

*L. Vysotska,*  
*Student,*  
*O. Humankova,*  
*PhD (Education), Associate Professor,*  
*Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University*

## **PROJECT ACTIVITY AS A FACTOR OF MENTAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

*Relevance of the problem.* In modern conditions, the problem of optimizing the mental development of primary school students, who will be able to use their experience, knowledge and values in various life situations, is quite acute. According to the "New Ukrainian School" Concept, this process is most expedient to implement with an orientation to the peculiarities of the age and cognitive development of students, their abilities and opportunities, according to interests and tastes, as well as using the most effective methods and means of learning [2]. Therefore, the search for forms and types of activities that will stimulate the development of students in the specified aspect is becoming more relevant.

Research analysis: The problem of mental development of elementary school students in the process of organizing their education was studied by: I. Beh, N. Bibik, S. Goncharenko, V. Lozova, S. Martynenko, O. Savchenko and others. The mentioned scientists emphasize the direct dependence of students' mental development on the types of educational tasks and technologies that are used directly in the educational process at the initial stage.

*The purpose of our article* is to draw attention to the possibilities of using project activities as a means of mental development of primary school students in the process of organizing their education.

Outline of the main material: The problem of using students' project activities in the educational process was studied by: G. Vashchenko, G. Golub, I. Ermakov, M. Morozova, E. Polat, O. Pometun and others.

From the point of view of scientists, a "project", in the context of the organization of students' educational work in lessons, is a set of actions specially organized by adults, which are performed by children together with adults; a factor in the development of a child's creative activity in the educational process [1].

Researcher N. Bibik defines the project as a set of educational and cognitive techniques, with the help of which schoolchildren acquire knowledge and skills in the process of planning and independently performing certain practical tasks with a mandatory presentation of the results [1, p. 41].

Modern researcher I. Konovalchuk interprets design activity as a special type of mental activity, the characteristic features of which are the independent search for the necessary information, its creative transformation into a material result.

Each project, according to the scientist's research, and its organization have a certain structure, which includes: 1. The idea of the project. 2. Purpose and goal setting. 3. Expected results. 4. Sequence of project structuring. 5. Selection of forms, methods

and means of organizing activities. 6. Ways of implementing the goal and tasks of the project. 7. Economic aspect of the project [3].

Work on the project allows to optimize the mental activity of students who analyze the problem, set the goal, choose the means of achieving it, search and process information, evaluate the achieved results, produce conclusions [3, p. 135].

Project activity encourages students to independently find a solution to the problem, coordinate their actions, cooperate with other students and participants in the educational process in order to solve the tasks set before them, which are correlated with the realization of the didactic goal.

Planning and integration of the project into the educational context contributes to the development of the individual creative activity of the teacher in the development of the strategy and technology of the educational process, allows to optimize the mental and personal development of students and ensure high results of their educational activities.

According to the methodologist O. Tevkun, the topics of projects in primary school should be chosen taking into account the interests of students, their possibilities, abilities, and skills and should be focused on the zone of their immediate development. For example, the topics of projects can be: "Life reflections", "Why should be polite?", "Travel with a droplet", etc. The names of the projects themselves should be interesting and unusual, and at the same time, understandable for elementary school students, in order to arouse in them the desire to actively participate in such activities.

It should also be taken into account that each stage of the project: from planning to expected results, must be discussed by adults together with children, taking into account their opinions and needs in certain types of activities (play, music, problem-solving). However, it is worth emphasizing that in order to stimulate a positive attitude of schoolchildren towards participation in projects, they should provide for the variability of forms, methods and techniques of work, not to be oversaturated with specific ones [4].

Participating in project activities should arm students not only with new knowledge, but also be directed towards the formation of competence in them, in which the student, guided by the acquired knowledge, formed values and experience, will be able to make balanced decisions in everyday life.

The creation of game situations in accordance with their educational and developmental potential will ensure the focus of project activities on the development of mental activity among schoolchildren. Scientists recommend analyzing game situations, choosing from them those that will most interest students and will be accessible to them.

It is the project activity that allows you to shift the focus from the process of passive accumulation of knowledge by children to mastering it in various ways of activity in the conditions of availability of information resources. This is facilitated by a personally oriented approach in the education of primary school students.

We believe that the project should always have a personally and socially significant result, the achievement of which creates a situation of success, a sense of creative self-realization of students.

Based on the above, the project activity contains a problem situation, as well as the following 4 important "Ps": design, search, product and presentation.

In the context of the mental development of primary school students, project activity should be considered as a method of learning, as a means of organizing the pedagogical process, based on the active step-by-step practical activity of students to achieve the set goal.

*Conclusion:* We believe that the project activity is a factor in the activation of students' mental activity, provided that it is organized pedagogically and expediently, corresponds to the interests, needs, and abilities of schoolchildren, and satisfies their need for play.

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