

Olexandra Dubasenyuk

Dr. Sc. (Pedagogy), Professor, Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, Zhytomyr, Ukraine,
dubasenyuk@ukr.net

ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9447-4527>

Olexandr Voznyuk

Dr. Sc. (Pedagogy), Professor, Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, Zhytomyr, Ukraine,
alexvoz@ukr.net

ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4458-2386>

STUDY OF THE READINESS OF THE PROSPECTIVE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TO WORK WITH INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED PUPILS

Abstract. *The article deals with the actual problem of professional training of the prospective primary school teachers to work with intellectually gifted pupils. It has been shown that giftedness is determined by both innate gifts and social conditions and, of course, needs support and help on a part of a trained teacher. The level of readiness of prospective primary school teachers to work with intellectually gifted pupils in modern conditions has been investigated. For this purpose, a scientific study was conducted in 2021-2022 studying years in which the students of the 1st and 2nd courses of the Institute of Pedagogy of Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University participated. The conducted research allows formulating certain methodical recommendations for the professional training of prospective teachers to work with intellectually gifted pupils. These recommendations outline the following imperatives: 1) there is a need to introduce a special training course into the educational process; 2) it is relevant to include in psychological and pedagogical disciplines the issues that characterize the peculiarities of working with gifted pupils; 3) the need to develop students' motivation for self-development and self-improvement is very important; 4) it is expedient to include psychological trainings, project tasks, methods of innovative computer training in the studying disciplines; 5) the prospective teachers should be motivated to study modern psychological and pedagogical literature in this field, since working with gifted pupils requires special training both in higher education and in further independent professional activity. The promising aspects of the research include research in the indicated direction using the synergistic concept «talent is the sum of talents and abilities». This approach corresponds to the synergistic principle of superadditivity («the whole is greater than its parts») when any system reveals certain systemic properties that are not inherent in the properties of its components. Under such conditions, the problem of human development in the context of «heredity VS environment» can be resolved.*

Keywords: *giftedness, intellectual giftedness, prospective primary school teacher, primary school pupil, professional training, independent professional activity, synergistic principle of superadditivity, system properties.*

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Statement of the problem in a general form and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks. The socio-economic

transformations taking place in our country in recent years have revealed the need for such people who are active and creative, persistent in achieving

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results, being able to solve tasks in a non-standard way. Intellectually developed, gifted people are the state's highest value, since such citizens have a positive impact on the progressive development of any society. That is why the idea is realizing in domestic education relating to building a holistic system of working with intellectually gifted pupils, whose creative potential requires non-standard approaches to the organization of all-rounded psychological and pedagogical support, focused on the possibilities of their self-realization and self-development.

The normative and legal basis of this process is realized through various legislative acts (the Law of Ukraine «On Education», the State Standard of Primary Education, the Concept of the New Ukrainian School), which define the priority goals and objectives of the educational policy of the Ukrainian state regarding the support and development of intellectually gifted children [1].

In particular, the Concept of the New Ukrainian School states that every child is unique, endowed by nature with unique abilities, talents and opportunities. The mission of the New Ukrainian School is to help discover and develop the abilities, talents and potential of each child based on the partnership of all participants in the educational process. Therefore, a modern Ukrainian school should ensure the comprehensive development of the individuality of each pupil as a personality based on the identification of his/her aptitudes, abilities, giftedness and talents. Under such conditions, work with intellectually gifted pupils should begin from the first days of the child's stay at school, since the State Standard of Primary Education provides

for the recognition of the uniqueness and giftedness of each child [1].

Taking into account the mentioned above, the primary school teacher must be prepared to work with intellectually gifted children, namely: to possess the necessary general psychological and pedagogical and special knowledge of the theory and methods of educational work; also to possess professional skills for effective work with intellectually gifted pupils, striving to constantly improve the content, forms, methods and means of teaching and educating the pupils in order to develop their abilities and talents.

