



6th Congress of the International Society of Cultural-historical Activity Research

**Cultural-historical Activity Research in crisis contexts: challenges and perspectives**

SYMPOSIUM  
**CULTURAL-HISTORICAL SCIENTIFIC SCHOOL:  
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION  
IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA  
PART TWO**

**Joint learning activity as the Zone of proximal development  
of primary school children**

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# Social situation of development. “Zone of proximal development”

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*«Behind all higher mental functions and their relationships stand genetically social relationships, real relationships, homo duplex (a dual person - Latin). From here comes the principle and method of personification in the study of cultural development, that is, division of function between people, personification of functions. For example, voluntary attention – one possesses, the other one acquires. Dividing again in two what had been fused into one, experimental unfolding of a higher mental process (voluntary attention) into a small drama.»*  
*(L. Vygotsky, 2005, p. 1023).*

# Organizing joint learning activity

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- distribution and exchange of actions
- mutual understanding
- communication
- reflection as a special kind of operation with modes of cooperative work

# Learning activity is characterized by the following traits

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- In the process of the activity children together with the adult (usually teacher) study scientific (in Davidov's terms - theoretical) concepts and corresponding means of activity
- Children master new means of action while solving particular learning tasks and performing particular learning actions

# Learning activity is characterized by the following traits:

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- learning activity is organized by the adult (adults) as a collective activity, based on learning discussions, dialogues and open interaction between children and adult
- while solving learning tasks and performing learning actions in the form of collective activity, children develop abilities for analysis and planning of their own actions, as well as reflection as a particular ability for considering one's own actions in the context of joint activity

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSNAqjhLBKQ>

# The experience of organizing learning in the form of joint activity testifies, that zone of proximal development:

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- is based on a particularly organized joint activity, aimed at dealing with specific tasks and learning corresponding generalized means of their solution
- is based on the initiative and autonomous search for ways of solving classes of tasks, as children discover these solutions and learn the general means of solution in the process of interaction with each other and with the adult
- is based on broad use of signs and models
- is constructed as a learning community of children and adult

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7\\_jxgfeQiM8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_jxgfeQiM8)



# The characteristics of the ZPD:

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- learning motivation
- communication
- mutual understanding
- the way of learning interaction between children and adult

On the issue of training researchers of social practice in the framework of the scientific school of L.S. Vygotsky, A.N. Leont'ev, A.R. Luriya (the experience of running a Master's program: "Cultural-historical theory and activity approach in education")

# The competences, that the students need to succeed in our program, include:

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- capacity to plan and model new forms of joint learning activity, corresponding with the zone of proximal development and the age of the students
- capacity to conduct targeted psycho-pedagogical research on the specifics of the organization of the learning activity and to define new requirements to the organization of joint learning activity
- capacity to fulfill new forms of organizing learning activity in teamwork (cross-disciplinary cooperation)
- capacity to assess the students' educational results, which are determined by the structure and general patterns of the organization of learning activity, as well as by age and individual differences
- capacity to reflect on one's own professional achievements, perform professional development on the basis of the conducted psycho-pedagogical research

V.V. Davydov noted: “Vygotsky’s cultural-historical concept even in its interpretation in the framework of the activity approach is still not truly a theory, but rather a hypothesis. But, as you know, true science finds the source of its development in formulating theories and proving their legitimacy for different areas of social practice. It is the challenge to young scholars — philosophers, logicians, psychologists, educators, culture studies experts — who are able in the nearest future (hard to say how many years from now) to turn this cultural-historical hypothesis into a full-scale truly fundamental modern theory” (V. Davydov, 1999, p.30-35).

**Thank you for your attention!**

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