Obutchénie
Revista de Didática e Psicologia Pedagógica

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

Motivational Foundations of the Activity of Study[1]

Fundamentos motivacionais da atividade de estudo

Volodimir V. Repkin[2]

ABSTRACT RESUMO

The article presents a translation and a scholarly commentary on V. V. Repkin's lecture "Motivational Foundations of the Activity of Study" (1997), which has not been previously published. It analyzes the structure of motivation within the activity of study in the framework of developmental instruction theory, with particular emphasis on the relationship between need, motive, and interest as a meaning-forming construct. It is demonstrated that the activity of study does not arise directly from a cognitive need as such, but emerges through the transformation of the subject's need for self-development. In this context, interest is interpreted as a specific form of manifestation of this need, ensuring the transition from externally driven to internally grounded motivation. The article argues that interest, within the structure of the activity of study, should not be reduced to a purely cognitive phenomenon, but should be understood as a form of experiencing the meaning of activity, integrating cognitive, practical, and emotional dimensions. From this perspective, the activity of study is

RESUMO

O artigo apresenta a tradução e um comentário científico da aula de V. V. Repkin "Fundamentos motivacionais da atividade de estudo" (1997), até então inédita. Analisa-se a estrutura da motivação da atividade de estudo no âmbito da teoria da aprendizagem desenvolvimental, com ênfase na relação entre necessidade, motivo e interesse como formação de sentido. Demonstra-se que a atividade de estudo não se constitui diretamente a partir da necessidade cognitiva, mas emerge no processo de transformação da necessidade do sujeito em seu próprio desenvolvimento. Nesse contexto, o interesse é analisado como uma forma específica de manifestação dessa necessidade, assegurando a passagem de uma motivação externa para uma motivação interna. Argumenta-se que o interesse, na estrutura da atividade de estudo, não se reduz a um fenômeno cognitivo, mas atua como forma de vivência do sentido da atividade, integrando dimensões cognitivas, práticas e emocionais. Assim, a atividade de estudo é compreendida como um espaço de constituição do sujeito, no qual o

[1] Translation performed by Natalya V. Repkina.

[2] Graduated in Philosophy from Moscow State University (1952). In 1963, he founded the Kharkiv Group as part of the Elkonin-Davydov-Repkin system. He taught at the Kharkiv Institute of Psychology (1968-1972, Ukraine). He earned his Doctorate in Psychological Sciences in 1966 from Moscow State University, under the supervision of P. I. Zinchenko. In the late 1960s, with the support of V. V. Davydov, he founded the Kharkiv Research Laboratory. He also taught at Maxim Gorky Kharkiv State University (now Karazin University), where he founded the Department of Psychology (1972-1979), as well as at the Kharkiv Institute of Engineering and the Tomsk Institute of Developmental Learning. He was Vice-President of the International Association of Developmental Learning since its founding in 1994. He is the author of numerous articles and books. His name appears inside a text box, indicating, according to tradition, a sign of mourning due to his passing on April 11, 2022. [Translator's note]

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

viewed as a space for the constitution of the subject, in which development takes the form of self-transformation.

Keywords: Activity of study. Developmental instruction. Subject. Motivation. Interest. Meaning. Emotions.

desenvolvimento assume o caráter de auto-transformação.

Palavras-chave: Atividade de estudo. Aprendizagem coletiva desenvolvimental. Sujeito. Motivação. Interesse. Sentido. Emoções.

1 Introduction

The text presented to the reader is a lecture by V. V. Repkin, "Motivational Foundations of the Activity of Study," prepared by the author in 1997. Until now, it had not been published and existed in manuscript form.

The lecture belongs to a group of works in which the motivational aspect of the activity of study within the theory of developmental instruction is presented in a more complete and systematic way. Unlike earlier expositions, this text provides a detailed analysis of the structure of learning motives, their dynamics, as well as the conditions for the transition from externally conditioned learning to the activity of study as a specific form of the subject's activity.

Of particular importance is the elaboration of the concept of study interest, which is not considered as a phenomenon derived from cognitive need, but as a specific form of manifestation of the subject's need for their own development. In this context, interest appears as a meaning-forming motive that ensures the transition to the activity of study and confers personal significance upon it.