Analysis of recent research and publications on the specified problem. Based on the study of scientific literature, it was found that the problem of the giftedness of children, in particular children of primary school age, is relevant, it is the object of research by many domestic and foreign scientists. In particular, the phenomenon of giftedness was studied by O. Antonova, Yu. Klymenyuk [2], H. Gardner [3], N. Karpenko [4], O. Musyka [5], O. Protas [6], J. Renzulli; the didactic foundations of the development of children's intellectual giftedness were studied by O. Voznyuk [7], O. Saprunova [8] and others. The issue of professional training of the prospective teachers, certain aspects of the readiness of the prospective teachers to work with gifted pupils, including intellectually gifted ones, were the subject of scientific research of such scientists as T. Vakolya [9], I. Korpan [10], G. Leshchenko [11], L. Mokridina [12], T. Molnar [13], A. Krikun [14], A. Satova [15], M. Endepohls-Ulpe [16] and others.

However, the issue of the readiness of prospective primary school teachers to work with intellectually gifted

pupils has not been fully investigated both in theoretical and practical aspects. In particular, the scientific and methodological support for the professional training of prospective primary school teachers to work with intellectually gifted pupils is insufficiently developed.

The purpose of the study consists in analysing the level of readiness of prospective primary school teachers to work with intellectually gifted pupils.

Presentation of the main material with the justification of the obtained scientific results. The problem of giftedness is being in the centre of attention of psychologists and pedagogues for quite a long time. The first scientific investigations in this direction were carried out in the second half of the 19th century, when F. Galton's book «The inheritance of talent. Its laws and consequences» (1869) was published. Later, V. Stern substantiated the psychology of giftedness as an independent branch of psychological science (1926). In his opinion, giftedness is the general ability of an individual to consciously direct his/her thinking to new requirements, an individual's ability to psychically adapt to new tasks and living conditions.

Based on the analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature on the problem of researching the phenomenon of giftedness, various approaches to the development of the concept of giftedness have been developed. The phenomenon of giftedness is considered from the point of view of heredity (complex of aptitudes, abilities, and endowments); in the context of the decisive role of the social environment as a source of the psyche that develops throughout

a person's life. From the standpoint of a systemic approach, giftedness is an integral entity that combines personality and social prerequisites for the development of giftedness.

The supporters of the hereditary approach to the development of the concept of giftedness (V. Voitko, N. Volkova, G. Kostyuk, O. Kulchytska, M. Fitsula, S. Shandaruk) consider giftedness to be a high level of aptitudes, abilities, properties of the individual's psyche, natural features of the human body, that is, these scientists give priority to heredity in the development of the phenomenon of «giftedness». Thus, N. Volkova and M. Fitsula interpret the concept of «giftedness» as an individual potential peculiarity of a person's endowments, thanks to which he/she can achieve significant success in a certain field of activity. S. Shandaruk also considers the concept of «giftedness» as a high level of development of a person's abilities, which allows achieving special original successes in a certain sphere of social activity.

G. Kostyuk, considering the phenomenon of giftedness, emphasizes the importance of natural endowments of the individual, which are the basis, the internal motivation for the development of certain abilities. Scientist defines giftedness as an individual peculiarity of human abilities [17, p. 173].

Other scientists (T. Zarochkina, N. Karpenko, and P. Tadeev) prefer a social approach to the development of the concept of giftedness. By giftedness, they understand the quality of the psyche that develops throughout life, that is, they recognize the leading role of the environment in the development of the studied phenomenon. Thus, according to N. Karpenko, giftedness

is a systemic quality of the psyche that develops during life and determines the person's possibility to achieve higher results in one or more types of activities compared to other people [4]. T. Zarochkina understands giftedness to be a qualitatively peculiar combination of abilities, which depends on the possibility of achieving greater or lesser success in performing this or that activity. P. Tadeyev also emphasizes the significant role of the social environment, stressing that hereditary endowments are only a prerequisite for the development of giftedness, if they are not developed, then the process of eliminating any giftedness starts.

