

V. V. Repkin: concepção de sujeito da atividade de estudo (1990-2021)

V. V. Rrepkin: conception of the subject of study activity (1990-2021)

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses the concept of the subject of study developed by V. V. Repkin between 1990 and 2021, which changed the direction, objectives, and content of developmental learning from the perspective of the Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin psychological-didactic system. The author introduced the subject of study as the fundamental neoformation in early school age at the beginning of the 1990s. The text aims, first of all, to show that the consolidation of the Theory of Study Activity would have been impossible without the development of the concept of the subject from the point of view of its specific psychological content. Before V. V. Repkin, the idea of the subject of study was essentially abstract and insubstantial, based on descriptive aspects associated, in general, with phenomena external to the subject itself. Secondly, it seeks to analyze the process of genesis, development, and improvement of V. V. Repkin's research on the subject of study, especially those carried out between 1990 and 2021. It is concluded that V. V. Repkin changed the very concept of developmental learning in early school age with his studies on the subject, considered the subject the fundamental objective of study activity (instead of theoretical thinking), established the concept of "subject as

RESUMO

O presente artigo aborda a concepção de sujeito da atividade de estudo desenvolvida por V. V. Repkin, no período entre 1990 e 2021, com a qual alterou os rumos, os objetivos e o conteúdo da aprendizagem desenvolvimental na perspectiva do sistema psicológico-didático Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin. O autor introduziu, no começo da década de 1990, o sujeito da atividade de estudo como a neoformação fundamental na idade escolar inicial. O texto tem como objetivo, em primeiro lugar, mostrar que a consolidação da Teoria da Atividade de Estudo teria sido impossível sem o desenvolvimento do conceito de sujeito do ponto de vista de seu conteúdo psicológico específico. Antes de V. V. Repkin, a ideia de sujeito do estudo era essencialmente abstrata e pouco substancial, baseada em aspectos descritivos associados, no geral, a fenômenos externos ao próprio sujeito em si. Em segundo lugar, analisar o processo de gênese, desenvolvimento e aprimoramento das pesquisas de V. V. Repkin a respeito do sujeito que estuda, sobretudo aquelas realizadas no período que se estende entre 1990 e 2021. Conclui-se que V. V. Repkin alterou, com seus estudos a respeito do sujeito, o próprio conceito de aprendizagem desenvolvimental das crianças em idade escolar inicial, considerou o sujeito o objetivo fundamental da atividade de estudo (em lugar do pensamento teórico), estabeleceu o conceito de "sujeito

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source," as well as its psychological content and structure, the fundamental characteristics of its conception, and the different levels through which it transits during its process of ascent.

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como fonte", bem como seu conteúdo psicológico e estrutura, as características fundamentais de sua concepção e os diferentes níveis pelos quais transita durante seu processo de ascensão.

Palavras-chave: V. V. Repkin. Aprendizagem Desenvolvidor. Atividade de Estudo. Sujeito como fonte.

Introduction

Two works by Davidov (1991, 1996) published in close temporal proximity are crucial for the analysis of research's place within the Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin psychological-didactic system of developmental learning. In the first of these texts, Davidov ([1991]2021, p. 279, emphasis added) acknowledges one of the system's most critical issues: **the limited attention devoted to the psychological characteristics of the subject**, as compared to the primary focus on the structure of study activity itself, the nature of the study task, and study actions and their manifestations in specific disciplines.

In the second text, Davidov (1996a) acknowledges V. V. Repkin's pivotal role in reshaping the conceptual framework of developmental learning, a transformation that entailed a reorientation of the objective and substance of study activities, with the subject being elevated to the pivotal neoformation in the early school years. He wrote about it:

In our theory of developmental learning, particular emphasis is placed on the issue of the **formation of the subject of study activity**. It is noteworthy that V. V. Repkin highlighted this issue in a manner that enabled him to introduce a novel concept to the students' developmental learning in the early years. **He regarded the subject** as the most significant neoformation of this age. From our perspective, the primary neoformations, in addition to the subject, encompass meaningful reflection, analysis, and planning. It is imperative to elucidate the conceptual underpinnings of each neoformation, particularly the interrelationships that emerge during the initial school age. Recently, our laboratory has conducted an experimental study to investigate the **development of the subject** of study activity in relation to the antecedents of other neoformations (Davidov, 1996a, p. 390).

The time between one publication and the other is only five years; however, it gives the impression that the information presented by V. V. Davidov in the second work overturns the criticisms made in the first. While Davidov ([1991]2021) admits that the "psychological characteristics of the subject" have been little studied, he also admits that V.V. Repkin's studies on the subject changed the concept of developmental learning and that the laboratory (presumably the Moscow laboratory) carried out experimental studies on the formation of the subject of study activity (DAVIDOV, 1996a).

What is certain is that suddenly² the experimental study of the subject became a relevant object of research within the system, and within five years the reality described in the first article, referring to the initial period of the 1990s, changed significantly in the second half of the same decade. In fact, some authors, including Kudryavtsev ([1998]1999), have revealed this shift of scientific emphasis within the theory of study activity itself from the traditional research of the conditions and methods of formation of study activity to the analysis of the nature and mechanisms of formation of its subject.

The analysis of the main lines of development of study activity of the youngest students from the 1st to the 3rd-4th grades revealed the necessity of shifting the scientific emphasis within the theory of study activity itself. Thus, **there was a shift from the traditional study (for the school of D.B. Elkonin - V.V. Davidov) of the conditions and methods ensuring the formation of study activity to the research of the nature and mechanisms of its formation.** The decisive role in this was played by the works of V.V. Davidov, V.I. Slobodchikov, G.A. Zuckerman, and others [...] although, of course, neither D.B. Elkonin nor any of his followers ever considered study activity as something absolutely without a subject (at the "pole" of the child). Besides, Elkonin (1989, p. 266-267) was the first to raise the problem of the subject of study activity - the one who is able and wants to learn (KUDRYAVTSEV, [1998]1999, p. 2).

² "Suddenly" is one way of putting it, because in fact specific historical, psychological and didactic circumstances created the necessary conditions for this frenetic thematic shift in a very brief historical time of five years.

The three basic references mentioned by Kudryavtsev ([1998]1999) were written and published between 1990 and 1996: Slobodchikov and Zuckerman (1990), Zuckerman (1993), and Davidov (1996a). In fact, there is another text written jointly by these three authors that V.T. Kudryavtsev does not mention: it is an article entitled "The student of the first years of primary school as a subject of study activity," published in the same period (DAVIDOV; SLOBODCHIKOV; ZUCKERMAN, 1992). This shows, albeit partially³, the growth of research on the subject in the first half of the 1990s in comparison with previous stages.

However, later research on the subject, from Kudryavtsev ([1998]1999), through Slobodchikov and Zuckerman (1990), to Zuckerman (1993), entirely ignored the contributions of V.V. Repkin and the Kharkiv group on the subject. As a result, Davidov's (1996a) assertion about V. V. Repkin's important contribution to the study of the subject fell into a void, especially after his death in March 1998, and not only did he fail to recognize that V. V. Repkin was the first to emphasize and consider the subject within developmental learning, but his theoretical-methodological contribution to the subject was also overlooked.

