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## THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES OF INTRODUCING THE PLAY-BASED METHODS TO TEACHERS' TRAINING IN THE SYSTEM OF POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

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*В статті здійснюється аналіз науково-теоретичних засад підготовки вчителів у системі післядипломної освіти до впровадження ігрових методів навчання. Узагальнені наукові підходи до розуміння сутності готовності особистості до професійної діяльності в цілому та педагогічної діяльності зокрема. Зазначено, що готовність вчителя до професійної діяльності є інтегративним особистісно-професійним явищем, зміст якого складає інтеграція ціннісно-орієнтаційного, когнітивного, конструктивного та рефлексивного компонентів, та яке є результатом тривалої професійної підготовки та самопідготовки фахівця, новоутворенням одного з етапів його професійного розвитку. Особливості професійної діяльності вчителя початкових класів в сучасних умовах, його професійні функції вимагають володіння ігровими методами навчання, які є діяльними за своєю суттю. На підставі здійсненого аналізу принципів діяльсного підходу в освіті зазначено, що вони висувають свої вимоги до вчителя початкових класів, системоутворювальною серед яких є суб'єктність як здатність педагога бути агентом дитинства. У статті здійснений аналіз положень інтегративного підходу «навчання через гру» та вимог до вчителя початкових класів, що забезпечують формування навчального досвіду школярів за допомогою ресурсу гри. Презентоване авторське розуміння сутності готовності вчителя початкових класів до впровадження ігрових методів навчання як інтегративного особистісно-професійного утворення, системної характеристики фахівця, що визначає його здатність ефективно використовувати ігрові методи навчання в освітньому процесі та складається з ціннісного, когнітивного та конструктивного компонентів. Підготовка вчителя до впровадження ігрових методів навчання є складним і тривалим процесом, що у сьогоднішніх умовах має здійснюватися у просторі післядипломної освіти*

**Ключові слова:** професійна готовність, ігрові методи, Нова українська школа, навчання через гру

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### 1. Introduction

The fundamental reformation of primary education has started in Ukraine since 2017 in Ukraine; it is remarkable for acceptance of new Laws of Ukraine “On education” (2017) [1], “On comprehensive secondary education” [2], approval of the Conception of New Ukrainian school and the State standard of primary education (Order of CabMin №87 of 21.02.2018) [3].

Among main factors of high-quality primary education, there are determined: comprehensive and timely covering of all school-age children by learning; many-sided use of preschool-period achievements; modernization and sanitation of the educational environment; introduction of methods of personally and competence oriented learning, upbringing and development of younger pupils; technological character of learning methods; monitoring support of the educational process and, that is especially important for us, – correspondent training of pedagogical staff [4]. Among key components of the formula of new school, there is declared such as a motivated teacher, having creative freedom and developing professionally [4].

So, the declared new values of primary education in Ukraine need essential review of the content of teachers' professional activity, and also their professional education and support of the professional development.

Realization of the conceptually new approach to the educational process organization in primary school, communication on principles of partnership, introduction of competence learning and other challenges, faced by a primary school teacher today, need from him/her to use other pedagogical methods, not only at the level of their instrumental component (realization of certain actions), but necessarily at the level of their sense acceptance, deep acknowledgment and interiorization. Such methods of pedagogical activity include, in the first turn, play-based learning methods. Because just they have a main resource as to realization of such principles, declared in the new State standard of primary education, as: acknowledgment of the fact that each child is talented; value of childhood; development of free personality; health and safety [4]. But last times, during the Soviet period of Ukrainian pedagogy, play-based methods were mostly related to means of preschool education and opposed to learning ones, because at school in whole and primary school in particular it was necessary “to teach, not to play”. As it was stated by the outstanding scientist, the author of didactic theory I Lerner, the main problems of Soviet and post-Soviet school education are: insufficient level of the teachers' professional competence, revealed in the insufficient motivation of pedagogical activity, low level

of teachers' psychological knowledge; domination of the explaining-reproductive approach that ignores methods of problem, research learning; stereotypes, authoritarianism in teacher's communication with pupils [5]. These problems are most essential factors that counteract the effective use of play-based methods of mastering and transformation of the external reality, natural for a child, by primary school teachers.