Also important is the distinction between different types of learning motivation, related to internal and external grounds of action, which makes it possible to clarify the psychological conditions for the formation of the activity of study and its difference from other forms of learning.

The publication of this text is particularly relevant in light of the need for a more comprehensive presentation of V. V. Repkin's theoretical legacy, especially those aspects that remained outside published works but are of

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

fundamental importance for understanding the structure of the activity of study and the process of the formation of the subject. (N. V. Repkina)

2.Development

Each type of activity is characterized, first of all, by its specific object-related content. This, however, does not mean that by observing a person's actions we can accurately determine the type of activity they are engaged in. Moreover, such observation does not even allow us to assert that the person is actually engaged in any activity at all. Indeed, what can be said about the activity of a person who is reading a book? Nothing definite can be said. It would hardly help to clarify that this is a first-grade child reading a primer. It is one thing if the child is reading to their dolls, conducting a "lesson" with them, and quite another if they are completing a school assignment. The same book may be read by their teacher in preparation for a lesson, by a proofreader, or by a specialist in didactics tasked with developing instructional materials for teachers, and so on. It is evident that, in all these cases, the same external procedure (reading) realizes entirely different actions, each oriented toward a specific goal, behind which, in turn, lies a particular motive that drives the action and gives it a certain personal meaning, and, finally, a specific need whose satisfaction constitutes the basis of the action. Only by clarifying the goals, motives, and needs of the acting individual is it possible to understand what they are actually doing and what the real content of their activity is (Leontiev, 1978).

The analysis of these components of the object-related content of activity should appropriately begin with the need to which it responds. On the one hand, it is precisely the need that constitutes the foundation of the psychological mechanism regulating activity, determining the content of motives and goals. On the other hand, it more precisely characterizes the specificity of the object-related content of activity, distinguishing one type of activity from another. A new type of activity–both historically and in the life of an individual–emerges only when a need arises whose satisfaction cannot be achieved within the framework of

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

already existing forms of activity. Therefore, to understand the specificity of the content of an activity means, above all, to identify the need to which it responds. (Leontiev, 1978)

At first glance, it might seem that the content of this need is fully determined by the object that constitutes the product or result of the activity. However, the relationship between the product of activity and its motivational basis is not unambiguous. This is due to the social division of labor and the "exchange of activities" that follows from it, most simply manifested as the exchange of products. As a result, the same action may be oriented toward the satisfaction of entirely different needs.

Thus, for example, when a carpenter makes a table to fulfill a production target and, the next day, produces a similar table while participating in a professional competition, it is evident that in each of these cases his actions are based on different needs. At the same time, each of these needs relates differently to the content of the action and its result. The need for subsistence is connected with the production of the table externally and is mediated by exchange relations. In principle, the carpenter could earn income in other ways. In contrast, the need for professional self-affirmation can be satisfied only through the activity itself–through the production of an object that demonstrates his competence. In this case, the connection between the need and the content of the action is direct and necessary.

Based on this distinction, Alexei Leontiev identified two types of motivation in human activity. In one case, activity is driven by motives internal to the content of the action. In the other, it is based on external motives that are not directly related to its content. These two types make it possible to distinguish different psychological forms of activity.

Let us return to the example of the carpenter. It is clear that when participating in a competition, he is driven by internal and meaningful motivation. In this situation, he tends to reinterpret the object of his activity, demonstrating initiative and mobilizing his abilities to realize his idea. In other

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

words, he acts as a free and responsible subject, and his activity acquires a creative character.

A different situation arises when he works "for a wage." Although the wage is equally important, it compels him to follow external requirements, subordinating his own conceptions to them. In this case, it is difficult to speak of an autonomous subject; rather, he acts as an agent within a prescribed role.

This need manifests itself only in the process of learning and only as its direct result, its "product." At first glance, such a need appears self-evident. However, a more careful analysis reveals that...It is precisely this need to assert oneself as the subject of a socially significant activity (Elkonin, 2009) that underlies the child's interest in school. It is important to emphasize that this is a need related to the status of being a subject, rather than to the content of the activity itself: the child is attracted not so much by knowledge as such, but by the social attributes of school–lessons, schedules, tasks, assessments, and so on.