In this sense, this article aims to analyze the process of genesis, development, and improvement of V. V. Repkin's research on the subject of who studies, especially those carried out in the period between 1990 and 2021. The goal is, first, to analyze the content and magnitude of his contribution to the concept of developmental learning and to the development of the theory of the activity of study, especially in relation to its objective and structure. Secondly, we try to present the characteristics of V.V. Repkin's conception of the subject, the concept of the subject of the activity of study, its psychological content and structure, as well as the levels through which it passes in the process of its ascent. At the same time, the differences, and similarities between Repkin's

³ The research in question, aimed at analyzing the peculiarities of the subject of study activity at different levels of education, only makes very superficial reference to two works by V. V. Repkin (REPkin; REPkinA, 1997; REPkin, [1997]2021).

concept of the "subject as a source" and Davidov's concept of the "individual subject and collective subject" are not overlooked, as well as some reasons why Repkin's concept of the subject, though praised, is not the same as Davidov's. Repkin's conception of the subject, though praised by V.V. Davidov and considered revolutionary at the time, was not widely accepted, or even ignored, neglected, and rejected by representatives of the Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin system beyond the Kharkiv group.

From a documentary and bibliographical perspective, the article is based on: (i) the production of V. V. Repkin, alone or in co-authorship, especially in the period between 1990 and 2021, available in Ukrainian, Russian, English and Portuguese (REPkin, 1992, 1997a, b; [1997]2021, 1999; REPkin; REPkina, 2019, 2023; REPkina; REPkin, 2012); (ii) the production of the disciples, collaborators, and followers of V. V. Repkin. V. Repkin (DOROKHINA, 1980; DUSAVITSKII, 1996); (iii) the production produced in the same period under analysis by scholars of the subject, either within the Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin system or outside it, with whom V. V. Repkin dialogued. V. Repkin dialogued with, with whom he may have been influenced or by whom he may have been influenced (Kudryavtsev, [1998]1999; KUDRYAVTSEV; URAZALIEVA; KIRILLOV, 2003; DAVIDOV, 1996a, b); (iv) the available production oriented towards the critical study of V. V. Repkin's work on the subject (REPkina, 1993, 2010; PUENTES, 2019, 2022a, b).

Development

A previous theoretical study (PUENTES, 2019) showed that the Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin psychological-didactic system of developmental learning, among other things, always had as its general purpose the process of self-transformation of the students involved in the study activity. Therefore, the main concern was the subject of the activity itself, as recognized by important representatives of the theory. For example, Repkina (2010, p. 3) writes that "for D.B. Elkonin and V.V. Davidov, **the concept of the subject is inseparable from the concept of transformative activity**, one of the types of study activity. Its object is not the external world, **but the subject itself**".

However, instead of developing a psychological theory of the subject, the system focused on the objective activity (its structure, the nature of the study task, study actions, etc.) that this subject performs. V.V. Davidov, for example, began to deal with the subject only very late, in the second half of the 1990s, especially with the publication of his book *Developmental Learning Theory* (1996). As a result, over the course of almost three decades, the proponents of the theory have generally adopted different conceptions of the subject without a sufficiently well-founded theoretical and experimental basis from a psychological standpoint. In this regard, Repkina (2010, p. 1, our emphasis) wrote that before 1990

The concept of the subject of the study activity was too abstract and lacked substance. Authors generally limited themselves to descriptive characteristics, such as the desire and ability to learn, or initiative, independence, and responsibility in the study process. However, the psychological characteristics that underlie these external phenomena of the subject of study and that must occur in the student during the learning process for the corresponding qualities to emerge remained vague.

Based on these aspects (predominance of an abstract and insubstantial concept of the subject, descriptive characteristics, as well as a lack of precision regarding its psychological properties, etc.), a significant diversity of subjects has prevailed for more than forty years and a lack of consensus on this issue. According to previous research (PUENTES, 2019), at least four different conceptions of the subject can be established in the history of the system: (1) subject of cognition (1958-1970); (2) subject of needs and motives (1971-1990); (3) "individual" subject and "collective subject" (1991-1998); (4) subject of emotions (1998).

The same research deals with the content of each of these types of subjects and their links with the theory of the activity of study. The correspondence between the different conceptions of the subject adopted and the level of development of the activity of study in the different stages of the evolutionary development of both processes has been demonstrated (PUENTES, 2019). Each change that has been experienced, from a theoretical and methodological

perspective, in the concept, content, structure, and formative process of the activity of study has been directly or indirectly associated with a similar change in the way the subject of study is viewed and adopted, and vice versa.

Regardless of the significant differences that make up the content of each of these four types of subjects in particular, in general, the original concept of the subject established by Elkonin ([1961]2019) prevailed, i.e., that of the subject as a child capable of being actively involved in the task of study, that is, "the acting subject himself". In short, the child who acts is the subject of study activity; who acts, whether because of the professors' requirements (cognitive subject), his needs and motives (subject of needs and motives), or his desires and emotions (subject of emotions).

In this sense, the subject, whoever he or she may be, is involved in the activity because of various aspects that act as the driving force behind the action, but he or she cannot act as the source of this activity. As a result, the study task, which leads to the performance of a system of specific actions aimed at achieving the result of the activity, must be placed outside by the professor (cf. REPKIN; DOROKHINA, 1973). The subject conceived in this way is incapable of going beyond the condition of the bearer of activity; he is the student who is capable of "working with tasks" and "self-transforming" with them, but he is incapable of establishing either work or self-transformation as a personal purpose or goal.

Thus, the formation of the subject, as well as its particular aspects through self-transformation (ELKONIN, 1967[2019]), was limited to the accomplishment of the task, the mastery of certain concepts, and generalized modes of action. In this way, both intellectual and subjective development are defined by the child's ability to engage in the activity, to develop his or her theoretical thinking and the operations that underlie it (synthesis, analysis, significant generalization, significant abstraction, planning, and substantive reflection), whether collaboratively or autonomously.

Although the concepts of the individual and collective subject, the subject of needs and motives, and the subject of emotions seem very different from the

concept of the cognitive subject, they are all closely related to it because the motivation, needs, desires, and emotions that act as the driving force behind the subject's study activity are directly related to the content of developmental learning (generalized modes of action and scientific concepts), which is essentially cognitive in nature. In other words, what really transforms the child into a subject of study activity is the motive, the need, the desire, and the emotion that arise from the interest that the content arouses in him. In short, the subject of needs and motives, the collective and individual subject, the subject of emotions, is also and above all the subject of cognition.

These are the conceptions of the subject that prevailed, especially in the Moscow group, which was dominated by the ideas of D.B. Elkonin and V.V. Davidov about psychic development, study activity, and the subject. In this group, the theoretical and experimental concern was always much more with the operational aspects of development, rather than with the analysis of its driving forces. V.V. Davidov himself, when it came to the structure of study activity, always gave more importance to the process of development of the actions of study, control, and evaluation than to the study task itself.

The problem of the study task did not become the subject of special research by V.V. Davidov, since he, following the established tradition in psychology (A.N. Leontiev, P.Ya. Galperin, etc.), probably believed that the student during his learning takes over the tasks assigned to him by the professor and, consequently, the acceptance of the task is not the result of the student's own activity, but a necessary condition for its realization. Let's see what he wrote:

At first, students don't yet know how to formulate study tasks independently and carry out actions to solve them. For the moment, they are helped by the professor, but gradually they acquire the corresponding **skills** (it is in this process that autonomous Study Activity and the ability to learn are formed). (DAVIDOV, [1986]2021, p. 219, emphasis added).