So, at changing fundamental ideas about primary education and its values, the priority task is creation of conditions for teacher's acceptance of play values, his/her mastering of play-based educational technologies and actualization of a play experience that is – for formation and development of the readiness to introduce play-based learning methods. Just this is one of urgent problems of the modern postgraduate pedagogical education in Ukraine.

## 2. Literary review

Studies of the problem of primary school teacher's readiness to introducing play-based learning methods don't occupy an important place in the actual native pedagogical science for today, but such studies are actively realized in works of foreign scientists [6, 7]. Their results testify that the process of introduction of play-based learning methods at primary school of different countries of the world is realized with essential complications just because of teachers' rejection of learning functions of a play. Play and learning, as Pramling Samuelsson and Johansson noted [8], are very often considered by teachers as separate objects. And moreover – dichotomic constructs [9]. So, just the teachers' readiness to implement play-based methods is, from the scientists' point of view, a system-creating component of the successful system of “implanting” a play in learning, and the formation of such readiness is a complicated and long-term process.

In native pedagogical science it is expedient to consider the problem of primary school teacher's readiness to implement play-based learning methods through the prism of scientific approaches as to determining the essence of: personal readiness to the professional activity in whole and to the pedagogical activity in particular, and also professional readiness of a primary school teacher; teacher's readiness to the professional activity under conditions of implementation of the Conception of New Ukrainian school and the play competence of a teacher. At the same time a study of the primary school teacher's readiness to implement play-based learning methods must be based on fundamental principles of the child play nature, highlighted in works of outstanding scientists-psychologists and pedagogues-classics, and also on understanding of modern child play peculiarities, presented in new scientific achievements.

But the problem of teachers' training in the system of postgraduate education for introducing play-based learning methods under conditions of implementation of the New Ukrainian School Conception remains unsolved till now.

## 3. Aim and tasks of the research

The aim of the research is in determining scientific-theoretical principles of teachers' training in the

system of postgraduate education for implementing play-based learning methods.

The research tasks are:

1) to determine the main theoretical-methodological approaches to understanding the essence of teachers' training in the system of postgraduate education for implementing play-based learning methods;

2) to characterize the structure of the teachers' readiness for implementing play-based learning methods;

3) to design pedagogical arrangements for providing the successful teachers' training in the system of postgraduate education for implementing play-based learning methods.

## 4. Materials and methods

For attaining the research aim, the following methods were used: analysis, generalization, systematization, comparison of different views on the studied problem – scientific approaches to understanding the essence of the phenomenon of person's readiness to the pedagogical activity; analysis of the studied notions by the generic-type scheme – for determining the essence of such notions as “person's readiness to the professional activity”, “person's readiness to the pedagogical activity”; modeling – for constructing the structural model of the teachers' readiness for implementing play-based learning methods.

## 5. Research results and their discussion

The conducted analysis of scientific studies as to the essence of the person's readiness to the professional activity gives a possibility to state that it is considered in three dimensions-approaches in pedagogy and psychology: 1) personal – as: a manifestation of individual-personal qualities, conditioned by the type of activity; special integral construct of diverse properties and person's attitudes [10, 11]. In such aspect the composition of the readiness to the activity consists of properties: intellectual sphere (decentration, reflection, criticality), moral sphere (responsibility), emotional sphere (empathy, sense of humor), willing sphere (self-regulation, willing qualities), organizational sphere (self-organization, self-management) [10];

2) activity – as a functional condition, in which psychic functions, such as the ability to mobilize oneself, to activate own psychic and physical resources for an activity intensify [12];

3) personal-activity – as an integral manifestation of all sides of a person that provides the effectiveness of the professional activity [13].

