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**ON THE PROBLEMS OF REALIZATION OF THE ADAPTED BASIC
GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN
WITH MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY**

Abstract. The article presents a prognostic analysis of problems (psychological, organizational and content), which may occur during the implementation of the adapted basic general education program (ABGEP) for children with mild intellectual disability in practical training.

The analysis of psychological problems allowed the authors to define and describe the structure of the educators' preparedness for the implementation of the ABGEP for learners with mild intellectual disability. The structure of preparedness comprises three components: motivational, cognitive and technological. The motivational component consists in the pedagogues' awareness of the necessity and urgency of the transition towards teaching in accordance with the ABGEP requirements and their own role in this process. The cognitive aspect of preparedness presupposes the teachers' knowledge of the content of the Standard and separate programs as parts of the ABGEP. The technological component of preparedness assumes that the pedagogues' possess the necessary skills in methods, means and techniques ensuring the achievement of academic and personal results of mastering the ABGEP by learners with intellectual disability.

The organizational problems are connected with the necessity to realize old curricula oriented towards type VIII special (rehabilitation) institutions, which are currently abolished in the system of educational organizations functioning within the Russian Federation, alongside with the ABGEP designed in accordance with the requirements of the Standard.

The undertaken study of the content problems which may occur in connection with the implementation of the ABGEP for learners with mild intellectual disability has shown that they are related to both the development of the content of the programs of new disciplines and the rethinking of the content of traditional subjects from the point of view of the Standard.

Keywords: Federal State Educational Standard for students with intellectual disability, adapted basic general education program, learners with mild intellectual disability.

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Design and adoption of the Federal State Educational Standard (*hereinafter*: FSES) of general primary education for children with disabilities

[1] and the Federal State Educational Standard for children with intellectual disability [2] mark a crucial moment in the modern system of general education for nine groups of children with disabilities.

The Standards provide differentiated normative requirements to the conditions and results of general education of children with disabilities ensuring satisfaction of their special educational needs and suggest variable model adapted basic education programs (ABGEP) on the basis of which educational organizations will be able to design their own ABGEPs and thus guarantee high quality of education for children with disabilities all over the territory of the Russian Federation for the first time in history [3].

The foundations of FSESs and corresponding ABGEPs design for children with intellectual disability consisted of conceptual provisions formulated by the staff of the Institute of Special Pedagogy of the Russian Academy of Sciences which included the recognition of [4; 5; 6]:

firstly, heterogeneity of the contingent of the pupils with disabilities, including children with intellectual disability;

secondly, the presence of special educational needs of the pupils of the given category;

thirdly, the need to use a differentiated approach with the aim of full satisfaction of special educational needs of pupils with disabilities.

Bringing the FSES for children with intellectual disability into force from September 1, 2016 sets before education institutions new tasks and

creates new challenges which are to be completed [7; 8].

The analysis of testing and discussions of the ABGEPs carried out in 2014-2015 allowed us to single out three groups of problems: **psychological** problems connected with preparedness of the pedagogues and the education institution as a whole to work in the conditions of implementation of the FSES; **organizational** problems; and **content** problems. Let us characterize each group of problems separately.

Preparedness of the pedagogues and the whole education institution to design and realization of the ABGEP is, to our mind, a most important factor ensuring its high quality. Preparedness for such activity is to a large extent determined by the existing experience of its implementation. Education institutions enrolling children with sensory, motor and speech impairments already possess certain experience of creation and realization of the basic general education program of primary general education on the basis of the FSES requirements. In contrast to them, pedagogical workers and schools providing education for children with intellectual disability do not have such experience. This may be the reason of the low level of their preparedness for such activity. Given the important role of each pedagogue in creation and realization of all aspects of the ABGEP, their individual preparedness acquires special importance in this process.

The pedagogues' preparedness for design and realization of the ABGEP can be subdivided into three

components: motivational, cognitive and technological.

The motivational component consists in each pedagogue's realization of the need and importance of switching over to training according to adapted programs, and understanding the advantages of getting such education by pupils with intellectual disability. That is why it is vitally important that the directive approach to the realization of the FSES and ABGEP requirements should not be replaced by a formal adjustment of the old content and methods of teaching to new demands.

The cognitive aspect of preparedness consists in the pedagogues' knowledge of the content of the FSES and separate programs in the structure of the ABGEP.

Beginning with September 1, 2016 the First Form curriculum includes such academic subjects as "Speech Practice" and "World of Nature and Man". This fact is of special importance because up to now the majority of Russian schools have realized educational programs edited by V.V. Voronkova which do not include such subjects [9; 10]. Thus, inclusion of the subject "Speech Practice" sets the task for the teachers to work with completely new content incomparable to the content of the traditional and well known subject of "Speech development on the basis of learning subjects and phenomena of the surrounding world (surrounding world)". From our point of view, the introduction of the subject "Speech Practice" marks a cardinal shift of priorities in the learning outcomes of the Russian Language

by junior schoolchildren with intellectual disability; and the development of speech as a special kind of activity becomes the basic one. This will demand knowledge of the fundamentals of communication theory, of the peculiarities of development of communication function in pupils with mild intellectual disability, and of the methods and techniques of formation of a complex of speech and communication skills and habits in such children on the part of the teacher.

Thus, in order to achieve the learning outcomes of the subject "Speech Practice" designated in the requirements of the FSES and model ABGEP the teacher should not only be provided with the necessary methods materials and aids, but must also have an in-depth preparation in content and theory.

