to some extent, and have used them in joint activities. This mechanism may be called “individualization of giftedness.” Due to his/her talent, the child can take a special, socially approved position in the society. At the same time, it is necessary to remember the “golden rule of pedagogy”, which states that a child should not be compared with other children, but only with him/herself. In this case, the focus is not only on the child's record of achievement, but also on the effort that needs to be applied to ensure success. This way the mechanism for the individualization of talent will be successfully implemented.

The fourth mechanism of social adaptation of a second-grader is “game of maturity.” It's implementation may start in

the first grade, but the mechanism works better for second-graders when new first-graders come to school. Second-grade students look at them patronizingly and, with proper organization of socially pedagogical activities and interaction, strive to assist them, and demonstrate support and care. Similar behavior of second - graders is observed in relation to younger members of the family, as well as to representatives of wildlife, pets, animals and birds of the pet's corner, indoor and garden plants. These children can show similar attitude to elderly people, not necessarily the members of their own families

6 Conclusion

Based on the above, it may be concluded that in the context of a multiethnic educational organization, social and pedagogical activities aimed at school adaptation and socialization of younger schoolchildren are of considerable importance. Consequently, it is essential to study and apply adaptation mechanisms, which have their peculiarities and change several times during each academic year.

1. Thus, second-grade students manifest the following socialization mechanisms: "cognitive differentiation", "individualization of giftedness", "parity cooperation" and "game of maturity".

2. The criteria for success of school adaptation and socialization of second-graders can be classified according to:

- physiological type (characteristics and self-assessment of physical condition and peculiarities of motion);
- cognitive type (characteristics of cognitive process and the manifestation of intellectual qualities);
- emotional type (motivation for learning activities, the ratio of self-assessment and level of aspirations, locus of control),
- behavioral type (reduced level of anxiety and aggressiveness, inclination to productive interaction and socializing).

Recommendations

The article materials can be useful for primary school teachers, parents of younger students, as well as for specialists working with polytechnic children's groups in the system of additional education, and social teachers dealing with migrant families in order to build a non-conflict educational environment.

Knowledgegment

The author confirms that the data do not contain any conflict of interest.

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