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Development Pedagogy – the Crisis of the Genre?

Viktor A. Bolotov*

*Russian Academy of Education
8, Pogodinskaya str., Moscow, 119121 Russia¹*

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This article analyzes the situation in the Russian practice of developmental education. The aim is to develop the new didactics, capable of providing mass school with technology that meets the challenges of tomorrow – to learn how to live and work in a rapidly changing world. This article grounds the necessity of formation of the education quality assessment system and gives the characteristics of its sub-systems: an external assessment of the individual achievements of the students, assessment of the effectiveness of educational institutions activity, assessment of the effectiveness of educational systems activity, the organization of assessment within the school.

Keywords: development pedagogy, new didactics, education quality assessment.

The problem of development has always been recognized as one of the key problems in pedagogy. At various stages of history the formulation of the problem itself and, consequently, its solution have been changing. This is due, primarily, to the changes of socio-cultural context, the requirements of production and economy, as well as new interpretations of the understanding of the essence of personal development and learning process itself. This topic is also relevant to pedagogy nowadays. Since the late 1980s in Russia the word “development” has become the most fashionable. In recent years it has acquired not only the specific meaning in the educational environment, but also become some kind of a distinguishing mark “one’s own” – “foreign.” Everyone is talking about developmental education, there is an establishment of a large

number of special educational and methodical complexes that “guarantee” the student’s development, and, probably, in the vast territory of our country it is very easy to find a school where at least one teacher can say – I’m working according to the methods of development education. But when we try to evaluate the real results of this great educational revolution, it turns out that they are more than modest. In particular, it can be proved by comparison of the results of the PISA international study in 2000 and 2009. Slightly exaggerating the situation, we can say that almost the only trophy in the victorious blitzkrieg of “developmental education” with the so-called traditional one is the implementation of several new terms (which are also interpreted in different ways by various groups of teachers and researchers), and arrogant and condescending

* Corresponding author E-mail address: vikbolotov@yandex.ru

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attitude toward any kind of shabby archaic: knowledge, abilities, skills.

Sotodaytheresearchesthatinoneconceptual space compare views of different pedagogical and psychological schools about the student's development would be highly relevant. There also will be need for the analysis of technologies that are offered by certain science school and that provide this development. Unfortunately, before the conduction of these studies it should be necessary to admit that many provisions of the pedagogical and psychological theories in attempts to use them in educational practices are unsustainable. This is due, primarily, to the fact that the purpose and object of development are determined mainly on the level of ideologemes, the result is very vague, and the mechanisms and technologies of implementation do not stand school practice. "It's easy to build bridges in dreams, because there are no laws of gravity" – C. Boyden wrote. Unfortunately, for many pedagogical (and psychological) schools creation of the ideal models that do not need to take the "inert" reality into consideration, it becomes an end in itself. From my point of view, the only possible way to solve the problem of development today is to describe the present state of affairs and form ideas about the needs of the future (society, government, economics, etc.).

In this connection it is worth remembering several examples of the establishment of new approaches to school education.

It is believed that our school came out of "The Great Didactic" by Comenius. It is worth remembering the full name of this really brilliant work, "The Great didactic, the **whole** art of teaching **all things to all men**, and indeed of teaching them with certainty, so that the result cannot fail to follow; further, of teaching them pleasantly, that is to say, without annoyance or aversion on the part of the teacher or the

pupil, but rather with the greatest enjoyment for both; further of teaching them thoroughly, not superficially and showily, but in such a manner as to lead to true knowledge, purity in morals and innermost devotion"(author's highlighting).

If you recall the historical context, it becomes clear how important was the supertask that had been solving by Johann Amos Comenius. This supertask arose from the situation with Lutheranism: the person should be able to communicate with God without the church and the priest. And it's necessary to teach people how to read. It can be assumed that Comenius' didactic, in general, has been linked to morality in the first place. The second wind was gained by Comenius' Didactic one century later during the Industrial Revolution, when it was necessary to have a great number of rather competent executors.