However, a large number of scientists (O. Antonova, Yu. Klymenyuk, O. Musyka, O. Protas, L. Lavrynenko) believe that giftedness is determined both by innate endowments and the social environment, but in the future, it can develop under favourable conditions or fade away under unfavourable ones [2; 5; 6; 18]. In particular, L. Lavrynenko understands the term «giftedness» as a set of certain abilities. Scientist believes that children's giftedness is manifested in a tendency to work, in the child's acute need to be engaged in a certain type of activity. Such activity develops when a child experiences positive emotions [18]. According to O. Musyka, giftedness is a consequence of the development of innate abilities under the influence of both internal, subjective, and external, in relation to individual, and social factors [5]. O. Protas interprets the concept of «giftedness» as a combination of predispositions, personal and social prerequisites for the development of the abilities of an individual above the average level, which make it possible to

achieve significant success in a certain type of activity [6].

In general, the researchers of the phenomenon of «giftedness» interpret the concept of «giftedness» as a complex phenomenon of the human psyche that combines intelligence, creative abilities, and a motivational component. At the same time, giftedness can be understood as a systemic personality formation caused by the natural features of the human body (sensory, motor, intellectual components of high energy), which as a systemic neoplasm implies a high level of intelligence, creative abilities, and a motivational component [19–23].

Below there are general characteristics of gifted children, particularly intellectually gifted children, although not all of them necessarily apply to every gifted child. So, a gifted child:

- possesses an extended and detailed memory, especially in a certain field of interest;
- possesses an expanded vocabulary for his/her age, uses a language developed beyond its years;
- possesses developed communication skills for his/her age and knows how to express ideas and feelings;
- asks intelligent and complex questions;
- is able to determine important characteristics of new concepts and problems;
- quickly masters the information;
- uses logical reasoning for finding answers according to common sense;
- possesses a wide base of knowledge, a large volume of information;
- understands abstract ideas and complex concepts;
- uses analogical thinking to solve problems;

- observes the interaction of natural objects and understands cause-and-effect relationships;
- finds and solves complex and unusual problems;
- forms generalizations and uses them in new situations;
- displays curiosity and a desire to learn;
- works conscientiously and reveals a high concentration in the areas of interest;
- understands and uses different symbol systems;
- reflects on learning;
- is passionate about a certain topic;
- possesses advanced reading comprehension skills for his/her age;
- possesses remarkable writing skills for his/her age;
- possesses strong artistic/ musical abilities;
- is able to concentrate for a long period of time, especially in a certain area of interest;
- is more persuaded, can be stimulated and influenced by the environment;
- experiences positive and negative feelings;
- feels and demonstrates a strong physical reaction to emotions;
- possesses a strong affective memory, experiencing or re-experiencing situations after a trigger event [19–23].

Therefore, giftedness is largely determined by innate abilities that develop under favourable social conditions and, of course, needs support and help from a trained teacher.

Analysis of students' readiness to work with intellectually gifted pupils.

The problem of training prospective teachers to work with intellectually

gifted pupils is actively researched within the Zhytomyr Scientific and Pedagogical School, where dissertations on this topic have been defended (O. Antonova, Yu. Klymeniuk). Developing the ideas of the researchers in the specified field, we (O. Dubasenyuk, M. Kovalyova) have set the tasks concerning analysing the readiness of prospective primary school teachers to work with intellectually gifted pupils in modern conditions.

For this purpose, a scientific study was conducted in 2021–2022 studying years in which 56 students of the 1st and 2nd courses of the Institute of Pedagogy of Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University participated.

The research program has been carried out in stages. First, the research had the aim to study: students' understanding of the essence of the concept of «intellectual giftedness» and their ability to distinguish the characteristic features of an intellectually gifted child. Secondly, both the necessary qualities that a teacher should possess for working with intellectually gifted students, and the student's awareness of effective forms and methods of working with intellectually gifted students were revealed. Thirdly, the existing level of readiness of the students in a certain direction has been investigated.