The subject "World of Nature and Man" is to a certain degree new as well; it is included in the subject field "Natural Sciences" which is targeted at the child's cognition of the surrounding world in its unity of the natural and social spheres. It is necessary to note that the tasks of this subject do not only consist in acquainting children with natural and social objects and phenomena and establishing interconnections between them, but also in developing the individual linguistic system and in forming communication skills. For this end, the teacher will have to establish inner ties between the subjects "World of Nature and Man" and "Speech Practice" caused not only by the proximity of certain topics but also by the need to motivate pupils to use the language

means acquired at the lessons of “World of Nature and Man” in independent speech practice.

In addition to the subjects which have not been included in any of the current variants of educational programs it is necessary to keep in mind that the content of other subjects (Russian, mathematics, reading, manual labor, etc.) should also be rethought by pedagogues from the perspectives of the pupils’ life competences formation. The teacher will have to “combine” the content of these subjects with the outcomes (basic knowledge and activity experience) designated by the “Program of Formation of the Basic Learning Actions” and the “Program of Spiritual and Moral Development”.

The achievement of cognitive preparedness for the realization of the ABGEP by pedagogues will largely depend on how actively the given education institution has participated and is participating in the discussion and analysis of the FSES and the model ABGEP. Such discussion and analysis should not be formal as their aim consists in providing each pedagogue with an opportunity to answer or receive answers to the following questions:

- what changes may take place in the educational content, in particular, in the content of a certain subject field in connection with the ABGEP introduction;
- what does the drawback (deficiency) of the pedagogue’s knowledge in solution of certain problems designated by the Model ABGEP consist in;
- how efficient is the peda-

gogue in using the methods of achieving personal and subject results determined as education outcomes in the FSES and the ABGEP?

The latter should become the subject of special discussion in all education institutions as it is directly connected with the third aspect of preparedness – the *technological* one, which presupposes that the teachers have a good command of the methods, means and techniques providing the achievement of subject and personal outcomes [11; 12]. Accordingly, each pedagogue, irrespective of when they are going to start realizing the main aspects of the ABGEP in their professional activity, should, firstly, clearly see their essence; secondly, have good knowledge of the normative documentation ensuring their professional efficiency according to the requirements of the FSES; thirdly, be well aware of the need to make amendments in the methods and teaching materials in accordance with the modern social demands and taking into account special educational needs of pupils with mild intellectual disability and understand their nature.

The provision of preparedness of the pedagogues and the whole education institution in general for the realization of the ABGEP in the complex of all the above mentioned aspects needs, to our mind, carrying out monitoring of the level of competence of separate teachers and the level of preparedness of the education organization as a whole. Such monitoring carried out by the organization itself or by specialists from local or regional education authorities should be aimed

not only at revealing “preparedness/non-preparedness” of the pedagogues for the realization of the FSES and ABGEP requirements, but, which may be still more important, also at determination of the most rational and effective methods of attaining the aims in view.

The second group of problems comprises **organizational** ones. They are connected with the fact that under the Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Russian Federation # 1599 of December 19, 2014 all children who had begun an adapted program of learning before September 1, 2016 will continue doing so. It should be mentioned that the notion of “adapted program for pupils with disabilities” first appeared in the Law “On education in the Russian Federation” which entered into force on September 1, 2013 [13]. But such programs were not used at special (rehabilitation) schools of type VIII either at this time or earlier because education of pupils with mild intellectual disability was carried out and is still carried out in accordance with two variants of the program: one was edited by V.V. Voronkova, and the other – by I. M. Bgazhnokova [14; 15].

In this connection it is only natural to ask the next question: can we consider the two traditionally used variants of the program in accordance with which pupils with mild intellectual disability from the Second to the Ninth Forms will learn beginning with September, 2016 adapted? If the answer is yes, then we shall find ourselves in the situation when schools will realize new adapted basic educa-

tion programs designed in accordance with the requirements of the FSES and programs oriented towards the non-existent education institutions at the same time.

In its turn, such situation may bring about another organizational problem which is logically connected with the first one. Should the pupils get education according to different programs, then, consequently, the education process is to be provided under the “Law on Education in the Russian Federation” using special but different textbooks. And those textbooks which may be called “old” should be used up to 2024. Can publishing houses publish textbooks which do not meet the requirements of the FSES for such a long time? Consequently, serious problems may arise in providing educational programs with special textbooks in the process of transition to adapted programs. A certain adaptation period may be needed to complete the transition from the current educational programs to the adapted ones.

The third group of problems includes **content** problems which may be the result of inadequate methodological support of the pedagogical activity of teachers realizing the FSES and the ABGEP of pupils with intellectual disability. We believe that the solution of this group of problems urgently needs creation of teaching guides of various kinds:

firstly, for design and realization of the program “Formation of the Basic Learning Actions” in and out of the classroom;

secondly, for the definition and teaching of those academic subjects

which were not included in the basic curriculum of the special (rehabilitation) school of type VIII earlier;

thirdly, for making up working programs of separate academic subjects.

It should be kept in view that the requirements of the FSES and the ABGEP for children with mild intellectual disability will be realized in the First Additional and the First Proper Forms only and, consequently, the emergence of some of the above mentioned problems will be deferred. At the same time, it is necessary to note that the article is far from dwelling on all problems that may arise in the process of realization of the ABGEP, and their scope may turn out to be wider and more diversified. Taking into account that the main vector of development of the system of education, including the pupils with intellectual disability aims at the quality of education, this determines the necessity to work out the strategy and tactics of activity of the education organization as a whole and each pedagogue separately in the new conditions of education provision.

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