There is another well known example of didactic that has radically changed the existing school. It is the didactic by Dewey. In his book "Democracy and education" he suggested quite different organization principles of school and school space comparing to the class-lesson system, providing education of the citizen of the United States. This was due to the fact that at the beginning of last century the United States of America had serious problems with a sharp increase of the stratification of society on the racial, ethnic and religious basis. And Dewey's didactics did not appear as the fruit of scholastic reasoning, but as a response to the challenges facing society. The American school, using these didactic principles, has made success: in response to the question "Who are you?", the majority of the U.S. citizens say "I'm American" and only then they can specify their nationality and religion. It should be noted that solving the problem of the citizen education, the American school lost in the

traditionally understood quality of education, and it's not the chance that for decades it has been facing the task of improvement of the student's educational level.

It is worth remembering that after the October Revolution of 1917 to address there have been made numerous attempts to reform the traditional school in order to solve the problem of educating the citizens of the new Russia. But because the state in the first place needed executors, class-lesson system won. But the problem of ideological education were solving through extracurricular work and the activities of the Pioneer and Komsomol organizations. However, during the last decades of the Soviet Union there was appearance of scientific schools that designed the new educational system, proceeding not from the concept of training of ideologically competent executors, but from some theoretical ideas about a modern person. As an example we can name scientific schools of V.V. Davydov, L.V. Zankov, V.S. Bibler, Sh.A. Amonashvili, V.K. Dyachenko. Representatives of the scientific schools designed a new practice, new pedagogical paradigm, proceeding from their philosophical, psychological and pedagogical ideas about the modern education. But since neither the Soviet society, nor the Soviet state were not interested in these approaches in general, then the Soviet mass school was not affected by these works.

For me, everything mentioned above means that if today any group of scientists and practitioners really raises the problem of establishment of the New school, at first they have to understand what are the things that do not satisfy them in the existing system of education not in terms of today, but in terms of tomorrow, and what challenges of tomorrow should be met by their new school.

It is obvious that different groups of researchers can have own idea about the proper

future, but, in my opinion, there are several invariant positions for any such idea.

First of all, how the goals of any approach to the construction of the new school are related to the fundamental educational objectives that are formulated in UNESCO documents, – to learn to acquire knowledge (to learn how to learn); to learn to work and earn (learning for labor); to learn to live (learning for life); to learn to live together (learning for life together).

Secondly, as noted by many experts, it is time to quickly update the knowledge and change the technologies. If earlier education was given for the whole life and it was enough to conduct professional activities in the chosen field until one's death, so today this situation has changed.

According to researchers, the volume of scientific knowledge is doubling every 8-10 years, and it means that the content of education that is acquired by students is aging rapidly in many ways. The volume of new knowledge increases exponentially. So trying to take into account all the latest achievements in the compulsory school curriculum is just hopeless. The best way to solve this problem is the transition from the knowledge-centered school to the culture conformable school that provides the basic concepts of the relevant culture and helps to master methods of work with them.

Such a transition should lead, at first, to the realization that future depends not only on the volume of students' knowledge, but on the level of development of the universal ways of thinking and working, the ability to develop new technologies. In this situation, the new school is facing the problem of not the transfer of existing knowledge and existing technologies (as required by the Great Didactic), but of the formation of abilities to find and develop new skills and master new technologies.

It is important to take in consideration that different scientific schools can give their

own interpretations of the concepts of “ways of thinking,” “ways of working” and create their own original techniques.

In connection with it, any textbook nowadays also needs to be fundamentally different. Today, despite a huge amount of books, textbooks do not differ from each other. All of them are twin-brothers: the information necessary for the student to solve a significant number of problems given in the textbook dominates in it. The modern school textbook should, in my opinion, take into account the realities of current time. And above all, this fact regards working with information. In modern informational world, people very often enter the bifurcation points, uncertain situations, when his behavior at any given moment determines the future. And basically there is solution of the problems that do not have sufficient information. There are no authorities to tell how to act, every person has to start activity by himself. Therefore, the most important task of the textbook is to learn how to use additional sources of information. In places where there is the Internet, where there are computers – it is of course, the usage of information and communication technologies, and in places where there are not such things, teachers should consider the usage of additional library resources.