In addition, it can be seen that in Davidov's (1972, p. 150) concept of the structure of study activity, the focus is on actions: "It [the structure of this

activity] reflects the actions that guarantee the solution of the study task". Inspired by this principle, priority is given to structuring the curriculum of subjects based on the formation of theoretical thinking, especially one of the operations or actions of thinking: substantive generalization, as well as three other operations directly related to it (significant reflection, significant abstraction, and concept).

To sum up, in general, there was a predominance of conceptions of the subject that, in articulation, were characterized by their conscious, intentional, active, diligent, performing, collaborative character and cognitively involved in the activity, but also the bearer of the activity. In fact, Zuckerman and Venguer's (2010) concept of "individual subject" and "collective subject", which Davidov ([1991]20-21, 1996) adopted in some of his works, is based on an assessment of the degree of autonomy of the student in the learning process in relation to the ability to master certain operations or actions. The collective subject is defined as the student who wants to learn and knows how to learn, and is formed over a period of time that extends approximately to the first years of primary school (1st to 4th grade), a phase in which the action of learning is initially mastered by the student in the context of joint action with the professor and other students. The individual subject, on the other hand, is the student who is able and willing to learn autonomously after mastering the actions of learning, which happens at the end of adolescence (between the 5th and 9th grade of primary school), when, having internalized the collective actions of learning, the subject of learning becomes individualized.

The definition of the subject based on the level of development of cognitive actions is the reason all these analyzed forms of the subject (cognitive, individual and collective, needs and motives, emotions), according to their representatives, reach their maximum level of development, i.e., that of the creative subject, only in the final stage of study activity, in the last year of the first cycle of primary school (5th grade). Let's remember that Davidov's (1996a) conception of the creative subject is connected with the student's

ability to carry out independently the study actions that will allow him to achieve the initially set goals.

However, there is another conception of the subject of study activity besides those mentioned above, namely that of the "subject as a source" of study activity. Not only is it quite different from those analyzed, but it also represents a specific variant within the system, which is still little known in the scientific and academic sphere, and which represents one of the most original and powerful strands born within the theory of developmental learning.

V. V. Repkin and the “subject as source” of study activity.

The concept of the "subject as a source" of study activity, its concept, concrete psychological content, structure, process of its formation and development, stages of its formation and diagnosis, etc., is connected with the particular perception, which the Kharkiv group under the leadership of V.V. Repkin developed as a result of the kind of didactic-formative experiments, which it conducted on the goal and content of developmental learning, as well as study activity, its structure, driving forces, formative process, and methods.

This excerpt from the article deals, among other things, with the emergence of the concept of the "subject as a source" of study activity in the work of V.V. Repkin in the period between 1990 and 2021. It considers the research in which the subject was studied, the basic characteristics of the concept of the subject, the content and psychological structure of the subject, the stages through which the student passes from the state of the individual to the subject in the process of his own self-transformation, the various types of the subject and their correlation with the stages of formation of the study activity, the researches on the diagnosis of the subject, etc.

The theoretical model of developmental learning of the Karkhiv group, presented in the past twenty years by Repkin and Repkina (1997, 2019), makes it explicitly clear that, unlike the model of the Moscow group, for which the function of learning was the development of theoretical thinking, it consisted in the development of the subject of study activity itself. For both authors, the formation

of theoretical thinking is not and could not be the objective and direct result of learning, but the development of children as subjects of learning who need to think to solve their problems. In fact, the inspiration comes from L.S. Vigotski, for whom "learning [...] is the form in which the development of the subject takes place" (cf. REPKIN, 1999, p. 12).

Repkin and Repkina (1997) wrote about it:

[...] the goal [...] began to be seen not as the development of the student's modes of action, but as the development of the student as a subject of study activity, that is, as an individual capable of setting new study tasks and finding ways to solve them (REPKIN; REPKINA, 1997, emphasis added).

Two decades later, Repkin and Repkina (2019, p. 48) reiterate the theoretical position by stating that: "This [learning] can affect the development of skills [modes of action] only if it ensures the development of the subject for whose activities these skills are needed".

However, the moment when the goal of developmental learning for V.V. Repkin and his collaborators became different from the function established and defended by D.B. Elkonin, V.V. Davidov and their followers is still a mystery. In any case, it is possible to establish some milestones.

At the same time as V.V. Davidov, in his famous work *Types of Generalization of Learning* (1972), argued that the fundamental role of school education and study activity was the development of theoretical thinking through the formation of generalized modes of action and scientific concepts, based on A.N. Leontiev's idea of the correspondence between assimilation and development,⁴ Repkin and Dorokhina (1973) proved in experimental research that focusing on

⁴ In this book, V. V. Davidov even wrote the following: "The purpose of this work is to substantiate the idea that a genuine solution to the problems concerning current school education, in terms of its logical-psychological foundations, presupposes a change in the type of thinking that can be projected through the content of subjects and the methods of learning them. The improvement of the latter must be carried out within the framework of this cardinal perspective: to **form scientific-theoretical thinking in schoolchildren**" (DAVIDOV, [1972]1982, p. 7).

this type of process, ignoring the subject's own development, would lead to the development of theoretical thinking.

Davidov's (1972) idea led him to prioritize the structuring of the curriculum of subjects based on the formation of theoretical thinking and to develop a course in Russian grammar and mathematics, in which the concepts of the "morphosemantic structure" of the word and "number" as a ratio of magnitudes for measurement were introduced, with the aim of stimulating in children the emergence of elementary forms of theoretical thinking and, consequently, of the creative subject. However, this did not happen, and it was shown that the formation of theoretical thinking is not possible without due care for the development of the student as a subject of learning (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2019).

V. V. Davidov, as well as the other members of the Moscow group, believed that the assimilation of mathematics and grammar would automatically, directly, and linearly lead to the development of thinking and, in turn, to the emergence of the creative subject. From this perspective, assimilation would make theoretical thought, and theoretical thought would make the subject. However, Repkin and Dorokhina's (1973) experiment showed in an unusual way that the study task set by the professor, as proposed by D.B. Elkonin and V.V. Davidov, was constantly redefined by the students. This proved that the thesis that the role of the professor was to formulate the task, while the role of the student was reduced to accepting it independently or with the help of the teacher, was wrong. From now on, it was assumed that the task was created as a result of the student's own activity, and a new concept of study activity was established, i.e. that specific type of human activity in which not only the solution of the study task is ensured, but also its determination or enunciation (Repkin; Repkina, 2019).

The notion of the determination or enunciation of the task of study as a result of the student's own activity immediately and correlatively led to the idea that the determination of the task of study arises only when the student is the subject of his activity. Thus, since the 1970s, the focus of V.V. Repkin

and the members of the Kharkiv group has shifted from the structure and content of the study activity, as well as the development of the student's theoretical thinking, to the development of the student as the subject of the study activity (REPKIN; REPKINA, 1997).

