

Is a preschooler ready for schooling?

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Abstract. The article reveals the aspects of the psychological readiness for school of the senior preschool-aged children. The results of studying the impact of the level of psychological readiness for school on further training are represented. The obtained results suggest that a basis of development is taken as the basis of readiness for school, without which a child could not excel in schooling. All aspects of preparing a child for school are considered to be important, the special ones should not be allocated. Upon the integrated development of all the aspects the preschoolers' psychological readiness for school could be established at a high level.

[Samsonova V.A. **Is a preschooler ready for schooling?** *Life Sci J* 2014;11(12s):986-989] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 213

Keywords: psychological readiness for school, senior preschool-aged children, methods of studying children's readiness for school

Introduction

The changes in the social and economic field of our society have determined the focus on the educational issues. The parents, who think about their children's future, primarily about whom they will be, impose increasingly high requirements on the education institutions, including the quality of the educational work at school and preparing for it in the preschool institutions.

For the children, who are not ready for systematic learning, the adaptation period, the adaptation to school, is carried out harder and more chronically, a variety of the learning difficulties occur much more often for them, there are much more non-achievers among them, not only in the first form. So, determining the level of psychological readiness is one of the measures to prevent the school failure.

Most of the domestic and foreign scientists believe that it is necessary to conduct such study a year - a year and a half in advance. This will allow not only determining the child's readiness for school, but also, if required, carrying out a special set of the corrective measures, providing parents with the guidelines necessary for improving the health and eliminating the educational shortcomings [1].

In the domestic psychology the detailed development of the issue of the school readiness, which is rooted in the works by Vygotsky L.S., is contained in the works by Bozhovich L.I., Veraksa N.E., Gutkina N.I., Kravtsova E.E., Salmina N.G., Elkonin D.B.

In the works by Bozhovich L.I. some parameters of the child's mental development, which have the most significant impact on the efficiency of schooling, are specified. The major criterion of school readiness in the works by Bozhovich L.I. is represented by an innovation - "the pupil's inner

attitude", which is a mixture of the cognitive needs and the need for communication on the new level [2].

While discussing the issue of school readiness, Elkonin D.B. put the establishment of the prerequisites for the training activity first. The child's ability to be guided by a system of rules in his work, the ability to listen and follow the adult's instructions, the ability to work after a pattern and some others were qualified as the most important prerequisites by him. Elkonin D.B. emphasized that upon the shift from the preschool to school age "an inspection framework should include the inspection of both the innovations of the preschool age and the initial forms of activity of the next period" [3].

As the indexes of psychological readiness for school Salmina N.G. identifies as follows:

1) voluntary behaviour as one of the prerequisites for the training activity;

2) the level of the semantic function establishment;

3) the personal attributes, which include the communication features (the ability to work together in order to solve the set task), the development of the emotional field and others. [4].

While describing the children's psychological readiness for school in the works by Kravtsova E.E. the main emphasis is on the role of communication in the child's development. 3 fields are identified: the attitude to an adult, a peer and oneself, the level of development, which determines the level of readiness for school and definitely correlates with the main structural elements of the training activity [5].

While considering the issue of psychological readiness for school, Gutkina N.I. assigns the key role to motivation, and emphasizes, that: "In the affective and need field of a child, who enters a

school, various reasons for learning are represented, but any one could be prevalent".

She considers in her work as follows:

1) the prevalence of the social reasons for learning;

2) the prevalence of the cognitive motivation.

Gutkina N.I. suggests, that voluntary behaviour - is a function of motivation, and therefore, the priority task of any learning - is to create or to use the child's motivation [6].

Bruner introduced the ideas of "readiness for learning". Bruner opposed Piaget's notion of readiness. He argued that schools waste time trying to match the complexity of subject material to a child's cognitive stage of development [7].

Early school success seems to depend largely on children entering school ready to learn, and many policy initiatives have highlighted the importance of preparing children for school entry. A new study finds that children's environment plays a major role in their readiness for school, suggesting that intervention could help boost readiness in at-risk youngsters [8].

Policy and practice guidance in the UK is advocating the benefits of experiential learning as a way of engaging young children as they move into primary school but for teachers this means a move to new practices which can be in tension with other expectations [9].

Readiness for school refers to, "the child's ability to meet the task demands of school such as comfort in exploring and asking questions, playing and working with other children, listening to the teacher, and benefiting from educational activities that are provided by the school" (Oxford Centre for Child Studies). Children are considered "ready for school" when they have developed certain skills and behaviors, such as being able to understand and follow instructions, to communicate and get along well with others, and having basic literacy skills. Children's readiness for school is assessed based on the skills and abilities children have learned from birth until they reach kindergarten. Readiness for school is based on years of cumulative early childhood development, beginning at birth [10].

In all studies, despite the difference in approaches, one admits, that schooling will be effective only if the first-grader has the qualities required and sufficient for the initial stage of training, which are then developed and improved during the training process [11]. It might be said, that a basis of development is taken as the basis of readiness for school, without which a child could not excel in schooling.

In fact, all the works on psychological readiness for school are based on the ideas, that training follows the development, as it might be said, that one should not go to school, if he has not reached a certain level of mental development [12].