The development of interpersonal skills, group interaction, that are so called-for in modern society, is favoured by the usage of interactive and project forms of education organization. Apart from the fact that these forms allow students to develop the skills listed above, every student is given the space to express own views (even if it's wrong, it's a good reason for the discussion!).

And once again, different scientific schools can have their own vision of the solution of the problems mentioned above.

But if we admit the possibility (and for me the necessity!) of the presence of various theories and practices of development in education, there is a

question about the comparison of the effectiveness of any particular approach. In other words, there is a problem of assessment of the education quality that is given by practice. It is also a matter of principle that the assessment should not only be internal (as a rule, “it” is done according to one's own criteria and assessment procedures, and people also argue that this approach “works” very well), but also external – according to the generally accepted indicators and procedures. Only in the presence of an external assessment it is possible to organize a real dialogue between the different scientific schools and practices, the real design of education development. However, everything that is introduced as an external assessment of education quality in some regions, requires a serious discussion. On the one hand, measuring materials that are used there, as a rule, do not correspond testological canons, on the other side – and it is more important, in my opinion, “regional” understanding of the term “quality of education” does not often stand any factual critics. In this article, I will not delve into the discussion of the very definition of the “quality of education”, because various scientific schools may have (and they have!) their own definitions of quality. The author's position on this issue was presented at the conference “Development pedagogy” in Krasnoyarsk in 2008 (1) and described in many publications, in particular, in the journal “Issues of education” (2). In this article I will only note that today the most discussed and popular are three main approaches to the assessment of the quality of education.

The first approach is the compliance of education with normative documents, and first of all with standards. It is necessary to understand that not all formulations of normative documents are the basis for the creation of monitoring and test materials. For example, in the standards the objectives of education are often described as a designation of the direction of the motion vector

“Our goal is the education of comprehensively developed personality”), and it is impossible to measure the achievements of every student, we can only assess the state of the school environment whether it contributes to approaching to the goal-ideal or not. If the aims of education are formulated specifically and operationally (students in the school will study any rules and master ways of solving any problems), it can be possible to measure knowledge and abilities of every student in accordance with the stated requirements. Thus, in the second case, the aims will be the basis for the development of the necessary measuring materials and procedures. As for the first example, when we speak about some goals-ideals, then there can't be any measuring materials to evaluate, for example, the student's level of love for the motherland.

The second approach is the compliance of educational results with the social expectations. They are not the same in different strata of the population. In my opinion, this is the space for the target self-determination of various scientific and educational schools.

The third approach to the quality of education is the compliance with personal expectations. In this case, the variety of different pedagogical practices is possible and needed.

Thus, when it comes to the quality of education, people should carefully sort out who (government, society, personality, or any scientific and pedagogical school) is talking about what kind of quality of education. In my opinion, the discussion of various schools about the advantages of any system should begin with a justification of their own ideas about the education of high quality and check methods of this quality. This article will focus on the problem of the external quality assessment.

Unfortunately, at the present moment the situation with the organization of external assessment in Russia worries people – in fact,

except for the Unified State Examination (USE), the State Final Examination-9 (SFE-9) (that mostly check the level of proficiency in school subjects), there are not any other various international monitoring activities at the federal level. If we consider this problem in a broader context, it is necessary to formulate a number of research tasks related to the organization of external quality assessment.

Today, **the questions about the quality of education** and thus its assessment are one of the central questions when discussing the state of affairs not only in education but in society as a whole. Understanding of the fact that human resource has become a key factor in the provision of the development, forces society to give more attention to this issue in the world and in Russia. For example, the countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are actively discussing the results of the international researches PIRLS, TIMSS and PISA, reflecting the problems of the quality of general education. In Russia, the education quality assessment in recent years is one of the most pressing topics for discussions in the professional educational community – more and more teachers and managers understand that speaking about the education quality management without any real assessment of the state of affairs is impossible. It should be also noted that the effectiveness of educational system activity begin to be increasingly taken into account during the assessment of the efficiency of activity of the executive authorities at regional and municipal levels, and during the introduction of a new system of teacher payments, and during the certification of teachers and heads of educational institutions, and in public reports about the state of affairs in education.

