

The problem of abilities as psychological properties of the personality: ontological aspect

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Abstract: In this article, author explores the concept "ability", clarifies its types, conditions of development as potential mental properties in social and cultural, cognitive and personal activities, particular qualities development of basic abilities (cognitive, intellectual), (professional, personal) are characterized in maturing, social learning and socialization of college-age youth in the implementation of the ego – identity, formation of selfhood, "self - concept", self-actualization and self-identifying in society, the strategies as well as social - psychological trainings which aimed at strengthening and development of basic skills are identified and described. Also development of the main basic abilities of the individual as its basic competencies, strategy formation, the possibility of development of professional abilities of students through the implementation of the strategy of development of professional abilities are considered.

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Introduction

Features of the personality which define its suitability to informative activity are called abilities. Abilities are the individual and psychological properties of the personality being a condition of successful performance of one or another activity. Abilities are understood as specific quality, as the difficult synthetic feature of the personality defining its suitability to activity and only by means of this one it can be created [1, 3].

According to B. M. Teplov, abilities are shown in dynamics of acquisition and formation of knowledge, skills in the conditions of specific activity. But ability isn't identical to activity at all, it is irreducible to psychological formations what knowledge, skills is. Quality of performance of activity, its success and level of achievement with its objectives of activity depend on abilities [2, 20-21]. Before giving definition to the concept "ability", we will consider the main signs of this concept. By B. M. Teplov three main signs are allocated.

First, abilities are understood as the individual and psychological features distinguishing one person from another. These abilities have the psychological nature and vary from one individual to another.

Secondly, abilities are related to success of performance of any specific activity.

Thirdly, the concept "ability" isn't reduced by psychological formations (knowledge, abilities, skills) which are developed at this specific person [2].

B. M. Teplov considers abilities as the individual properties of the personality being a condition of successful performance of activity. Ability to acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities also distinguishes one person from another

concerning success of performance of a certain activity. Prerequisite for the development of the capacity are the makings of congenital anatomical and physiological features. Abilities are created in activity and shown in dynamic characteristics such as speed, depth, durability of development of its means and ways. According to B. M. Teplov, "widely accepted determination of abilities consists abilities which are characterized as property of the individual which ensemble causes success of performance of a certain activity. Properties which develop ontogenetically in the activity and, therefore, depending on external conditions [2].

In research of the nature of personality's abilities as key qualities six directions are allocated. Representatives of the first direction consider that abilities are congenital properties of the personality. This point of view received the wide direction in foreign psychology and in linguistics in which the theory of knacks has deep class roots. The class inequality is easily explained by a natural inequality of abilities, natural talent, a superiority of this or another race or nationality claims for domination come true. The state systems of training are based on the theory of innateness of abilities in these countries.

Founders of the theory of innateness of musical abilities (G. Revesh and K. Sishor), despite opposite approach to the musicality nature, were united in a view of it as on fatally predetermined by nature. Musicality, they considered, is a congenital property of the elite. Musicality - the future of each child. Therefore K. Sishor considers that it is possible with all definiteness to predict musicality on the basis of tests results. In Anglo-American literature on psychology "ability" was considered within the

concepts "capacity". "Ability" substitutes ability for set of skills and the abilities acquired by the individual. The second concept means recognition of abilities congenital and, probably, fatally defines further development of the subject. N. Chomsky refers language ability to innate ability. The scientist believes that "language ability" should be understood as ability to language assimilation which is transferred to the person genetically and predetermines acquisition by the native language. Assimilation of language is not only acquisition units of lexicological and phraseological system, but also assimilation of system of certain rules. Grammatical rules as though exist in language consciousness and create a basis for understanding of the language relations. These rules can be private, and can be the general, universal. Regardless of the specific language the substantial universals exist, i.e. concepts such as "verb" and "name". Congenital is universal scheme which promotes acquisition by the child of language competence which is understood as knowledge of grammar of the certain language presented in the form of knowledge of private rules built. Genetically language material put in the person is extremely poor, however with age and by means of training, it is enriched and improved [3].