It is clear that the analysis of the process of development of the student as the subject of study activity went through different stages or moments, including facing the risks and difficulties of thinking differently from V.V. Davidov and the other members of the Moscow group. It must also be admitted that the choice of the development of the subject of study activity itself as the basic goal of developmental learning, rather than theoretical thinking, had other consequences: (1) the direction of the research changed; (2) the content and structure of the study activity were modified; (3) the conceptual and methodological differences between the Kharkiv Group and the Moscow Group became clearer and more intense; (4) the number of partnerships between Russians and Ukrainians decreased; (5) the more the Ukrainians distanced themselves from the Russians, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991), the more original, unique, and rare their work became; and so on.

We don't know the exact moment when it all began, and we probably never will. But one thing is certain: after the Moscow group, the second most powerful and creative variant of the Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin system and the Kharkiv model of developmental learning was born. In this process of development of the concept of the subject in the work of V.V. Repkin it is possible to identify two distinct stages: (1) the background (1975-1990); the "subject as a source" of study activity (1990-2021).

V. V. Repkin wrote a pioneering article in the second half of the 1970s: "The Concept of Study Activity" (REPKIN, [1976]2021). In the very first paragraph, the author himself stated: it starts from the "undeniable position that the person is not only an object, but also a subject of learning and education" (REPKIN, [1976]2021, p. 311). It should be noted that for V.V. Repkin the subject remains throughout the entire activity of study, after all, he is its source. But its permanence is not static; on the contrary, it assumes

different forms; forms that are conditioned by different aspects, including the specific modalities that the activity of study assumes, by a concrete psychological content and structure that is specific to it, by certain levels of training, etc.

In this article, however, we would rather not focus on the background stage, but on the second stage, which is related to the emergence of the concept of the subject as a source of study activity (1990-2021).

The “subject as source” of study activity (1990-2021)

V. V. Repkin, as the head of the Laboratory of Pedagogical Innovations at the Russian Academy of Education, in 1990-1992 gave a series of lectures in the cities of Kharkiv, Riga, and Moscow on the main features of the system of developmental learning at school age. The content of these lectures describes in a fairly comprehensive way the concept of developmental learning developed in the 1960s-1980s under the general supervision of D.B. Elkonin and V.V. Repkin. V. Repkin; however, it presents, perhaps for the first time, a variant of practical implementation of this concept, the result of many years of work of a group of Kharkiv psychologists together with professors of various schools.

These ideas arose as a result of the experimental theoretical researches of the Kharkiv group under the leadership of V.V. Repkin, as well as the experience of organizing work on implementation of the system of developmental learning in the mass general education school. All this led, on the one hand, to some "discrepancies" (though not fundamental) with the better-known works of D.B. Elkonin and V.V. Davidov, and, on the other hand, to the emergence of a new focus in V.V. Repkin's theoretical approach: the subject of study activity.

From then on, the subject was not only repeatedly addressed in V.V. Repkin's lectures and publications, but it was also gradually adopted as the main goal of developmental learning within the whole system. Therefore, Davidov (1996a, p. 389) would admit that

Recently, the idea has emerged that the main neoformation of early school age is **the subject of the study activity**. Consequently, basic education can only be truly developmental when its direct objective is the **formation of the subject of learning**, i.e., **the child who is willing and able to learn**. The main attributes of this learning (content, methods, etc.) must correspond to this same objective, so that the integral study activity carried out by students in the early years of primary school will be directly oriented towards their development. Our theory of developmental learning also pays special attention to the **problem of subject formation**.

The main theses on the subject of study activity are contained in the first material prepared by V.V. Repkin for his lectures, later published under the title "What is developmental learning? The first developmental stage of Russian language learning in elementary school" (Kharkiv; Tomsk, 1992). The text in question has not yet been found, but there is a booklet addressed to professors, methodologists, learning organizers, students of educational institutions, and parents interested in the problems of developmental learning. This booklet was prepared by Repkina (1993) in the form of an essay based on the lecture notes given by V.V. Repkin between 1990 and 1992. In fact, in the preface that Repkin (1993) himself wrote for this publication in June 1993, he stated the following

The essay presented to the reader is one of the first attempts to present in a fairly popular way a holistic description of the concepts of students' developmental learning, generated in the 1960s to 1980s [...] Naturally, in the course of this work, some provisions of the concept have been refined, concretized, and rethought [...] Needless to say, all responsibility for the validity of these discrepancies lies with the author of the lectures because of which this essay was written (REPKIN, 1993, p. 1).

There is also a second version of this material entitled "Developmental learning and study activity", which contains the transcripts of five days of lectures given by V. V. Repkin in the early 1990s in the city of Riga, Latvia. According to Zeltserman (2023), the material was digitized by professors of the

Riga Pedagogical Center "Experiment", proofread by him, and corrected by V. Repkin himself. V. Repkin himself. The full text (38 pages) was published on the Center's website in 1997⁵.

Finally, there is also a third text entitled "Man as the Subject of Activity", written by V. V. Repkin in 1997 in the same context and unpublished to date. This last work is essential for understanding not only the author's concept of the subject at that time, but also what characterizes it as such, as well as its psychological content. In addition, there are other publications by Repkin (1997b, 1999) in which he takes up some of his initial ideas about the subject at a much more advanced level of theoretical elaboration.

After all, it was during this period of lectures (1990-1992) that the thesis was formulated for the first time that the goal of developmental learning should be the development of the subject of study activity, and not theoretical thinking. The radical revision which the representatives of activity theory (A.N. Leontiev, P.Ya. Galperin, A.V. Zaporozhets, etc.) made of the traditional interpretation of L.S. Vygotsky's ideas on the relationship between learning and development already represented a rejection of the idea of reducing development to the formation of mental functions (thinking, memory, perception, etc.) and brought to the fore the development of the child as the subject of various types and forms of human activity. According to Repkina (1993, p. 6), V.V. Repkin emphasized the goal of developmental learning with the following words: "The ultimate goal of developmental learning is to provide each student with the **conditions for the development of a self-transforming subject of study**".

- The concept of the subject of the study activity

But who is the object of study? Repkin immediately defines it: "Such a **subject** means to have the **need for self-transformation** and to **be able to**

⁵ V. V. Repkin's text is available in Russian at the following link: <http://old.experiment.lv/>. A summary of this version was published in English in 2003, and the full text in Puentes, Cardoso and Amorim (2021).

satisfy it through learning, i.e., to want to **learn, to like to learn, and to be able to learn**" (Repkina, 1993, p. 6).

Repkina's (1993) quote, attributed to V. V. Repkin, not only corrects the new goal of developmental learning, but also refines the concept of the subject and reveals its discrepancies with the previously prevailing definition.

It is clear from the quotation that the subject of study activity in V.V. Repkin's conception is the child with a need for self-transformation, capable of satisfying it through learning, in other words, who wants, likes, and can learn. Thus, the content of the concept of the subject is no longer integrated only by the child's ability to carry out the indispensable actions (of study, control, and evaluation) leading to the solution of the task set by the professor, which was predominant from the 1960s to the 1980s, but also includes the "need for self-transformation", that is, the "desire, taste and possibility of learning". A few years later, returning to the question of the subject and the place of desire in its constitution, Repkin (1999, p. 18) wrote

In fact, along with the **ability to learn**, an equally important characteristic of the study subject is their **desire to learn**. Shouldn't the formation of this **desire** be considered a special goal of developmental learning?