Noting the practical importance of the current scientific researches in the field of education quality assessment, we must

acknowledge that the conceptual framework of researches on a number of directions of education quality assessment is not worked properly, in particular, in the approaches to the assessment procedures, criteria and indicators of the educational effectiveness (that is not limited just by the assessment of the proficiency level), there are few researches related to the improvement of the current verification and intra-class (intra-school) assessment of educational achievements of students, with the prospects of transition to the new systems of assessment, including the usage of portfolios.

In this connection it is reasonable to describe the tasks according to the strategic areas of development of education quality assessment: external assessment of the individual achievements of students, assessment of the effectiveness of educational institutions activity, assessment of the effectiveness of educational systems activity, the systems of assessment within the school.

In the matter of the external assessment of individual achievements of the students one important moment is correlation of this assessment with the requirements of the state and the demands of society.

At present the main areas of research for **the improvement of the content of the state final examination (USE and SFE)** are connected with the development of *the common approaches to the mandatory final examinations (in the Russian language and mathematics)*. One of such approaches might be the application of the specially designed two-level system of assessment of educational achievements in these subjects. The validity of the statement of this question derives from the analysis of the USE results in the schools for the humanities and schools with the evening mode of study. For mathematics: the first level is the control of functional competence, the second one is both the control of functional competence and the control of the level of proficiency in

mathematical concepts and methods of reasoning to the extent that is necessary for study in the field of engineering and natural science at the university. For the Russian language: the first level is the Russian language as the official language of the Russian Federation (qualifying evaluation for the full school course with regard for the multi-ethnic composition of the country), the Russian language for the university entrants (with regard for two levels – basic and profile).

The exam can be presented in the format of one examination work, and in the form of two independent works.

This approach gives an opportunity to partially solve the problem of possible discrimination of graduates on ethnic grounds.

There is much to do in connection of *different stages of the state attestation*, development of the continuity of requirements that are raised to the graduates of the secondary and high schools. This problem is particularly important for the language subjects, where the control of some communication skills can be shared between the secondary and high schools.

In this case there is no doubt about the need for researches connected with the usage of the results of SFE-9 for the formation of individual educational trajectories of students in the high school. It becomes especially important during the transition to the high profile school.

To ensure management decisions aimed at the improvement of the quality of education in high school, there is a need for researches that will allow comparing the results of examinations within SFE-9 and USE. The complication of this problem solution is connected with the fact that at present the structures of tasks in specific subjects in the USE and SFE-9 are often not coordinated, there are different methods of scaling and different procedures. However, today in several regions the comparison of the results of the USE and SFE-9 within the same cohort of students is

used for the assessment of the effectiveness of the teachers of the highest level of secondary school.

At the present stage it is reasonable to consider issues related to the introduction of tasks into the examination materials that check the functional competence of the students, in particular, tasks that contain excessive or, on the contrary, lack of information for the task.

And in this regard it is necessary to talk about overcoming of the narrow subject-centricity in the approaches to the proficiency quality assessment. I will illustrate it with a simple example. Proceedings of the numerous researches show that students have difficulties in the solution of mathematical problems, conditions of which are the detailed text. The reason for it should be found in the lack of understanding of the problem text that has a lot of complex cause-effect relations between different parts and in the inability to interpret it. It is clear that the search for solutions to these problems is not possible within mathematics or the Russian language. Consequently, the object of study is not the content of educational material on mathematics, but the presence of certain qualities (system of qualities) of the student, providing the possibility to solve text problems. And this is the basis for the construction of measuring materials that are outside the boundaries outlined by the subject of any educational discipline. In this sense, many tasks from PISA and PIRLS are of interest.