According to A.R. Beysembayev, language ability should be considered congenital, predetermining acquisition by the native language [4]. But abilities as individual and psychological features can't be congenital. Only anatomic-physiological features, the natural preconditions underlying development of abilities can be congenital. These are inclinations which predetermine the possible directions of development of abilities. In inclinations ability are already given as a potentiality, but abilities are always only result of development in the course of activity, V.M. Teplov emphasized that abilities exist only in development. And this development is carried out, not differently, as in the course of these or those practical activities. Therefore representatives of the second direction in the theory of abilities claimed that in development of abilities it is necessary to consider interrelation of external and internal factors. Internal factors of development of abilities are congenital anatomical and physiological abilities that develop through social factors. According to S.L. Rubenstein, the state on social conditionality of development of abilities doesn't testify to independence of the person of natural data, "from properties of labor activity of his brain" [1, 304]. According to S.L. Rubenstein, natural abilities have an innatelypsychicability, because the mental process goes on in the capacity as the connection determining its course, "stereotyped". The reflex mechanism fixes that what is developed by the

person in interaction with surrounding reality [1] as natural ability.

Ability cannot be separated from those elementary generic properties that characterize the person him/herself. "Any mental process or mental activity as a form of communication of the subject with the objective world assumes the corresponding mental property or "ability" - in more elementary and broad sense of the word, ability in this sense is for example sensitivity i.e. ability of feeling and perception [1]. Communication of abilities with mental processes - thinking, perception, sensitivity, etc. - the "generic" properties inherent to all people is, in his opinion, that basis on which studying of abilities as the features differentiating people has to be under construction. If to break this link, emergence of outstanding abilities becomes inexplicable and is mystified [1, 232]. Considering biological and social in abilities, B. M. Teplov emphasized: "Only anatomic-physiological features, i.e. those inclinations which underlie development of abilities can be congenital, abilities always grow out of the development which is carrying out in the course of education and training" [2, 46]. To inclinations he attributed mainly properties of higher nervous activity, but warned against identifying with them even the simplest elements of abilities as mental formations: "Human capabilities are formed by specific psychological laws, and not laid down in the properties of the nervous system". Thus B. M. Teplov allowed possibility of formation of various abilities on the basis of the same inclinations.

S.L. Rubenstein and B. M. Teplov's states that the mental processes connected with work of the highest nervous activity, develop in activity, receive confirmation in works on differential psychophysiology in which neurophysiological bases of mental activity and self-control as the most general natural preconditions of endowments of the person [5].

However many scientists criticize understanding of inclinations as anatomic-physiological preconditions of abilities and offer their own psychological understanding: inclinations are the congenital or acquired properties of the personality which facilitate acquisition of any activity and allow carry it out at high level [6].

The question of the nature of inclinations as internal conditions of development of abilities remains still debatable though the majority of scientists recognize inclinations as primary natural basis of the abilities that haven't yet been developed, but declaring themselves at the first tests of activity. Thus there are two types of inclinations: congenital (natural) and acquired (social).

Representatives of the third direction in the theory of abilities consider that abilities are created only in activity, and before activity they don't exist. Success of activity isn't provided by separate ability, but by their peculiar combination.

In psychological science problems of abilities are considered in the all-psychological theories of activity. As A.V. Batarshv writes that ability is found only in activity and only in such which can't be provided without existence of this ability [7]. V.A. Krutetsky says about ability as about the characteristic of activity of the person from the individual and personal side, unlike skills and abilities that provide its procedural side [8]. L.A. Wenger connects abilities with the approximate activity regulating practical or informative actions [9]. Thus, the majority of researchers consider abilities as the mental properties function of which consists in regulation and generalization of knowledge, skills. A.N. Leontyev doesn't consider property of type of the highest nervous activity as elements of structure of congenital inclinations. He takes them out of limits of this structure and claims that they represent natural abilities which are formed on the basis of congenital inclinations: "Development of natural abilities goes to force as though "involvements" of inclinations into activity" [10,10].

If N. Chomsky says about the language ability which is transferred to the person genetically, A.A.Leontyev, Y.N.Karaulov, A.M.Shakhnarovich, A.F.Tarasov understand language ability as acquired, social, developing only in development and socialization of the personality [11]. It is formed under the influence of such social factor, as need for communication and realization of communicative interaction. For this reason ability is understood by A.A. Leontyev as "the specific psycho-physiological mechanism which is formed at each native speaker on the basis of neuro-physiological preconditions and under the influence of speech communication" [12,315]. Language ability provides "assimilation, production, reproduction and adequate perception of language signs members of language collective" [12,54].