For D.B. Elkonin and V.V. Davidov, as well as for the rest of the representatives of the Moscow group, the subject was the student who knows how to study together (collective subject) or independently (individual subject) because he has mastered the actions that allow him to carry out this activity. For V.V. Repkin and the rest of the Kharkiv group, the subject is the child who needs and wants to learn, even if he doesn't yet know how to study. The forms that these "needs", "desires", "likes", and "possibilities of learning" take, their content, as well as the way in which the actions of study, control, and evaluation themselves are constituted in the process of forming the activity of study, are related to the different stages or levels that the subject passes through in his or her continuous development, and vice versa (REPKIN, 1997b).

In one of the 1997 texts (REPKIN, [1997]2021, p. 375, our emphasis), the approach to the concept of the subject is once again an explicit concern, and V. V. Repkin adds new elements to the original definition. At a certain point in the text, V. V. Repkin asks the audience: What is the subject? And he diligently answers:

The **subject is the source**⁶ of activity, it is the mode of its existence, and in no other form except activity does it exist. Thus, **the subject is a material form of existence of activity**, of potential activity. The terms activity and subject are closely interrelated.

This was the first time that the concept of the "subject as a source" of learning activity was introduced into the didactic-psychological system of developmental learning. Until then, the subject had been understood as the "capable individual, "active," and "involved," but also as the "product," "derivative", and "bearer" of the activity he performed; therefore, someone who was incapable of creating his own activity. For V.V. Repkin, on the other hand, learning is developmental only when the child who learns is in the position of the subject, and with this, he adopted the Vygotskian thesis, first formulated in Pedagogical Psychology (VIGOTSKI, [1926]2003)⁷ that it is the student who teaches himself. He wrote about this:

Only when the child is the **subject of the learning process** can one have an opinion on the type of **learning**[...] This occurs when the professor's companion is not a student, but a **self-teacher**, a **professor of oneself**. In this case, it is not the professor who teaches the student, but **the student who teaches himself**. The professor's mission consists of a single task: to **help the student teach himself** (REPKIN, [1997]2021, p. 375, emphasis added).

⁶ The Russian term used by V. V. Repkin is "источник" which means source, spring, fountain.

⁷ L. S. Vygotsky's idea is as follows: "The student educates himself. Professors' lessons can teach a lot, but they only inculcate the ability and desire to take advantage of everything that comes from other people's hands, without doing or proving anything. For education today it is not so important to teach a certain amount of knowledge, but to educate the ability to acquire this knowledge and make use of it" (VIGOTSKI, [1926]2003, p. 296).

The idea of the student as a self-professor who needs the other, but who teaches himself, questions teaching as an external act aimed at transforming the other, as well as giving full protagonism to the child who learns. Of course, appropriately, as a shared protagonist, above all with the figure of the professor, who acts as an organizer and guide of the process and as a collaborator. In a recent text, Repkin and Repkina (2023, p. 14, our emphasis) refine this idea of the student's independence in the light of shared protagonism (with the professor's support) with the following thesis.

The **subject of study** is not the student who assimilates the knowledge offered by the professor in an applied way, but the **student**; in other words, the **person who teaches themselves**, finding the necessary knowledge independently or with the support of the professor and mastering it. First and foremost, being a subject of study presupposes the possibility of independently finding ways to solve the new tasks that arise in the learning process and then **formulating these tasks on your own**. Of course, to achieve this, the student must have mastery of the corresponding means, something that only the developmental learning process can offer.

This quote not only defines the new goal of developmental learning and the concept of the subject, but also provides a pioneering insight into the characteristics of its conception, the content and psychological structure of the subject, and the stages the child goes through in the process of ascending to this state. In later works, the concept, characteristics, and these different types of subjects were systematically refined, concretized, and rethought in terms of their limits, content, and typical characteristics (REPKIN, 1999; REPKINA; REPKIN, 2012; REPKIN; REPKINA, 2019, 2023).

- Characteristics of the concept of the subject of the study activity

V. V. Repkin's concept of the subject has three basic features: 1) she considers the development of the subject to be the initial stage of personality

formation; 2) she considers development to be a strictly individual process,⁸ unlike Davidov ([1991]20-21, 1996); 3) she considers that the child passes through various stages or levels of development in its movement toward becoming a subject as the source of the activity of studying its own self-transformation (REPKIN; REPKINA, 1997, 2019).

The first characteristic obliges us to approach the study of personality in its dialectical relationship with the development of the subject, which is its basis. Personality is actually a specific quality of the subject at its most advanced stage of development, that is, at the stage of the creative subject. Indeed, Repkin ([1997]2021, p. 374) would write

Only to the extent that man develops as a subject does he develop as a personality because his activity is never individual. Activity in relation to other people or with their participation is a form of joint social activity; one interacts, one acts as a personality.

V. V. Repkin and V. V. Davidov agreed in considering personality as the highest level of the subject's formation. In fact, V. V. Repkin even considered that among the numerous definitions of personality, perhaps the most significant and promising was V. V. Davidov's definition of the creative subject (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2019). Davidov (1996b, p. 282) wrote in the last phase of his life that "personality is the subject of activity that realizes a new spiritual or material product. To create this new product is to perform an act of creativity. Therefore, the concepts of personality and creativity are inseparable."

However, there are differences between the personality and the subject of action. In its creative work, the personality depends on an individual understanding of the meaning of the world or its parts, while the subject of practical action or study starts from the generally accepted and well-

⁸ Individual does not mean individualistic, solitary, on the contrary, it is an adjective that denotes something belonging to or proper to the individual, individual quality, special, particular, singular, exclusive, proper, subjective, unique. Let's see that here the word "individual" has a totally different meaning to the one it adopts in the following quote, where individual refers to something that is not carried out by a single person.

established understanding and, in the case of identifying a difference, the individual understanding with the generally accepted one about the world view. According to Repkin (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2019, p. 38):

It is quite obvious that the understanding of the world on which the creative personality is based is the highest level of its development, which is provided by all the previous activities of the subject."

Repkin goes on to write about the differences between the subject and the personality:

Based on this understanding of personality, it follows that the development of the subject and the development of personality are two closely related, but not identical, processes. The development of the subject of action, which is carried out in the process of mastering a certain activity, is a prerequisite for the development of personality, which is carried out in the process of carrying out activities that the person has already mastered, it is the logical conclusion of the development of the subject, its final result (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2019, p. 38).

Finally, V.V. Repkin warns that the formation of personality is not the main goal of learning, but the development of the subject of study activity. Personality formation is a continuation of the process of development of the subject of study activity, and takes place mainly outside the school and in future periods of human development.

The second characteristic (the process of development is strictly individual and not collective) is intended to show that the constitution of the subject does not depend on the degree of the child's autonomy in solving certain study tasks during the learning process, as Davidov ([1991]2021, 1996) predicted, based on the need to clarify the previously learned mode of action. In this way, the subject was defined as an individual who is willing and able to establish the purpose of his or her activity (Repkin; Repkina, 2019).

The third feature was also new. The subject of study activity before 1990 was devoid of psychological content, amorphous, based on descriptive aspects.