While revealing all the aspects of psychological readiness: motivational readiness, social and personal, intellectual and volitional readiness - one should also dwell on the criteria of school readiness.

The issue of psychological readiness for school is very popular among the researchers of different specialties. Psychologists, teachers, psychologists study and justify the criteria of school readiness [13].

Now it is almost generally admitted, that school readiness - is the multicomponent composition, which requires the integrated psychological studies [14].

The analysis of the existing tests and methods of examining the children by A.Kern-Y.Yirasik, Elkonin D.B., Venger A.L., Bozhovich L.I., Slavina L.S., Morozova N.G., Kravtsova E.E., Tsekhanskaya L.I. has shown that these methods could be used as the elements of the child's complete examination. Teachers are given the opportunity to select themselves the methods of examining the child's readiness for school.

Methods

We have conducted the study in order to find out, whether the level of psychological readiness for school affects the further training. The object of our study is the senior preschool-aged children (5-6 years old) from the "Development Centre - the nursery school # 88" of the city of Kazan in a number of 54 children (two graduation groups), and the same children in a year - the pupils of two first forms of the secondary school # 152 of the city of Kazan. They formed two groups - the control and treatment ones.

We have assumed that there will be a linear relationship between the successful training of first-graders and their level of psychological readiness for school, already established in a preschool institution. We drew up the examination program, which contained the necessary and sufficient aspects for the report on the child's readiness for school.

While conducting the study we have used as follows: 1) the "Conversation" method by Bozhovich L.I., Slavina L.S., Morozova N.G., 2) the method by Chkhartashvili S.N., 3) the direct and modified scale type by Dembo-Rubinstein, 4) the author's method - a set of procedures consisting of 10 items.

Body

The examination has allowed distributing the children by 3 groups, each of which has its own specification:

Group # 1 - a high level of readiness for school;

Group # 2 - an average level of school readiness, requires additional studying in order to obtain more objective data;

Group # 3 - should be observed. These children require the careful individual examination of intelligence, the development of personal and motivational qualities.

According to the examination results, the following data have been received:

- at the ascertaining stage of the experiment (at the beginning of the school year the age of the children is 5.5 years): a high level - 46.6%, an average level - 40%, a low level - 13.4%;

- at the control stage of the experiment (at the beginning of the school year the age of the children is 6.5 years): a high level - 60%, an average level - 26.6%, a low level - 13.4%.

When comparing two examined samplings according to the parameter of school readiness in general it has turned out, that among 6-year-old children there are much more children, who are ready for school, than among the 5.5-year-old ones.

Under the conducted control test, we could find that the majority of the 6.5-year-old children, as well as the 5.5-year-old ones do not possess the psychological innovations, which make up the outline of the "psychological readiness for school" concept.

It is worthwhile to raise the questions of the need to carry out the children's special training for school. The importance and purpose of such training - is not just developing the learning skills, but the development of the child's mind to the level of psychological readiness for school.

After learning for 7 months at the secondary school # 152 in the classes of different specialties: the mathematical, classical, Tatar, general ones - we conducted a control experiment again. We tried to establish, whether psychological readiness for school affects the further training in it. The experiment was conducted according to the adapted modified version of the children's personality questionnaire by R.Kettel (the authors Aleksandrovskaya E.M. and Gilyasheva I.N.).

This method allows adequately evaluating the pupils and has wide enough differentiating features. The questionnaire contains 120 questions, which concern a variety of aspects of the child's life: interpersonal relationship, intelligence, readiness for school requirements, attention, social relationship, gender differences, motivation, relationship with

adults, imagination, personal qualities, social adaptation and self-control, character.

Conclusion

Thus, our assumption has been confirmed. It has been established, that psychological readiness for school affects the children's further development and their schooling. Upon the control retest, it has been found, that such index, as "Intelligence" for this age group - is average, but the "Character" index shows, that the academic performance could be high in these children. Such indexes, as "Imagination", "Social Relationship" and "Readiness for School Requirements" are at a high level. The "Self-Control" index is very high in children, what will be a good learning environment in future, "Motivational readiness" is above average, what is also good. All the children's answers show that the children like to study at school.

Summary

The results obtained during the studies show that a basis of development is taken as the basis of readiness for school, without which a child could not excel in schooling. All aspects of preparing a child for school are considered to be important, the special ones should not be allocated, only upon the integrated development of all the aspects the psychological readiness for school could be established at a high level.

For the children, who are not ready for learning, a variety of the learning difficulties occur much more often, there are much more non-achievers among them. Determining the level of readiness is one of the measures to prevent the school failure. The examination should be carried out in advance, about a year and a half - two years before. This will allow not only determining the child's readiness for school, but, if required, carrying out a special set of the corrective measures.

Gratitude

In conclusion, I would like to express my profound gratitude and to thank the director of the Institute of Psychology and Education of the Kazan Federal University, Doctor of Education, Professor A.M. Kalimullin and the head of the Department of Education and Methodology of Pre-School Education of the Institute of Psychology and Education of the Kazan Federal University, Doctor of Education, Professor V.F. Gabdulkhakov for their support in publishing the results of the scientific research.

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8/21/2014