Generalization of scientists' research positions as to the essence of the person's readiness just to the pedagogical activity gives grounds to separate several approaches, in which it is considered from different methodological positions, accenting a certain its component that gain a system-creating status, namely:

1) Informational, in which the teachers' professional readiness is understood as a result of mastering professional pedagogical information and abilities to collect, to save, to transform and to transmit it in the process of activity [10];

2) technological, in which the readiness to the professional pedagogical activity is directly connected

with the ability to construct and to realize a pedagogical technology [14, 15];

3) functional-system, in which the readiness to the pedagogical activity is determined by the category of pedagogical abilities that provide realization of all professional tasks, as a professional-functional aptitude to the special pedagogical activity [16];

4) competence, in which it is determined as a precondition of the teacher's integral professional competence, manifested in mastering a necessary amount of knowledge, abilities and skills that reveal the formation of his/her pedagogical activity, pedagogical communication and teacher's person as a carrier of certain values, ideals and pedagogical consciousness [17];

5) acmeological [13], in which the person's readiness to the pedagogical activity determines one of stages of his/her personal-professional development, is a precondition and precursor of both professionalism of activity (harmonic combination of the high-developed professional competence and professional skills at the level of professional mastery, and also acmeological invariants – special basic skills [13]) and personal professionalism (understood by acmeologists as a system of different characteristics and properties of a specialist, corresponding to activity requirements and conditioning its high effectiveness that is a system of complicated and special abilities [13] approaches.

The conducted analysis of the scientific approaches to understanding the essence of the person's readiness to the professional activity in whole and person's readiness to the pedagogical activity in particular gives grounds to state that:

At first the person's professional readiness or person's readiness to the professional activity is: a systemic personal-professional construct, providing the effectiveness of the professional activity and consists of several components, characterizing:

1) positive attitude to the profession, interest to it and other stable motives (motivation components);

2) knowledge and ideas about peculiarities and conditions of the professional activity, its requirements to a person (orientation or knowledge component);

3) mastering of working methods and skills, techniques, cognitive processes of analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization (operational component);

4) self-evaluation of own readiness and its correspondence to professional requirements (evaluation component). As opposite to the situation (temporary) readiness, it is long-term and is manifested as a result of the process of person's purposeful, specially organized training for professional activity realization.

At second, the teacher's readiness to the professional activity is an integral personal-professional phenomenon, which essence is integration of the value-orientation, cognitive, constructive and reflexive components and a result of long-term professional training and self-training of a specialist, a new construct of one stage of his/her professional development. The teacher's professional readiness is a precondition of his/her professional competence development, a potential precursor and is conventionally divided in theoretical and practical ones.

The primary school teacher's professional readiness, based on the specificity of his/her activity, must provide his/her professional realization of own basic labor functions [18], namely: to plan and to realize the educational process; to provide and to support learning, upbringing and development of pupils in the educational environment and family; to create the educational environment; to reflect and to develop oneself professionally; to conduct pedagogical studies; to give colleagues methodical aid in learning, development, upbringing and socialization of pupils of primary classes of a secondary educational institution; to generalize own pedagogical experience and to present it to the pedagogical community, to estimate results of primary class teacher's work at a secondary educational institution. Returning to the second primary school teacher's function – to provide and to support learning, upbringing and development of pupils in the educational environment and family, – it is necessary to stress that he/she must:

– *know*: methods, forms and means for learning and providing interaction at the educational process; modern technologies of primary school learning; organization forms of the educational process and ones of interaction between pupils and a teacher;

– *be able*: to foresee expedient methods, forms and means for learning and providing interaction at the educational process, including ones of feedback, at projecting pupils' and teachers' activity at lesson; to plan the use of modern educational technologies at projecting a lesson; to organize learning in different forms (lesson and outclass forms: excursion, homework, club work and so on); to organize different forms of pupils' learning activity (individual, pair, group, collective, frontal), to provide feedback with a teacher and so on [18].

Thus, for realizing one of main functions of own professional activity, a primary school teacher must be ready to implement play-based technologies / learning methods; because a play, from one point of view, is a natural type of human activity that provides his/her physical, psychic (emotional, cognitive) and social development, is a leading activity at the stage of childhood, and from another one, – an effective learning means. As L. Vygotsky noted, a play doesn't die in school age, but penetrates the attitude to reality; it has the internal continuation in school learning and labor; it has the new ratio between a sense field (situation in mind) and real situation [19].

The study of the essence of primary school teacher's readiness to implementing play-based learning methods needs separation of two scientific approaches that determine its content, namely the activity approach and one of "learning by play".