The results of the research regarding the first direction have shown that 21,05 % of the respondents consider intellectually gifted a person who has a high level of intellectual abilities, allowing to think in a nonstandard way, quickly finding the ways to solve problems; 21,05 % of the students believe that an intellectually gifted pupil reveals a high level of development of mental abilities, due to which this

pupil easily memorizes and analyses information, makes certain conclusions; 15,79 % of the perspective teachers note that intellectual giftedness is a high intelligence, the ability to successfully study at school; the same percentage of the respondents consider intellectually gifted to be a person who has a high level of cognitive activity and mental abilities, which makes it possible to achieve high academic results; 10,53 % of the respondents understands the intellectual giftedness as an ability to think, analyse, compare facts, i.e. to perform complex intellectual work; according to 5,26 % of the respondents, the intellectual giftedness is the ability to quickly perceive and analyse information, to think logically, and memorise information easily; 10,53 % of the respondents found it difficult to answer this question.

Next, we studied the features that, in the opinion of the prospective teachers,

are characteristic of an intellectually gifted child (Fig. 1).

The respondents most often singled out high intelligence and high mental abilities (57,89 %) in the first place among the characteristic features of an intellectually gifted personality, and in the last place – a deep interest in learning (21,05 %), which is explained by the fairly independent lifestyle of gifted individuals, who, through an active life position and intensive search activity, acquire knowledge from many areas of life, not only on the basis of formal education.

Thus, the main feature of an intellectually gifted child is considered by prospective teachers to be a high level of development of the child's intelligence and mental abilities.

In accordance with the purpose of the research, it was important to identify the qualities that, according to the prospective teachers, a primary

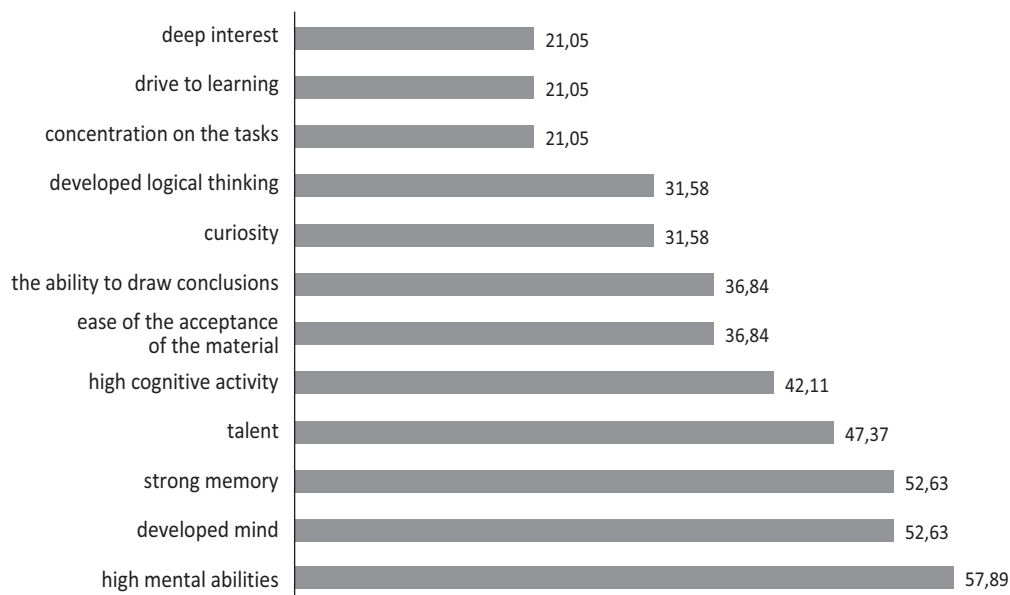


Fig. 1. Characteristic signs of an intellectually gifted child, %

Developed by the authors.

school teacher should possess to work with intellectually gifted pupils (Fig. 2).

In the first place (63,16 % of respondents) professionalism is important, in the last place (26,32 % of respondents) – the purposefulness and the ability to understand the pupils. This can be explained by the fact that the prospective teachers, as a rule, strive to possess professional skills (when the focus on purely professional training prevails among the prospective primary school teachers), and at the same time, purposefulness and the ability to understand gifted pupils are considered by them to be somewhat secondary professional qualities of a teacher.

In the research, it was important to identify the main effective forms and methods of work, which, according to the prospective teachers, should be used when working with intellectually gifted pupils (Fig. 3).