This need determines first-grade students' attitude toward everything they encounter at school, including learning itself. Children are willing to comply with any requirement set by the teacher, provided that their actions receive a positive social evaluation. The figure who, in their eyes, has the right to evaluate is the teacher (hence his or her enormous prestige), and the most understandable form of such evaluation is the grade, which assumes the function of both a driving and a meaning-forming motive of learning.

The desire to receive a grade (initially any grade, and later a good one) leads students to carry out all assigned tasks carefully, regardless of their content. A good grade reinforces the child's conviction that he or she is engaged in an important and useful activity, encouraging further effort. A negative evaluation is far more problematic, since in that case the child loses the point of support that allows him or her to feel secure in the new school situation.

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

It is evident that the needs and motives underlying learning in the early school years are not directly related to its content; that is, they are external to it. This motivation is strengthened with the formation of the student collective. Already in preschool age, the child develops a need for recognition from peers, and this need becomes activated in the school context (Dusavitski; Repkin, 2019).

In this process, children begin to evaluate one another primarily as students, using criteria provided by the teacher as a reference. Since this evaluation directly influences their position within the group, it becomes a powerful motive for learning. However, unlike the teacher's evaluation, peer evaluation tends to be more rigid and less flexible, and may become a source of significant discomfort when it is negative.

If the teacher fails to correct this situation in time by adjusting the criteria of evaluation, the resulting discomfort may lead to compensatory forms of behavior, including behaviors of an antisocial character within the school context.

This occurs for at least two reasons. On the one hand, since the need to affirm oneself as a subject of a socially significant activity is not effectively realized within the process of schooling, it gradually ceases to motivate the student toward learning. On the other hand, as the children's collective develops, interpersonal relations come to occupy the foreground. Consequently, the object of self-evaluation and its criteria change: the child's position within the group is increasingly determined not by academic performance, but by personal qualities–intelligence, erudition, dexterity, kindness, sense of justice, etc. As a result, the connection between learning and the child's need to affirm oneself within the school collective weakens and eventually disappears.

Thus, in the second half of primary school age, learning finds itself in a kind of motivational vacuum, manifested in a sharp decline in interest in studies, a decrease in responsibility toward school tasks, and other phenomena well known to teachers and parents. However, since school continues to be the main

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

sphere of the child's social activity and learning remains its central obligation, this vacuum is gradually filled by the end of this stage and the beginning of adolescence. The concrete ways of overcoming the motivational crisis may vary, but in most cases three main variants can be observed.

A significant proportion of children begin to perceive learning as an external necessity, as a fundamental condition for maintaining social comfort and stable relationships with adults. Since these relationships depend primarily on official evaluation provided by the school, the main motive for studying becomes the attainment of good grades. However, in comparison with the beginning of schooling, the actual content of this motive changes radically. Whereas earlier the grade represented success in affirming the student in their new social status–a grade "for oneself"–it now becomes a means of securing a favorable position in the world of adults, turning into a grade "for others" (for the teacher, for parents, etc.).

Whereas earlier the grade was perceived as the result of one's own effort, it now becomes an end in itself, and the means of achieving it become indifferent (if it cannot be obtained through effort, one may attempt to "outsmart" the teacher). For such students, an indifferent or negative attitude toward most school subjects becomes characteristic. Depending on circumstances, their behavior may become adaptive and conformist or, on the contrary, non-conformist, manifesting itself in increasing forms of opposition to the demands of adults.

A second, smaller group already displays, by the end of primary school, motives of a prestige-oriented character. For these students, forms of recognition from adults whom they regard as authorities are extremely important. This often leads to conflicts with the peer group, whose evaluations are relatively insignificant for them. During adolescence, these motives may be supplemented by others connected with life perspectives, often suggested by adults and not directly related to professional self-determination.

Although these motives are external to the content of learning, they may be quite strong and determine a specific type of school behavior: strict compliance

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

with the teacher's demands, an uncritical attitude toward them, great diligence combined with a lack of initiative, strong orientation toward external evaluation, and a low capacity for self-evaluation. Even when interest in a subject is present, it is usually connected with the teacher's personality and tends to be temporary, not developing into a stable interest in the content.If such conformist behavior is confined to the sphere of learning, it tends to exhaust itself, often culminating in youth in a form of "rebellion" that leads to a devaluation of education within the individual's value system.

In other cases, conformism extends to other spheres of life, deeply influencing personality formation.