So, main statements of the activity approach are:

1) the learning process is always activity learning – either subject-practical actions or mental ones; to teach an activity it means to make learning motivated, so to teach a child to set own aims independently, to find ways for their realization, to help to form the ability to control and self-control, evaluation and self-evaluation;

2) learning provides opening for a child the full spectrum of possibilities and creation of a setting for free, but responsible and substantiated choice – setting

for creativity; the learning aim is to provide an independent creative activity of each child;

3) activity learning at its first stage provides the joint learning-cognitive activity of groups of children, guided by a teacher; such joint activity provides a connection between a zone of the nearest development of a child and what that he/she can do independently [11].

Main principles of the activity approach in learning are defined as:

activity principle (acquiring knowledge by a child in the independent search); continuity principle (succession of learning stages according to age and psychological development peculiarities);

integrity principle (formation of a complete world picture and own place in it in a child); minimax principle (giving a possibility to maximal mastering of a program);

psychological comfort principle; variability principle (development of thinking variability, ability to adequate decision making in different choice situations);

creativity principle (maximal orientation on a child's creative activity).

As [11] noted, and we are completely agree with it, the activity approach in education it is not just a totality of educational technologies and methodical techniques; it is a kind of education philosophy, methodological basic that different systems of developing learning or education with different concrete technologies, techniques, theoretical peculiarities are built on [11].

Realization of the principles of the activity approach needs special professional knowledge, abilities and qualities of a primary school teacher, although as scientists note it, learning cannot be non-activity, otherwise it would not be learning. But talking about system-creating requirements to a teacher that works by the activity approach principles, it is necessary from our point of view, to first of all focus attention on such its determining characteristics as subjectivity – the ability to be an agent or actively operating subject that realizes a possibility to influence the human world, not only to cognize it and to prescribe it own personal or intersubjective importance; this is the ability that gives a possibility to act purposefully, reflexively, being in complicated interrelations with others, correcting and transforming the external world under circumstances, in which people find different vectors of actions desirable and possible, although not necessary from the same point of view [11].

Considering different methods of activity learning according to conventional activity types, it is necessary to note, that they also include methods of developing, problem and research learning, ones of interactive and projecting learning and also play-based didactic ones.

In modern pedagogical science play-based learning methods (or technologies) are determined by the special organization form of learning, upbringing and development of a person, realized by a teacher, based on the purposefully oriented pupils' activity by the specially elaborated play scenario at maximal pupils' self-organization at modeling the human activity experience [20]. A ground for understanding play-based methods in pedagogy is determination of a play as a special activity type under conditions of situations, directed on reproduction and assimilation of the social experience, in which behavior self-management forms and improves [20].

Despite the fact that play-based learning methods are traditionally considered in pedagogical science and practice as equal to ones of problem, project and research learning, but the attitude to them in the pedagogical community may be characterized as “additional”, “amusing”, “attendant”.

A change of such attitude to play-based learning methods of primary school and secondary and high one is caused by implementation of the Conception of the New Ukrainian school, because LEGO playing toolkits became an unalienable component of each primary school of Ukraine, according to the Memorandum about mutual understanding between the Ministry of education and science of Ukraine and The LEGO Foundation. The primary school teachers' professional activity was added by the new strategy, grounded on the interactive approach “learning through play” that combined child-oriented, accompanying and teacher-oriented learning according to characteristics of the play-based learning experience [21, 22] and integrates in itself active learning, experimental one and one of managed discoveries, learning by demands, problem, project one, Montessori pedagogy [21]. Just their integrity, using the play resource, allows them to create a schoolchild's learning experience that is important, active, stable, social and joyful; favors the successful development of cognitive, creative, emotional, physical and social skills in young schoolchildren [21, 22].

One of main principles of the approach “learning through play” is a necessity to create a so-called pupils' agency by a teacher – support of the active, subject participation of a schoolchild in the educational process, his/her real involvement in the educational sense space, that is achieved due to giving a possibility to make own choice, to ask questions to teachers and to offer own ideas, to interact with other actively; free movement for searching for resources; constant support from a teacher and other pupils, team [10]. Due to play that integrates free play, managed play, constructed play, joint play, physical and digital play and so on, the learning continuum provides creation and elaboration of such pupils' agency.