I want to emphasize that the actual content of the state final certification after the graduation from the secondary and high school can't depend on the views of the particular scientific and pedagogical school. However it is legitimate to raise the question about the impact of work on the base of particular set of training materials, prepared by the representatives of different scientific and pedagogical schools, on the results of the USE and SFE-9. In order to solve this problem people now usually use just statistical

methods. Obviously, that without regard to other factors, including the qualification of teachers, it is impossible to make definite conclusions about the impact of training materials. It is necessary to conduct additional researches in order to investigate the factors affecting the success of the final examination.

In contrast to the secondary and high school, graduation from the primary school is not connected with the state final attestation, but it does not preclude the introduction of the independent (in this case, independent not of the school, but of the particular teacher) diagnostic of mastering of the “academic proficiency” that is necessary for the successful study in the secondary school. The term “academic proficiency” is used in order to avoid in this text comparison of the terms “universal academic activities” that are introduced in the new standard of the primary school, “academic activity” according to D.B. Elkonin – V.V. Davydov and L.V. Zankov, “proficiency” that is checked in the international studies PIRLS and TIMSS; the terms “meta-subject or sub-subject competences” that are widely used in the educational community, but often with a different interpretation of these terms, etc. The comparison of skills, abilities and competencies that stand either explicitly or implicitly behind these concepts and terms requires a separate study. It is essential that this diagnostic should check not the level of mastering of any subject taught in the primary school, but ***the level of readiness for the successful study in the secondary school.***

Diagnostic of the level in “academic proficiency” is necessary not for the qualification (disqualification) of the children, but for the development of individual study paths that allow to eliminate student's deficiencies that interfere with the successful study in the secondary school, and the development of appropriate recommendations for teachers, students and their

parents. Although certain studies in this area have been already conducted, it is impossible to talk about the final solution of this problem. Again, there is the statement of a question about the development of indicators and procedures to be adopted by the representatives of different scientific schools.

Researches related to the assessment of extracurricular and extra-subject achievements of the students (often referred to as “portfolio”) that are widely discussed in recent years in the pedagogical community, in fact, should reflect progress and personal achievements of the student, apart from the level of proficiency in various school subjects that is evaluated during the USE and the SFE-9. Despite many years of empirical practice in the introduction of intra-school portfolio, scientific and methodological researches in this area are almost absent.

At the same time it is legitimate to raise the question about the assessment of any specific personality traits that are developed during the implementation of the relevant scientific and pedagogical approach, i.e. it should be noted again that the concept of “personal development” for different scientific schools can mean different things.

There are also some invariants that are recognized almost by everyone – it is the results of Olympiads, contests and competitions held by the organizations external to the concrete school. However, closer examination of this topic shows the need for additional researches in order to determine the list of skills and competences of the students being tested in these Olympiads, contests and competitions. At the same time there are alarming suggestions given by some scientific and pedagogical schools about the organization of an external assessment of the level of politeness and socialization of the students, their patriotism, tolerance, etc. It is obvious that any “frontal” measure of the presence of certain

human values and personal characteristics can only lead to profanity, and without any serious scientific works it is even harmful to enter any external assessment of the “achievements” of the schoolchildren in this area.

Researches related to the state accreditation of educational institutions

can be seen in the course of the previous topic about the absence of any valid methods for the mass assessment of personal characteristics of the students. It can be argued that the question about the creation of conditions for the formation (growth) of the personal qualities in a particular student should be raised during the state accreditation of schools. In this regard, it is necessary to conduct scientific researches in order to identify new indicators of the state accreditation of educational institutions, including, in addition to the assessment of educational achievements, the indicators providing the assessment of the effectiveness of the school activity in the socialization and education of the students. Considerable importance should be gained by the indicators of school activities on improvement of the health of students. Particular importance is gained by the problem of the development of new indicators of the state accreditation due to the introduction of the new generation of educational standards, that are largely focused not only on the academic achievements of the students, but also on the establishment of the conditions for personal and cognitive development of the students.