The most profound transformation of motivation occurs in a third group, the smallest one. Externally, it manifests itself in the fact that, after a brief decline in school activity at the end of primary school, students begin to demonstrate a strong interest in a set of subjects or in a particular subject. Often, though not necessarily, this interest is connected with the teacher's personality. However, unlike the transient interest observed in the second group, here it becomes stable and progressively intensifies.

This is expressed in students' tendency to go beyond the limits of the textbook, actively seeking additional information. Another essential characteristic of this interest is its substantive nature: students are attracted not merely by the novelty of facts, but by the possibility of using knowledge in their own activity. They prefer non-standard, more complex tasks that require reflection. In this context, the grade loses its central importance–these students are guided primarily by self-evaluation or by the critical evaluation of an adult whom they regard as an authority. They also display a critical attitude toward the teacher, not automatically accepting remarks and demands. At the same time, their autonomy determines their position within the group: they are usually respected, although they do not seek leadership positions.

It is evident that, in this case, the student acts as a subject, satisfying in the process of learning a vital need, which manifests itself in the form of a stable

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

interest, giving learning a deep personal meaning. The content of this interest suggests that it represents a form of manifestation of the cognitive need upon which the activity of study develops.

However, the question arises: how can it be explained that at the previous stage the motivation for learning was not effectively connected with this need? Even if it is assumed that this is due to the introduction of more complex content (scientific concepts), the question remains as to why this same content did not lead to the activation of the cognitive need in other students. These considerations lead to the conclusion that the need underlying the activity of study is, in some way, related to the cognitive need, but is not reducible to it.

Up to this point, in considering the relationship between need, motive, and the results of activity, we have taken into account only its objective result. However, every activity also has a subjective, indirect result.

In fact, whatever activity a person performs, they transform not only the object with which they act, but also themselves, appropriating and reproducing within themselves historically formed human qualities and properties. Since such reproduction constitutes an essential condition of human life, at a certain stage of social development it becomes autonomous, separating itself from production proper (material or spiritual).

Thus, a specific class of human activities arises–reproductive activities (Davydov, 1996). Each of these activities represents a particular model of the corresponding productive activity, in which the human qualities that the individual must reproduce in themselves are manifested more clearly. Although they retain the same structure as their productive prototype, reproductive activities differ from it in terms of their object content and the "product" toward which they are directed.

The specific character of these activities is particularly evident in role-playing. When "playing hospital," for example, carefully reproducing the actions of the characters, children are not concerned with the practical outcome of these actions, but with reproducing the relations between the

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

participants and the rules that organize these relations. It is in this process that the need arises to appropriate the corresponding object – in this case, the norms governing relations among the participants in joint activity (Elkonin, 2009).

Among reproductive activities, the activity of study is also included. Like any other activity, it can be described in terms of its objective result – the knowledge, skills, and competencies that students acquire. However, its real content (the goals, motives, and needs that sustain it) is connected with its subjective, internal product. Without understanding this product – that is, what exactly the individual transforms in themselves through learning – it is impossible to understand either the activity of study or its subject.

The activity of study arises only under conditions of organized instruction, when the appropriation of knowledge is presented to the student as a specific task. A necessary condition for its emergence is the non-coincidence between the objective and subjective results of learning. In the initial stages of traditional instruction, this difference practically does not exist: the objective result (knowledge of rules) coincides, in terms of content, with the subjective result (the ability to apply them). Therefore, no special object distinct from the content to be learned is formed, and learning does not transform into the activity of study.

The situation changes when the object of learning becomes the scientific concept. In this case, the student may appropriate either only the final result of generalization or the very process of analysis and generalization. In the first case, the situation remains similar to the previous one: the objective result coincides with the subjective one, and no conditions are created for the transformation of learning into the activity of study. In the second case, however, the objective result consists in the appropriation of the modes of analysis and generalization – modes that coincide, in their essential features, with the methods of scientific inquiry. As shown by Sergei Rubinstein, analysis and generalization constitute the core of the mechanism of human capacities. Thus,

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

by mastering these modes, the individual reproduces within themselves a specific human capacity (Rubinstein, 2002).