V.V. Repkin showed the upward movement that children go through in their self-transformation until they reach the status of creative subjects. One is not born as a subject; the mechanisms that integrate it are formed throughout life; the subject is a state of the person based on the conditions of the type of activity he performs; one is not always in the state of the subject, only in that activity in which creativity is a necessity. He wrote about this:

It is not necessary to explain the reasons why this mechanism [psychological content] is not given to a person at the beginning but is formed in him gradually in the course of life; and that these qualities are inherent in each person in an equally different way. Moreover, they manifest themselves in different ways in the same person in different situations. But this means that a person doesn't always behave like a subject. This is perfectly understandable: there are many situations in life that not only do not require creativity from a person but, on the contrary, require strict adherence to established rules, norms, and traditions. It is therefore necessary to distinguish between at least two types of human activity. And if we agree to use the term "activity" to characterize specifically human, transformative activity, then it is advisable to keep it to designate that type of activity in which a person acts as a creative subject. As for the second type, it appears that the most appropriate term for its designation is the generalized term "role behavior", which fixes an important characteristic of this activity, within which a person strictly follows prescribed norms and rules (REPKIN, 1997a, p. 12).

- The psychological content of the subject of activity

Repkin (1997a) makes significant advances in his analysis by identifying the particular qualities or psychological content that enable human beings to become subjects of activity. The first contribution he makes is to make **creativity** explicit as the main quality of the subject, understanding the **creative and transforming attitude** towards the world as the central aspect of the concept of the subject; that is, a person who is capable of transforming the existing conditions of his life, and while conceiving and creating a humanized environment, nature, and the world become the object of his transforming activity, and he himself acts as its active principle, as its subject. He wrote about this:

In this case, it is not the activity that takes possession of the person, but the person who appropriates the activity, who becomes its "**owner**", its **subject**, and for him, it is no longer an obligation imposed by an assigned social role but a necessary form of his own free life (REPKIN, 1997a, p. 7).

V. V. Repkin's second contribution was to determine and describe the psychological content of the subject of study activity, which consisted of the following components

- **Needs** (a generalized reflection of the conditions necessary for the maintenance of life), as a prerequisite and purpose of activity;
- **Appropriate capacities**, as a complex system of characteristics that determine the possibility of using certain means, mastering the methods and techniques necessary for the activity;
- **Consciousness**, as the main mechanism for regulating the activity;
- the ability to determine the goals of the next activity as a representation or image of the result of an action to be or to be performed (an image not of the present, but of the future);
- **Reason**, as the mechanism that regulates the subject's creative activity ("it is reason, and not needs and capacities as such, that acts as a real prerequisite for a person's transformative activity");
- **the will**, as the force that, during the execution of the activity, makes it possible to overcome the various obstacles on the way to the desired goal;
- **Freedom** (free will), as "the ability to make informed choices" (F. Engels)⁹.

Of these seven components, V.V. Repkin indicates three as the most important in the constitution of the subject of study activity: reason, free will, and conscience. In this regard, he wrote

⁹ According to V. V. Repkin, the creative subject can only be a person with free will, i.e. a will based on reason.

Reason, which allows a person to go beyond the limits of concrete existence and set themselves ever newer goals; **free will**, based on the feeling of love and human dignity, which gives a person the strength to overcome the power of transitory circumstances; **conscience**, verifying the chosen goals and the means to achieve them - these are the main components of this more complex mechanism that regulates man's creative and transformative activity. At the same time, these are the minimum qualities that a person must possess to be the subject of such activity (Repkin, 1997a, p. 11).

Psychological structure of the subject of study

More than a decade later, the results of a series of studies based on the assumptions about the subject allowed V. V. Repkin to formulate a clearer, more precise, and specific idea of the psychological structure of the subject and its development, which is proposed in an article aimed at analyzing educational strategies for personality stability (REPKINA; REPKIN, [2012]2018). In particular, this text defends the thesis, supported by research, that the level of development of the subject at which it finds psychological stability, i.e., the ability to self-transformation, passes through two stages or levels and significantly depends on schooling, especially that which takes place in the first years of primary school.

According to the authors, when a child enters school, he develops a psychological structure consisting of two elements that characterize him as a subject: (1) **the universal need** for independent and active action, which appears in the first months of life in the form of a lack of emotional communication, and (2) **reflection**, through which the child distances himself from his actions. According to Repkina and Repkin ([2012]2018, p. 8), the "initial form of self-consciousness (Myself) that arises through reflection turns out to be the most powerful stimulus for the child's later development" as a subject.

At the end of primary school, this psychological structure of the subject changes significantly. Developmental experiments conducted for many years in many regions of Russia and Ukraine have led to the conclusion that in this

period of school life students have formed the psychological structure of the subject of study activity consisting of two components. Now the central core is no longer the need for independent action, but the process of (1) **comprehension**, which acquires an indirect character and, based on knowledge of the substantive basis of the generalized mode of action or functional system, provides an understanding of its meaning, and (2) **defining reflection**, [1] which allows the student to detect contradictions between the necessary level of understanding of a new situation and the existing knowledge. In this way, they can independently define a new learning objective and then find a way to achieve it. The processes of perception, thinking and remembering acquire a reflexive character, i.e., they become truly voluntary.

According to Repkin (REPKINA; REPKIN, [2012]2018), the initial "I myself", which finds satisfaction in the process of solving study tasks, is filled with concrete content, and the student's self-consciousness arises in the form of interest in the semantic side of the studied phenomena, which presents itself as the main motive for learning. Thus, the basis of self-evaluation is increasingly based on the evaluation of the degree of participation in the discovery of the cultural norm, which determines the creative attitude towards it. At the same time, retrospective self-evaluation differs in its content, validity, and prognosis - in its cautious and optimistic nature. With the formation of these structural components (of the first and second stages), the student first becomes the subject of collective study activity, then of quasi-research activity aimed at mastering an integral system of practical actions, and finally of study activity whose task is the student's self-transformation into a subject.

Repkina and Repkin ([2012]2018) present reports on the diagnostic research carried out by members of the Kharkiv group for more than a decade on the level of formation of the components that make up the psychological structure of the subject of study activity, and the moments or phases through which this process passes.

Our diagnostic study conducted in 1995-2008 in 39 classes from different regions of Russia and Ukraine, working in developmental learning programs, showed that by the end of the first years of primary school, the subject structure of the described study activity is formed in the majority of students. In 25% of students, this structure is in the process of collective solution of study tasks, i.e., it is in the zone of possible development, while in 70% it is already at the level of actual development (REPKINA, 2010). It is clear that the development of the subject, and even more the personality, does not end with the end of primary school. However, the peculiarities of the current psychological structure of the subject suggest that it provides the adolescent with sufficient stability to cope with the negative effects of the external environment.

To confirm the validity of this assumption, we present the results of a survey of tenth graders from two schools in the Lugansk region (Ukraine), who in early elementary school participated in developmental learning programs conducted under our guidance by undergraduate psychology students (Yu. A. Didenko, A.V. Ganagoy, D.N. Makhukova, N.S. Bondareva, and A.V. Barabashova). Although these students were outside the school of the first years, they studied according to regular programs, and their study and research activity was supported mainly by interactive learning methods, but the test results for all the indicators usually used to characterize personality stability (structure of value orientations, formation of motivational attitudes to achievement, success, freedom from unfavorable emotional states; high indicators of willpower, resistance to stress, self-esteem and self-acceptance, etc.) were very low. (ANDREEV, 2008), were significantly higher than those of their traditional school peers.