At such understanding language ability and its social nature appear as the constituting characteristic. If to distract from the psychophysical sides of language ability which is the precondition of its development, it is possible to consider process of formation of language ability of the personality equivalent to process of assignment of culture of society in a mediate look, in the form of language signs within interpersonal communication. The social nature of language ability is defined by the fact that it is formed, on the one hand, in the course of assimilation of system of language signs in which

social life of people is simulated, and on the other hand, the crucial role is played by the form of activity creating preconditions for this assimilation - interpersonal communication. Value of language signs in the generalized form fixes historical experience of people about natural phenomena. Communication through system of language signs that is mediated by signs in activity of the personality appropriates a human way, exists in the form of exoteric and promotes mastery of objectified cultural phenomena in the signs. Language signs and ways of operating them before becoming a basis of formation of language ability at the personality, existed already in interpersonal communication and were already caused by historical experience of people, recorded in the phenomena of material and spiritual culture and displayed in language signs [11,262-263]. As we see in development of abilities external and internal factors of development abilities play an active role. At the solution of a question on determination of abilities psychologists proceed from two basic states: 1) about their formation and development in activity; 2) dialectic unity of natural and acquired in them. The thesis about interrelation of abilities and activity concretizes and develops the fundamental general theoretical concept of L.S. Vygotsky about the socio-historical, social nature of human mentality and position of S.L. Rubenstein following from it about unity of consciousness and activity, and also position of the scientist about activity as a basis of development of abilities. Recognition of their lifelong formation follows from the state on formation and development of abilities in activity with inevitability. The theoretical approach developed by A.N.Leontyev is based on this situation. According to hypothesis of A.N.Leontyev, formation of mental functions and the abilities peculiar to the person as a public being, occurs at the child as assimilation of the world of objects - the human abilities created by activity of previous generations. Even in the sphere of elementary touch functions the person has a reorganization due to which new touch abilities occur, peculiar only to him or her[10].

A.N.Leontyev specifically considers human abilities as "formal" effect of process of assignment by the person of products of culture, unlike knowledge and abilities which are his material result [12].

Works of representatives of the fourth direction on researching of abilities are characterized by research of abilities in dialectic unity of mental functions and activity. Mental functions are considered in close connection with development of abilities. The great interest in this plan is presented by ideas of L.S. Vygotsky and B.G. Ananyev. B.G. Ananyev claims that development of abilities is

connected with development of the highest mental functions representing a combination of various formations - functional, operational and motivational.

According to the author, abilities are formed in activity during which certain ways of the organization of mental processes which affect growth of abilities and character of the person are created. Ability is manifestation of creative development of mind, but not only simply accumulation of knowledge, an innovative position of the person concerning knowledge which he or her acquires, and also independence and consciousness [13].

During studying abilities as potential properties of the personality, B. G. Ananyev considers proceeding from functional structure of this or another activity. Besides special experience in the field activity, the person rises by this or that level of development, saves up life experience, possesses certain properties of the nervous organization. If not to consider general bases of specialization of personality's labor development, it is possible to draw a wrong conclusion that abilities are only function of a special, private kind of activity. Special abilities are product of development of the special kinds of activity that has leading value in the general development of the person. However this general development also has influence on formation of potential properties of the personality [14]. According to B. G. Ananyev, a product of the general development is endowments which S.L. Rubenstein calls "the general ability" [1].

L.S.Vygotsky, connecting development of abilities of the personality with development of mental functions, claimed, that mental functions and development of ability of the personality are provided in the course of socialization of the personality in society. In the work "Thinking and speech" the scientist considered structure of speech activity in close interrelation with cogitative activity. The scientist claimed, that mental functions (cogitative activity) and speech of the person (speech activity), develop in the course of cultural and historical development of the person in society. External speech of the person (in communication between people) develops at first, only on the basis of it an internal speech develops - cogitative activity. Any function in cultural development of the child appears on a scene twice, in two plans; at first - social, then psychological [15].

According to the cultural and historical theory of L.S.Vygotsky, an initial form of individual mental functions of the person is their preliminary collective implementation on the basis of the analysis of the extensive actual materials connected by the relations of training and development. L.S.Vygotsky forms state that mental capacities develop in process of

mental functions at first between people, and then independently, i.e. training of the child is internal necessary and general moment of his or her intellectual mental development. Training acts as a source of the development that forms at the child such functions without which development can't arise. But training and development aren't identical to each other. Intellectual development - i.e. development of mental capacities is provided at two levels: 1) on the first - the level of actual development fixed on its some complete cycles; 2) at the second level - level of a zone of the next development, fixed on even its incomplete cycles. The first level can be defined, using problems which children of a certain age solve quite independently, the second - using problems which children of the same age solve by means of adults and companions, in cooperation with them. However children after a while solve these problems independently.