It is precisely this internal transformation – this development of capacities – that constitutes the subjective result of learning. This result does not coincide with the objective result, either in content or in its form of existence. Under certain conditions, it may acquire intrinsic value for the student, becoming the object of a specific need. At that moment, learning transforms into the activity of study, oriented toward satisfying the need to develop one's own capacities. Since capacities are a fundamental property of the subject, the need to develop them can be understood as a concrete form of the need for self-affirmation, which arises in childhood and transforms throughout development. In this way, the activity of study ensures the continuity of the child's development as a subject, now within the context of organized instruction.

At the same time, this transition marks the beginning of a new qualitative stage. Whereas previously development occurred relatively spontaneously, it now takes on the character of a process of self-transformation. The child ceases to be merely a subject in development and becomes the subject of their own development.

It would be naive to assume that the child engages in this activity with the conscious intention of transforming their capacities. The content of the need that drives it, as is the case with many other needs, manifests itself indirectly, through motives and goals. More immediately, it appears in the form of emotionally charged experiences. hen this need is actualized in situations of insufficient capacities, it is experienced as an acute feeling of dissatisfaction with oneself, of inadequacy.

This particular form of emotional-reflexive self-evaluation, which arises as a result of analyzing the situation, becomes objectified, leading to the delimitation of the object whose insufficient understanding constitutes the source of the feeling of dissatisfaction with oneself. Thus, a specific relation to this object is established – it is understood as something whose

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

deeper and more complete comprehension can eliminate the feeling of inadequacy, that is, satisfy the current need. This relation is experienced in the form of an interest emotionally marked by the object, which constitutes the motive that drives the activity of study and gives it personal meaning – that is, it is the study interest.

Conventionally, interest is considered a specific form of manifestation of cognitive need (Dusavitski; Repkin, 2019). In fact, interest usually includes a clearly expressed cognitive component. However, this is hardly sufficient to relate it to a single human need. Common sense indicates that, alongside cognitive interest, there exist aesthetic, technical, sports, economic, and other types of interest; that is, interest can be a form of manifestation of any human need. At the same time, each of these needs can also manifest itself in the form of a drive. This is because the same need may characterize an individual either as the subject of an activity or as an executor acting within established roles and norms. In reality, in such cases we are dealing with two distinct needs that coincide in terms of their object but express different relations of the individual to the world and, consequently, presuppose different modes of satisfaction.

The need that characterizes the executor expresses dependence on objects, and its satisfaction is achieved through possession of these objects. In contrast, the need proper to the subject expresses the requirement of active self-affirmation in the world, realized through the creation, production, or transformation of the object. This difference is also manifested on the subjective level as the distinction between drive and interest.

A drive appears to the individual as an external, compulsive force originating from the object. It is what a person “feels like having,” rather than what they truly want. Although it may act as a powerful motive, a drive rarely determines the personal meaning of an action. Even when intense, it may be evaluated negatively by the subject. Moreover, it is characterized by rapid satiation, which may subsequently lead to a negative attitude toward the object.

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

Diametrically opposite properties characterize interest. Unlike drive–whose analogues can be found in the animal world–interest is a specifically human form of motivation. As a form of manifestation of the subject's own needs, it expresses an active and affirmative relation to the world. If a drive is oriented toward the consumable properties of an object, interest is directed toward those properties that open new possibilities for the subject's self-affirmation. In other words, whereas a drive is a projection of the object onto the individual's inner world, in interest the opposite occurs: the individual projects their own needs and capacities onto the objective world–their needs and capacities–onto the objective world, seeking in it the means for their realization.

In interest, the cognitive attitude (of search) and the practical attitude (of transformation) toward the world are organically united. Deprived of its practical orientation toward self-affirmation, interest degenerates into idle curiosity; losing its investigative character, it turns into blind pragmatism.

By prompting the subject to seek in the object new means of realization, interest endows this search with a deeply personal meaning. Unlike drive, which often comes into conflict with reason and will, interest harmonizes reason, will, and feelings, eliminating any ambivalence: it is impossible to be interested in something and at the same time condemn oneself for it. The satisfaction of interest–which implies the discovery of new possibilities for action–does not exhaust it; on the contrary, it tends to expand it, giving it stability and generalization

. At the same time, due to its close connection with the subject's values, interest exhibits strong selectivity, whereas drive, being subject to contingency, lacks conscious orientation.

The general properties of these forms of motivation manifest themselves in specific ways in different spheres of life. Let us consider their characteristics as motives of learning.