Therefore, among the effective forms and methods of working

with intellectually gifted pupils, the prospective teachers ranked individual work in the lesson in the first place (57,89 % of respondents) and creating projects in the last place (5,26 % of respondents). This is explained by the ascertained by us fact that giftedness is considered by prospective teachers to be a rather rare phenomenon, while project activities involving «future-oriented pedagogical technology» (the term coined by the authors of the article) are not a serious aspect of professional training of the prospective teachers.

At the same time, the majority of students consider traditional forms of work (individual work in class, consultations outside of class, group work) to be effective forms and methods of pedagogical interaction with intellectually gifted pupils, while innovative technologies (research activities, interactive methods, creative tasks, creating projects) in work with gifted children are singled out by only a

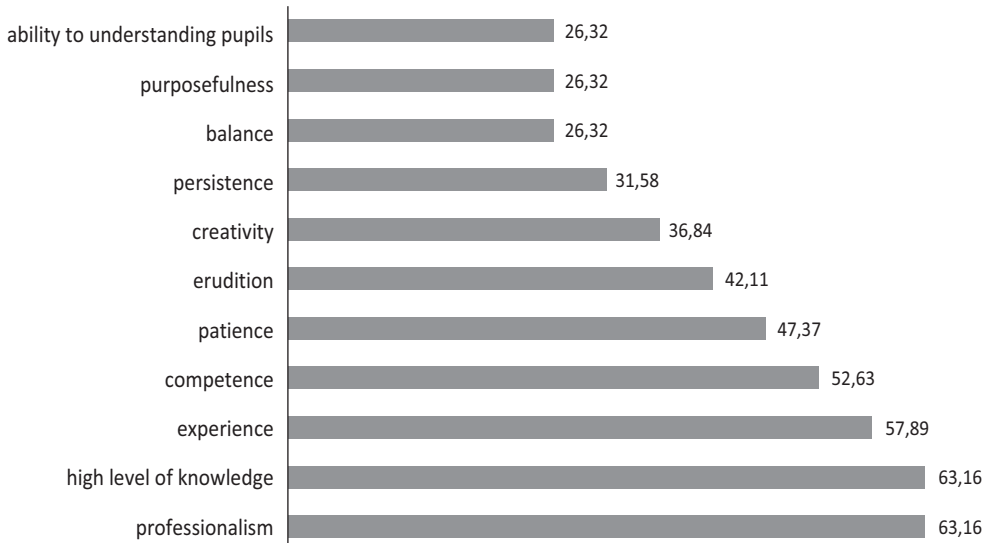


Fig. 2. Qualities necessary for a prospective teacher to work with intellectually gifted pupils, %

Developed by the authors.