- Levels through which the subject of study activity passes

The research carried out by the Kharkiv group has shown that during the learning of mathematics and Russian language, the student consistently becomes the subject of study activity. This process follows certain stages of human development in ontogenesis and V. V. Repkin (REPKIN; REPKINA, [2018]2022) established seven stages: (1) **subject of relatively simple cultural actions** (writing, reading, arithmetic); (2) **subject of transformative object action**, which is based on understanding its meaning and general mode; (3) **subject of knowledge**, capable of content analysis of

practical situations of various kinds; (4) **subject of self-transformation**; (5) **subject of self-determination in life**; (6) **subject of study-professional activity and**; (7) finally, **creative subject**, i. i.e., personality.

In his ongoing work to improve his ideas, Repkin (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2019) became more precise in specifying the final stage of subject development, reducing the number of levels from seven to four: (1) **communicative subject**; (2) **subject of practical actions**; (3) **subject of understanding**; (4) **creative subject**. Each of the mentioned types of subjects is determined by the type of activity they carry out, but not because of their ability to carry out their actions, but based on the needs that feed them. The content that defines each level remains the same and does not change in any way.

The new proposal introduces four new features. First, it introduces an initial level before the subject of actions, that is, the communicative subject. Second, the levels of the subject of relatively simple cultural actions (writing, reading, calculating) and the subject of transformative object action are merged into the level of the subject of practical actions. Third, the name of the level of the subject of knowledge is changed to that of the subject of understanding, but without any significant change in the content that defines it. Fourth, the subjects of self-transformation, the subject of self-determination in life, the subject of study-professional activity, and the creative subject are integrated into a single level: the creative subject.

The greatest novelty of this latest proposal in comparison with the previous one is the inclusion of the communicative subject as the initial stage in the development of the subject of study activity. According to the author, at the end of the 2nd or at the beginning of the 3rd year of life, a child for the first time convincingly declares himself as a subject (the famous "Myself!"). By the end of preschool age, they have become the subject of various types and forms of activities. In addition, they begin to develop the need actively to realize themselves as subjects and to expand the scope of this realization, which finds its most vivid expression in role-playing. It is this need that primarily determines the child's psychological readiness for school. But

preschool children have neither the need nor the ability to change themselves. Both can only be developed during school learning. Whether this opportunity is realized or not depends largely on several conditions that are formed in the learning process itself (REPKINA, 1993).

The developmental stage of the communicative subject extends from the first months of life to the end of the preschool period (4/5 years). This stage is characterized on the one hand by a rich experience of communication and on the other hand by the simplicity of self-transforming actions based on one's own individual experience (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2019).

The development of the **subject of practical actions** takes place between the beginning of the school process (5/6 years old) and the end of the 2nd and beginning of the 3rd year of primary school (8/9 years old). During this period, the child becomes the subject of actions that go far beyond his or her individual experience. The methods of implementing these practical actions are determined by cultural norms (writing, reading, arithmetic actions, etc.), and there is an intensive development of cultural awareness, methods of establishing the objective bases of the ways of performing actions, first in the form of sensory perceptions, and then in the form of concepts and meaningful analysis of the components of the mode of action (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2019).

The **understanding subject** develops in the period between the second half of 3rd grade and the end of 5th grade (10/11 years). At this stage, according to Repkin and Repkina (2019), the mastery of new modes of action recedes, while the focus shifts to a change in the individual's understanding of himself as a subject, as well as the possibilities of activity.

Finally, the **creative subject** represents the final stage of the individual's subjective development and coincides with the moment when the student tries to check his possibilities for inclusion in a certain type of creative activity, determining the prospects for his formation as a creative person (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2019).

The explicitness of these levels in the development of the subject of study activity proves only one of the main theoretical and methodological concerns

of V.V. Repkin, namely the study of the processual character of the subject's development. This theme appears repeatedly and emphatically in various works from the 1990s until the end of his life. In a still unpublished text, the author, together with Natalya V. Repkina, wrote specifically on the subject of study activity:

Before entering school, children have already gone through some important stages of development. First, they were the subject of direct emotional communication with adults, then object activity, and finally play. Each of these types of activity makes special demands on the child's intellect and personality and provides appropriate means for their development. Now the child must take a new step in development, which is to become an **object of study**. By the time the child enters school, the need to realize himself as a subject and to expand the sphere of this realization is already sufficiently formed, which constitutes the core of psychological readiness for school learning. However, **the student** does not enter the school as a subject of learning but as an **object of pedagogical influences** who willingly carries out all the demands and instructions of the professor. They still need to become **subjects of study**, and without the help of the school and the professor, they won't be able to take this step. If this support is absent or late, there is a risk of losing **interest** in school and the **desire** to study. It is clear that this support cannot be reduced to promoting **the child's active, conscious, responsible, etc. relationship with studying**. Undoubtedly, all these qualities are important, but they are not specific to the characteristics of study and **are not sufficient** to characterize the student as a **subject of study** (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2023, p. 14-15, our emphasis).

This quote highlights two specific qualities associated with the concept of the subject of study activity. On the one hand, the role of needs, interests, and desires in this process, much more than the ability to perform certain actions (study, control, and evaluation). On the other hand, manifestations such as the child's "active", "conscious", "responsible" relationship with study are important, but also insufficient to characterize the student as a subject of study activity. What characterizes the student as a subject is the mastery of theoretical concepts that constitute the objective basis of a certain generalized mode of action that enables

the student to put the study activity into practice. Therefore, one of the basic characteristics of developmental learning is that its content is integrated by a system of theoretical concepts (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2023).

Theoretical concepts, forming the objective basis of generalized modes of action and allowing the subject to develop, are learned only in the activity of study as the highest form of assimilation. This activity, carried out in the form of "quasi-research" and study dialog, presupposes: (a) the setting of the study task by the student and (b) the carrying out of the study actions that allow to solve it¹⁰ (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2023). The study activity based on "quasi-research" and study dialogue is based on the activity of students and professors distributed collectively, which gives the study the character of cooperative work.

- The process of reception of V.V. Repkin's concept of the subject of study activity

The analysis carried out so far on the concept of the subject of study activity developed by V.V. Repkin and his team of collaborators allows us to prove what was initially a hypothesis: this is a pioneering work in the field of studies within the Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin psychological-didactic system of developmental learning due to its theoretical and methodological novelty, but above all it has enormous innovative and creative potential, it is profound, complex, and at the same time incomplete and even imprecise. Davidov (1996), aware of the magnitude of the contribution of the Ukrainian psychologist and teacher, paid tribute to him in his most important book (Kudryavtsev, 2023). However, it is also a work that was entirely ignored, or at least underestimated, by future research on the subject within the system itself.

¹⁰ (1) attempts to reconstruct the object situation in order to discover the relationship between the elements that determines its possibility and capacity for transformation; (2) construction of the model that fixes these relationships in a pure form, in the analysis of the selected relationships and fixation of the results of this analysis in the form of a concept or generalized mode of action; (3) concretization of the mode of action found; (4) assimilation of this mode and; (5) evaluation of the result of solving the study task (REPKIN; REPKINA, 2023, p. 16).