As already indicated, organized learning, as a form of role-regulated behavior governed by external norms, may be based on different needs, whose common feature is their indirect relation to the immediate results of

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

learning. These needs manifest themselves in the form of drives that act as motives for learning.

Initially, among these motives, the predominant one is that which expresses the need for social recognition of the importance of school activities. Since the main form of such recognition is the teacher's evaluation, the grade becomes the object that gives meaning to learning.

It is significant that, even without fully understanding this relation, the child associates the grade with the quality of their work. Thus, the initial drive for any grade quickly transforms into a conscious desire to obtain good grades.

It may lead the student to become enthusiastically involved in the game proposed by the teacher, to follow with anticipation the unfolding of the "performance" taking place during the lesson; however, this "interest" usually disappears with the bell that signals the end of the class.

A more significant role is played by motives related to the cognitive need, which, as noted earlier, is present to some degree in every child. In the early stages of learning, this need manifests itself in the typical form of preschool curiosity–that is, as an intense, emotionally charged orienting response to new facts, events, and so on. If this response is supported by the teacher and the learning material is rich in such elements, this situational curiosity may develop into a relatively stable interest in the object, which undoubtedly stimulates its study.

As the content of a discipline becomes enriched with elements that are fundamentally new to the learner (which is associated with the introduction of scientific concepts), this engagement may acquire the character of a stable motive for learning. Its effectiveness, however, largely depends on which aspect of the concepts is emphasized as the object of assimilation.

If the assimilated concepts appear to the learner merely as the result of scientific knowledge, the degree of their attractiveness is determined primarily by the possibility of their practical application and by the relevance of the field in which they can be applied. In other words, interest in the content retains its

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

function as a motive for learning only when it is supported by motives of a pragmatic nature.

A completely different character is assumed by this engagement when the object of assimilation becomes the very process of concept formation, that is, the modes of analysis and generalization.

As has already been noted, analysis and generalization constitute the core of the mechanism of human capacities. If the relationship between these modes and the corresponding capacity is revealed to the learner in some way (even if not at a conscious level), the concept comes to be perceived as a bearer of a human capacity.

In this way, engagement with the content is transformed into an interest in it as a source of capacities. As a form of expression of the subject's need to expand their own possibilities, this interest becomes an autonomous motive of learning, which not only steadily sustains the assimilation of concepts but also gives it the meaning of an activity oriented toward the transformation and development of oneself.

The emergence of interest does not mean that motives of a social, competitive, playful, or pragmatic nature lose their relevance. However, they are reinterpreted on the basis of interest and gradually assume a subordinate position in relation to it. This is expressed, in particular, in the transformation of the motivational function of assessment.

Under ordinary conditions, grades often become an end in themselves–or even lose their effectiveness. When connected with interest in the content, however, they begin to function as a starting point for the self-evaluation of the methods and results of the activity of study. This gives rise to a critical attitude toward assessment (including high grades), as well as a preference–often observed–for analytical comments rather than mere marks.

A similar process occurs with pragmatic motives related to the practical application of knowledge. If simple engagement with content, unsupported by such motives, tends to disappear quickly, interest in content as a source of capacities is relatively independent of its immediate practical usefulness–

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

whether for solving concrete problems or "simply" for gaining a deeper understanding of a particular domain of reality.

At the same time, this interest often leads the learner to independently seek new ways of applying the concepts they have assimilated, thus giving learning a creative character.

Thus, interest structures the various motives of learning, organizing them into a hierarchical system that ensures not only a stable desire to learn but also confers upon learning the meaning of a personally significant activity. The interest that underlies learning constitutes a form of expression of a need of the subject. Unlike other interests directed toward the external world, its object is the internal world of the subject itself–its capacities. The external object becomes meaningful only insofar as its understanding and mastery allow for the appropriation of the human capacities objectified in it.

In other words, unlike interests that motivate various forms of productive activity, the interest that underlies the activity of study directs the subject toward the transformation of themselves and of their own capacities, and in this sense constitutes study interest proper (Repkin, 2019).

Since there are no capacities "in general," the content of study interest becomes concretized depending on the type of capacity to which it is directed. This means that it takes specific forms–scientific, technical, artistic, athletic, and so on–which underlies the differentiation of concrete forms of the activity of study. This diversity also explains its selective character, determined by the significance that particular types of capacities acquire for the subject. At the same time, emerging in relation to specific capacities, interest may generalize and extend to others, forming a complex system of interrelated and hierarchically organized interests.