In assessing the state of affairs with the study of specific subjects at the school it is appropriate to expand the program of scientific research on the usage of the results obtained in the course of the state accreditation of schools. Twenty percent of all schools should every year pass this procedure, and with the appropriate preparation of measuring materials, compliance with the relevant procedures and well-organized list of schools it is possible to make well-founded conclusions about

the level of teaching of all school subjects in the given educational system. Similar works can be deployed for the assessment of the state of affairs with the formation of meta-subject competencies and comparison of the effectiveness of various scientific and pedagogical schools.

Introduction of new standards, as it has been already noted above, raises particular challenges for **the establishment of modern intra-school assessment systems**. First of all, it is related to the assessment of the development of cognitive abilities and personal characteristics of the students. It should be noted that, despite the recent series of works, this task, in general, is far from being solved. It is necessary to continue researches related to the measurement of the individual student's progress and development of the appropriate methodical recommendations for teachers and students. The task of introduction of the formative assessment techniques into schools has remained urgent. There is also a large field for the activity of various scientific and pedagogical schools.

As noted above, in many countries around the world the results of the international monitoring programs PIRLS, TIMSS and PISA are actively used for the assessment of the effectiveness of educational systems. Russia is one of the few countries that regularly takes part in these studies. The results of the studies are used in order to develop suggestions about the correction of the content of educational programs. However, deeper meaningful interpretation of the results of PIRLS, TIMSS, PISA requires the repeated analysis of the performance of certain test tasks or questions, the usage of new methods for data analysis, the introduction of new variables for the analysis of tendencies, inclusion of additional samples of students into the study (e.g., separately 4th and 5th, 9th and 10th grades, certain regions), the usage of additional tools, including advanced forms for teachers and parents. And although

some work in this area is already underway (see, for example, (3)), for the control of the quality of education it is necessary to develop appropriate methods for the secondary schools, municipal and regional education systems. It is also necessary to expand the work on comparing the results of the studies PIRLS, TIMSS, PISA in order to clarify the dynamics of development of different kinds of proficiency in the basic school. It would be extremely important to compare how students who were engaged in some methodical system, perform tasks that were used in various international studies.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that if we will talk about the development pedagogy seriously, then we can say with certainty that there is no any scientific and pedagogical system that can guarantee the development of students without the organization of cooperation with the social partners, and above all – the sensible work with parents as the main social partner for the school is still a family. Today despite the variety of interpretations of the concept of “development” none of the existing scientific and pedagogical schools seriously considers the parents and the individual strata of society as equal partners (and schools even do not raise such a problem!). But a lot of things, in my opinion, just depend on whether the school and pedagogical science be able to go beyond its borders or not, whether it will develop as a part of the whole social and public system or it will be just the part of the industry state system.

At present, in our country there is a discussion about the law of the Russian Federation “On education”. The draft law has absorbed a lot of the latest developments in the field of education, it contains a lot of new and progressive ideas. From the analysis of the requirements of the draft law to the content of education it follows that the basic requirements are aimed at the personal development. The

new educational standards are also aimed at this idea. Will the scientific schools involved in the development pedagogy be able to respond to the challenges of the time, or there will be just two realities in our school: one is the sphere of beautiful ideologemes and the other is the everyday educational practice, where there are the same problems that many years ago?

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Педагогика развития – кризис жанра?

В.А. Болотов

*Российская академия образования
Россия 119121, Москва, ул. Погодинская, 8*

В статье анализируется ситуация с российской практикой развивающего обучения. Ставится задача по разработке новой дидактики, способной обеспечить массовую школу технологиями, адекватными вызовам завтрашнего дня – научить жить и действовать в быстроменяющемся мире. Обосновывается необходимость построения системы оценки качества образования и даются характеристики её подсистем: внешней оценке индивидуальных достижений школьников; оценке эффективности деятельности общеобразовательных учреждений; оценке эффективности деятельности образовательных систем; организации внутришкольного оценивания.

Ключевые слова: педагогика развития, новая дидактика, оценка качества образования.