As L.S. Vygotsky wrote "A zone of the next development is a distance between the level of its actual development defined by tasks, resolved independently, and level of possible development of the child, defined by the tasks solved by the child under the direction of adults in cooperation with cleverer companions".

The zone of the next development allows to predict what will be in development of the child tomorrow, but this "tomorrow" internally connected with what happens to child today in the course of cooperation (communication) with adults and contemporaries [15].

The fifth direction in development of abilities considers that for determination of abilities and tendencies of pupils it is necessary to use methods and receptions of new branch of psychology - differential psychophysiology. Within this science the state about unity of natural and social in the person assumes complex studying of abilities at least at three levels: psycho-physiological, psychological and socially - psychological [5,12].

So, for example, at concept "linguistic or language abilities" research is conducted as follows: 1) at the psychological level "language abilities" are understood as initial ability of the person to speech activity, ability to languages is a psychological concept. The psychological concept "abilities to languages" is connected with the specific psycho-physiological features that are a condition of successful acquisition of language. As inclinations of these abilities, i.e. the anatomic - physiological features of a brain and nervous system can be: 1) typological properties of nervous system; 2) ratio of the first and the second systems; 3) specific features of a structure of analyzers.

At psychological, psycho-physiological research of language abilities of the individual such formally - dynamic characteristics are considered as: 1) rate of assimilation of language means; 2) transition speed from cognitive-linguistic level (assimilation) to communicative - to speech level (application); 3) speed of overcoming the communicative barrier arising not only because of personal properties, such, as shyness, uneasiness, etc., but also because of discrepancy of psycho-physiological parameters that are trained in those requirements which show, on the one hand, a dialogical form of communication, and on the other hand, the specific features of training creating extremeness of conditions for part of pupils [5,110]. In the conditions of intensive training there is the big information stream exceeding average volume of perception; deficiency of time, the fast speed of speech processes excluding possibility of the analysis of the language phenomena; deficiency of language means, etc.

Representatives of the sixth direction in research of abilities suggest studying abilities from the position of the theory of functional systems focusing attention on interrelations of concepts ability and functions. Though in the cultural and historical theory L.S. Vygotsky considered intellectual development of the child in zones of "actual" and "next" developments in connection with development of mental functions of the person, development of the highest mental functions goes through acquisition by the subject his own processes of behavior, nevertheless in his works the interrelation of abilities and mental functions of the person " didn't get" sufficient research. The history of development of mental functions was not written yet. Obscurity of genesis of the highest mental functions brings inevitability to metaphysical concept: the highest and lowest forms of memory, attention of thinking exist nearby with each other, independently one from another, they aren't connected genetically, functionally or structurally, and precisely created in a double look - noted L.S. Vygotsky[15,14]. Along with mechanical memory logical memory exists as its highest form, voluntary attention is built over involuntary attention, creative imagination is over reproduced imagination [16, 13].

As we see, L.S. Vygotsky told about interrelation of abilities and mental functions. He emphasized thought of lack of research on mental functions. Actually "Abilities" and "Mental functions" shouldn't be investigated separately, but together as two closely interconnected aspects of development of abilities.

In theories of functional systems of V.D. Shadrikov studying of abilities is provided taking into account features of development cultural the caused

operational mechanisms, during seizing them person can seize the abilities, in this case as a process of biological and cultural development in their unity.

According to V.D. Shadrikov, it is impossible to separate abilities from mental functions and to transfer the center of gravity to determination of abilities from an aspect of activity. According to V.D. Shadrikov the aspiration to cultural determination of abilities contrary to their understanding as internally opened properties, qualities, leads to a rupture of a natural and cultural component of abilities [17, 140].

Any specific activity, according to the author, can be analyzed and differentiated, i.e. in any activity it is necessary to apprehend something, to remember, present, comprehend, make the decision, etc. Mental function is represented most by the general patrimonial forms of activity. In relation to concrete activity mental functions are characterized by polyfunctionality, i.e. they can be included in various activities.

Thus, it is expedient to correlate ability to the corresponding mental functions because mental functions are realized in mental processes which can be considered as types of mental activity, but such types which were automated and turned into ways of activity. Under certain conditions they can get the independent purpose and turn into full actions. Each mental function is realized by specialized functional system, and all of them are united in one functional system of a brain. These functional systems in structure of a complete brain were formed for realization of certain mental functions. It is possible to state that they possess property due to which it is possible to implement a certain mental function. This property of functional systems also is the general natural ability referred to specific mental function.