It is important to note that although, in a fully formed activity of study, interest appears as a form of manifestation of the subject's need for self-transformation, this need itself is constituted in the very process of the formation of the activity, as a result of the progressive generalization of particular interests (Dusavitski; Repkin, 2019).

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

In summary, learning initially arises as a moment within other activities of the child, without having its own intrinsic motivation. Under conditions of organized instruction, it becomes autonomous; however, as it does not allow the learner to realize themselves as a subject, it comes to be sustained by external motives of an unstable and situational character.

Learning as an activity is distinguished, first of all, by its specific content. The transition to the activity of study becomes possible when the learner discovers, behind knowledge and skills, the world of their own capacities, which comes to acquire intrinsic value. Under these conditions, learning ceases to be merely a means of assimilating knowledge and becomes an activity oriented toward the development of the subject themselves, acquiring the meaning of a process of self-transformation (Repkin, 2019).

In this sense, the activity of study reveals itself as a space in which the development of the subject is realized through the unity of need, interest, and lived experience, conferring upon learning a deeply personal meaning.

Fundamentos motivacionales de la actividad de estudio

RESUMEN

El artículo presenta la traducción y un comentario científico de la lección de V. V. Repkin «Fundamentos motivacionales de la actividad de estudio» (1997), hasta ahora inédita. Se analiza la estructura de la motivación de la actividad de estudio en el marco de la teoría de la enseñanza desarrollante, con énfasis en la relación entre necesidad, motivo e interés como formación de sentido. Se muestra que la actividad de estudio no surge directamente de la necesidad cognitiva, sino en el proceso de transformación de la necesidad del sujeto en su propio desarrollo. En este contexto, el interés se analiza como una forma específica de manifestación de dicha necesidad, que asegura la transición de una motivación externa a una motivación interna. Se argumenta que el interés, en la estructura de la actividad de estudio, no se limita a un fenómeno cognitivo, sino que actúa como forma de vivencia del sentido de la actividad, integrando dimensiones cognitivas, prácticas y emocionales. De este modo, la actividad de estudio se entiende como un espacio de constitución del sujeto, en el que el desarrollo adquiere el carácter de auto-transformación.

Palabras clave: Actividad de estudio. Enseñanza desarrollante. Sujeto. Motivación. Interés. Sentido. Emociones.

DOI: http://doi.org/10.14393/OBv10.e2026-02

4 Referências

DAVYDOV, V. V. *Teoria da aprendizagem coletiva desenvolvimental*. Moscou: Intor, 1996.

DUSAVITSKY, A. K.; REPKIN, V. V. A investigação do interesse cognoscitivo na atividade de estudo. In: PUENTES, R. V. (Org.). Ensino desenvolvimental: antologia. Uberlândia: EDUFU, 2019.

ELKONIN, D. B. *Obras psicológicas escolhidas*. Moscou: Pedagogika, 1989.
ELKONIN, D. B. Psicologia do Jogo. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009.

LEONTIEV, A. N. *Activity, Consciousness, and Personality*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1978.

LEONTIEV, A. N. *O desenvolvimento do psiquismo*. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte, 1978; São Paulo: Ícone, 2004.

REPKIN, V. V. O conceito de atividade de estudo. In: PUENTES, R. V.; CARDOSO, C. G.C.; AMORIM, P. A. P. (Orgs.). *Teoria da aprendizagem desenvolvimental*: contribuições de D. B. Elkonin, V. V. Davydov e V. V. Repkin. Curitiba: CRV; Uberlândia: EDUFU, 2019, p. 312–322.

REPKIN, V. V. Estrutura da atividade de estudo. In: *Teoria da aprendizagem desenvolvimental*: contribuições de D. B. Elkonin, V. V. Davydov e V. V. Repkin. PUENTES, R. V.; CARDOSO, C. G.C.; AMORIM, P. A. P. (Orgs.). Curitiba: CRV; Uberlândia: EDUFU, 2019, p. 323–330.

RUBINSTEIN, S. L. *Foundations of General Psychology*. São Petersburgo: Piter, 2002.

Recebido: abril/2026
Aprovado: maio/2026