What could have caused this apparent paradox? We need to delve deeper into this analysis, but Vostorgova (2022) and Kudryavtsev (2023) offer important clues to this question. Vostorgova (2022, p. 1) recognizes that although V.V. Repkin left a significant scientific legacy, "his students and followers still don't understand it. Kudryavtsev (2023), for his part, admits that this apparent marginalization of V.V. Repkin's conception of the subject is, if only in part, related to its enormous philosophical complexity.

In short, V.V. Repkin's studies on the subject of study activity, which shook the foundations of developmental learning by establishing some basic principles of a psychological theory of the subject of study activity, did not prosper, among other things because the didactic system within which they arose had already entered a phase of decline and withering because few scientists were intellectually capable of understanding the author's these given their novelty, and because there was not yet a reasonable level of development in philosophy and psychology for their reception.

Final considerations

V. V. Repkin made significant contributions to the development of theories of developmental learning and study activity, especially in the field of didactic Russian language teaching. However, one of his most important contributions is connected with laying the foundations of a theory of the subject of study activity. His ideas on the subject were considered original in his time by colleagues, collaborators, and followers, which helped to change the objective of developmental learning from the perspective of the Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin psychological-didactic system, especially after V.V. Davidov included them in his work "Theory of developmental learning" (1996).

Nevertheless, V.V. Repkin's contributions to the subject of study had little impact on future research within the system. Research focused on analyzing the specific psychic operations of theoretical thinking continued to prevail without considering the subject who thinks.

In the specific case of Brazil, where the greatest influence was exerted by the representatives of the Moscow group, research has been focused on the implementation of didactic-formative experiments aimed at the development of theoretical thinking or the formation of certain study actions in reading, writing, introducing the concepts of multiplication and division, proposing and implementing stages for learning mathematical knowledge objects, etc. As a result, content, methods, and assessment are valued as harming the learner, keeping alive the thesis of A.N. Leontiev, adopted by V.V. Davidov, of the mediation of mathematical knowledge objects. As a result, the content, methods, and assessment are evaluated as harming the learner, keeping alive the thesis of A.N. Leontiev, adopted by V.V. Davidov, of the mediated and direct relationship between the processes of assimilation and development.

V. V. Repkin was the first to say in the 1990s that the relationship between assimilation and human development is mediated by the subject. It is the individual himself who assimilates and develops in a process of self-transformation that is determined much more by the ability to perform certain actions than by the desire, pleasure, will, need, taste, possibility, and freedom to perform them.

The Ukrainian author has also shown in his work that subjects are not born but are a human condition, the result of the activities carried out, and the relations established; that the subject of study activity passes through different levels, which are determined by the contents learned, the methods used, and the way these processes are organized. The subject of the study activity is determined by the learning of theoretical concepts in the study activity, which has the character of "quasi-research", study dialogue, and shared protagonism.

Finally, V.V. Repkin helps us to understand that the subject is the master of his activity, not a puppet of it. His concept of the "subject as source" of study activity, which replaces the definition of the carrier subject, brings elements that are still little or poorly understood, even by those who consider

themselves his followers, but it will help to revolutionize the foundations of developmental learning theory in the future.

It should be emphasized that the listed stages of developmental learning are determined by the objective logic of the formation and development of the student as a subject of learning,

It is necessary to continue the research on the concept of the subject of the study activity, to return to it from where it was abandoned, and to improve it because of the current development achieved by developmental, age and pedagogical psychology and didactics, the demands of contemporary schools and the specific problems facing Brazilian education today.

For reasons of space, the article does not deal with two other aspects that are critical in the analysis of the development of the subject of study activity: (a) the organization of the process of study activity that leads to the development of the subject; (b) the diagnosis of the process of constitution of the subject of study activity. As a matter of fact, the latter is still something like the "Achilles' heel" of the theory of developmental learning in general and the theory of the subject of study activity in particular.

V. V. Repkin: Concepción de sujeto de la actividad de estudio (1990-2021)

RESUMEN:

Este artículo discute la concepción de sujeto de la actividad de estudio desarrollada por V. V. Repkin, en el período comprendido entre 1990 y 2021, con el cual cambió las direcciones, objetivos y contenido del aprendizaje desarrollador desde la perspectiva del sistema psicológico-didáctico Elkonin-Davidov-Repkin. El autor introdujo, a principios de la década de 1990, el sujeto de la actividad de estudio como la neoformación fundamental en la edad escolar inicial. El texto pretende, en primer lugar, mostrar que la consolidación de la Teoría de la Actividad de Estudio hubiera sido imposible sin el desarrollo del concepto de sujeto desde el punto de vista de su contenido psicológico específico. Antes de V. V. Repkin, la idea de sujeto de estudio era esencialmente abstracta y poco sustancial, basada en aspectos descriptivos asociados, en general, a fenómenos externos al sujeto mismo. En segundo lugar, analizar el proceso de génesis, desarrollo y perfeccionamiento de las investigaciones de V. V. Repkin sobre el sujeto que estudia, en especial las realizadas en el período comprendido entre 1990 y 2021. Se concluye que V. V. Repkin cambió, con sus estudios, la forma de abordar el sujeto, el propio concepto de aprendizaje desarrollador de los niños en edad escolar temprana, consideró al sujeto como objetivo fundamental de la actividad de estudio (en lugar del pensamiento teórico), estableció el concepto de “sujeto como fuente”, así como su contenido y estructura psicológica, las características fundamentales de su concepción y los diferentes niveles por los que transita durante su proceso de ascensión.

Palabras clave: V. V. Repkin. Aprendizaje evolutivo. Actividad de estudio. Sujeto como fuente.

В.В. Репкин: концепция субъекта учебной деятельности (1990-2021 гг.).

АННОТАЦИЯ:

В статье рассматривается концепция субъекта учебной деятельности, разработанная В.В. Репкиным в период с 1990 по 2021 год. Автор показывает, как изменились направления, задачи и содержание развивающего обучения по психолого-дидактической системе Эльконина-Давыдова-Репкина при внедрении в начале 1990-х годов субъекта учебной деятельности как фундаментального новообразования в младшем школьном возрасте. Текст призван, во-первых, показать, что укрепление теории учебной деятельности было бы невозможно без разработки понятия субъекта с точки зрения его специфического психологического содержания. До В. В. Репкина представление о субъекте учебной деятельности было преимущественно абстрактным и не очень содержательным, основанным на его описательных характеристиках, по сути, внешних по отношению к самой сущности у субъекта. Во-вторых, проанализировать процесс зарождения, развития и совершенствования исследований В.В. Репкина по указанной проблеме, особенно проведенных в период с 1990 по 2021 гг. Делается вывод о том, что В. В. Репкин своими исследованиями о субъекте изменил саму концепцию развивающего обучения детей младшего школьного возраста, рассматривая субъект как основную цель учебной деятельности (вместо теоретического мышления), разработав положение о «субъекте как источнике учебной деятельности», а также его психологическое содержание и структуру, основные характеристики и различные уровни, через которые он проходит в процессе своего развития.

Ключевые слова: Репкин В.В. Развивающее обучение. Учебная деятельность. Субъект как источник деятельности.

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