But, as scientists note, if a teacher is not psychologically and methodically trained to learning by play, the use of play-based methods may be ineffective or even harmful [21]. So, for the effective use of play-based learning methods at primary school, “learning through play” approach, teachers must: know, how to implement integrated pedagogies and sub-strategies that are the base of their effectiveness; keep positive views and to know advantages of interactive pedagogy; know that play-based methods are not “unmanaged”; master enough knowledge for studying disciplines; know, how to realize the forming and summarizing evaluation; have an access to scientific studies and professional learning on interactive pedagogy for supporting or improving practice [21].

The conducted analysis and generalization of the scientific approaches as to understanding the essence of the person's readiness to the professional activity in whole and pedagogical activity in particular and also main principles of the activity approach and “learning through play” one gives a possibility to state that for implementing successfully play-based learning methods by

a primary school teacher, he/she must: internally accept values of education, oriented on formation of key competences and soft skills in children, to be motivated to the professional and personal development; to understand the essence of play-based learning methods and their importance for the physical, intellectual, emotional, personal and social development of a human; be characterized by a special professional behavior that provides not only skills to use a play in the educational process, but special verbal abilities, flexibility, activity, democratic style of interaction with pupils and so on.

In this context the requirements to a primary school teacher may be integrated in such personal-professional construct as the readiness to implementing play-based learning methods, understood by us as a system characteristics of a specialist that determines his/her ability to use play-based method in the educational process effectively and consists of:

1) value (attitude, setting as to play, play-based learning methods, interest, motivation of the pedagogical and playing activity and also professional development, comprehension of own playing experience and so on);

2) cognitive (knowledge about peculiarities of the child's playing activity, playing strategies, comprehension of advantages of play-based learning methods);

3) constructive components (ability to project the child's playing activity, to accompany it, to insert a play in the didactic process, reflexive, communicative skills and so on).

The formation and development of the teacher's readiness for implementing play-based learning methods must take place already at the stage of his/her professional training, but this process must continue during the whole professional way of a teacher. Under conditions of reformation of native primary education, when changes in the educational activity are realized by the "revolutionary" way, tasks as to preparing a primary school teacher for realizing new learning methods and forms, organization of the educational environment, based on new values of education are faced just by the system of post-graduate pedagogical education. Solving it needs implementing the system of multilevel arrangements, realizing the specially projected activity, built by the principles of systematicity, mutual dependence and succession, scientism, purposefulness, contextuality, personal aim-setting, meta-objectivity, efficiency, support and reflexive activity, and also involving in the playing activ-

ity, priority of activity and play-based learning methods, minimax and psychological comfort.

## 6. Conclusions

So, the conducted analysis of the scientific-theoretical principles of training primary school teachers in the system of post-graduate education for implementing play-based learning methods gives a possibility to state the following.

1. Understanding of the content of primary school teachers' training in the system of post-graduate education for implementing play-based learning methods must be based on principles of the personal, activity, and personal-activity approaches to determining the person's professional readiness in whole and also informational, technological, functional-system, competence and acmeological approaches to explaining peculiarities of the person's readiness to the pedagogical activity in particular. At the same time it is important to take into account principles of the activity approach and "learning through play" one that condition the specificity of training New primary school teachers for implementing new didactic strategies.

2. The primary school teachers' readiness for implementing play-based learning methods is a complicated personal-professional construct, system characteristics of a specialist that determines his/her ability to use play-based learning methods in the educational process and consists of three components according to the general activity structure and European requirements to the competence structure:

- 1) value;
- 2) cognitive;
- 3) construction.

3. Training of teachers for implementing play-based learning methods is a long-term process that must cover the system of specially organized arrangements, built on a series of general pedagogic and special principles, and must include both the course and intercourse period of the specialists' professional development. Such arrangements must be directed both on teachers' mastering of the system of professional knowledge in pedagogy and psychology and formation of skills to project the child playing activity, to support and to implant it in the educational process, and also on acquiring own positive experience of the playing activity by teachers.

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