Single individual abilities depend on how the general property (concrete ability to perceive, remember, etc.) is expressed at the specific individual. Single one will be presented by a measure of expressiveness of property at the specific individual.

Certain individuals can have a various measure of expressiveness of this general property. At this stage there is a problem of individual distinctions in abilities as various measure of expressiveness of the general ability. Abilities, according to V.D. Shadrikov, as properties of the functional systems provide informative and psychomotor processes which have the individual measure of expressiveness which is showing in success and a qualitative originality of performance of activity [18,183]. By definition of the scientist, ability has properties of the functional systems providing separate mental functions, having an individual measure of expressiveness and being shown in success and a

qualitative originality of development and realization of activity [17,142].

Development of abilities as properties of functional systems is provided in the course of training of the functional systems realizing natural abilities. Ability is manifestation of the personality in activity.

The problem of development of abilities is solved by V.D. Shadrikov from the concept of systemogenesis of activity [18]. Even standard activity, according to V.D. Shadrikov, will always accept individually expressed character, according to methodological installation that external influences are applied through internal conditions. Individual nature of activity isn't compensation consequence, but it is a consequence of expression of activity through personal qualities.

As we see, the analysis of abilities is provided by V.D. Shadrikov from positions of systemic-functional approach at which development of various separate mental functions that has an individual measure of expressiveness in aggregate leads to the general result – development of the general abilities of the individual under the leadership of the teacher. The teacher, promoting realization of separate mental functions of the personality, provides development of cultural depended mechanisms, person seizing them seizes the abilities. B.L. Shadrikova's merit is substantial disclosure of the concept "abilities" which (abilities) develop in the course of joined activity of trainees and the teacher.

But today's level of education development is a question of development of potential opportunities trained by activation of self-organizational activity of trainees in the course of personal and active approach when the trainee is considered as the active subject of pedagogical interaction independently organizing the activity. Focusing on abilities development of the trainee is caused by increase of interest to development of basic ability of the trainees providing both quality of trainees education, and their competitiveness and mobility. Therefore representatives of the fifth direction in development of the theory of abilities suggest solving a problem of development of basic abilities of the personality on the basis of competence-based approach, and basic abilities of the personality are considered as key competences. According to P.S. Yeger competence defined as "the basic ability which hasn't been inherited genetically, biologically", acquired by the individual, created internally in the course of independently motivated interaction with the world" [19].

Key competences are competences of a wide range. According to H. Sheper "competences are something more, than just knowledge, they

considered as ability of tasks performance, the solution of problems and overcoming of requirements" [20, 290]. The concept "key competences" is used as a synonym of necessary and important competences which promote successful life and well-functioning society, and related to various spheres of life, important for all people [20, 290].

Boys and girls at student age master dialectical thinking and reach "cognitive maturity", which, according to K. Riegel, implemented on the fifth stage of cognitive maturity. If J. Piaget speaks about development of children intelligence on four stages, namely: sensomotor, preoperational, concrete operational stage, the stage of formal operations, then K. Riegel highlights understanding of contradictions as an important achievement of cognitive development in adulthood [21].

According to Riegel, if there is 5th stage of cognitive development, following the 4th one, then it is dialectical stage at which a person considers opposing thoughts and synthesizes and integrates them. Particularly important aspect of dialectical thinking is integration of the ideal and the real. Practical, usual world (real) is dialectical correction of artificiality, abstract, formal operational thinking (perfect). This, according to Riegel, is a strong point of thinking of an adult [22].

Therefore G. Labouvie-Vief - Vif offers "commitment and responsibility" as a criterion of adults cognitive maturity [23]. By Labouvie-Vief, way of cognitive development should include the development of logic, described by Piaget, and the development of self-regulation, based on the transition from childhood to adulthood. Like Perry and Riegel, Labouvie-Vief also believes that to avoid dualistic thinking people need to experience the falsity of social life, learn the differences in attitudes and real-world practicality. The difference of her theories from others is that she described the process of development in which adults become truly autonomous and acquire the ability to deal with the contradictions and uncertainties of life experience, so it is a bit different and lasts longer. According to G. Labouvie-Vief, the characteristic feature of cognitive maturity of an adult is to develop decision-making skills [23].

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