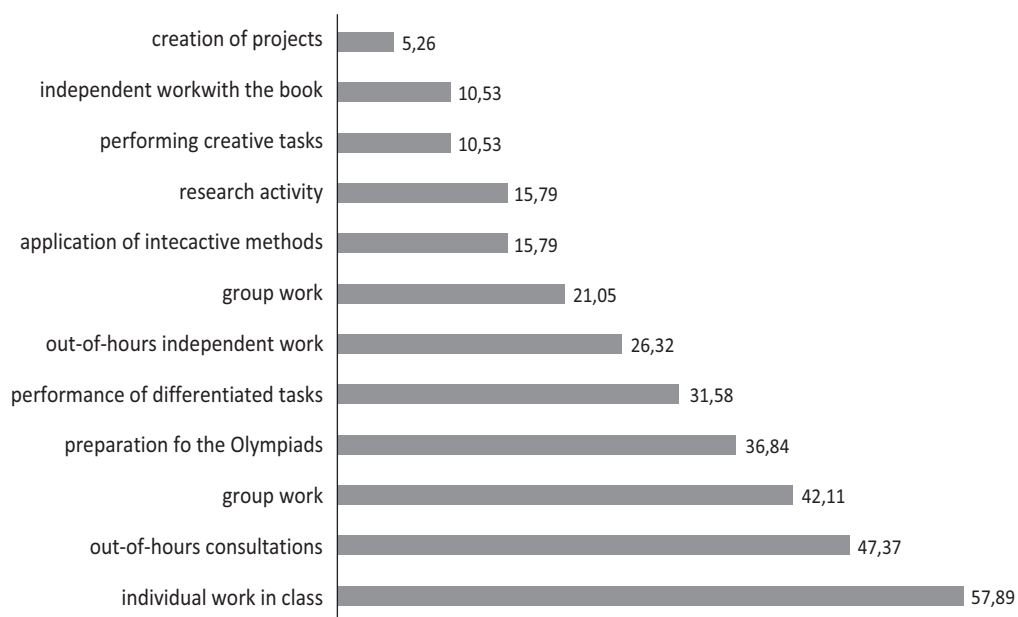


Fig. 3. List of effective forms and methods of teacher's work with intellectually gifted pupils, %

Developed by the authors.

small part of the prospective teachers, which indicates the limited knowledge of most students in this field.

Next, the level of students' readiness to work with intellectually gifted pupils has been studied (Fig. 4). It was revealed that 31,58 % of the respondents gave an affirmative answer, arguing that they would be interested in teaching such a child, and working with a gifted pupil,

the teacher should also develop together with the pupil, increasing the level of teacher's professional competence.

At the same time, 47,37 % of the students have not yet decided whether they are ready to work with intellectually gifted pupils, since the former do not have the appropriate experience and necessary knowledge to teach and develop this category of

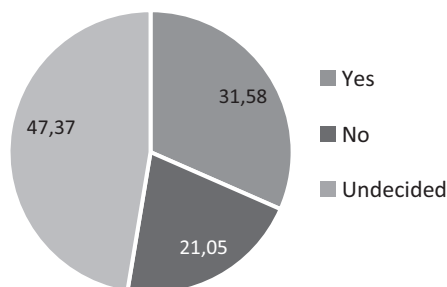


Fig. 4. Distribution of respondents' answers regarding readiness to work with intellectually gifted students, %

Developed by the authors.

pupils. Students note that this is quite responsible work. Therefore, 21,05 % of the prospective teachers are not ready to work with intellectually gifted pupils, they believe that this is a difficult job that requires special professional training, relevant qualities, knowledge and skills.

Conclusions. Thus, based on the analysis of the state of readiness of the prospective primary school teachers for the development of the intellectual giftedness in the primary school pupils, we can draw the following conclusions: most students are familiar with the essence of the concept of «intellectual giftedness»; the latter means the presence of a high level of personality's intellectual abilities, the ability to nonstandard thinking, to find optimal ways to solving the problem; the prospective teachers attribute a high level of development of the pupil's intellect and mental abilities to the main signs of an intellectually gifted child; the necessary qualities that a teacher should possess are highlighted (professionalism, high level of knowledge, experience, competence, erudition, creativity, perseverance, balance, purposefulness); the majority of students attributed traditional forms of work (individual work in class, consultations outside of class, group work) to effective forms and methods of working with intellectually gifted pupils; at the same time the students are not sufficiently familiar with modern technologies (research activities, interactive methods, creative tasks, project activities). The latter testifies to the limited knowledge of the majority of the students regarding the peculiarities of the education of gifted students. Therefore, prospective teachers need to

possess special knowledge and skills in this field, to master innovative content, forms, methods, and tools necessary for working with gifted pupils.

The analysis of the state of readiness of the prospective primary school teachers for the development of intellectual giftedness in primary school pupils has confirmed that in the educational process considerable attention should be paid to the issue of professional training of the prospective primary school teachers to work with a certain category of pupils.

The conducted research allows formulating certain methodical recommendations for training the prospective teachers to work with intellectually gifted pupils. These recommendations outline the following imperatives: 1) there is a need to introduce a special course «Technology of working with gifted pupils» into the educational process, during which the students are introduced to relevant innovative forms and methods; 2) it is relevant to include in psychological and pedagogical disciplines the issues that characterize the peculiarities of pedagogical interaction with gifted pupils and pedagogical strategies of influencing such pupils; 3) the need to develop students' motivation for self-development and self-improvement is urgent; 4) it is expedient to include socio-psychological trainings, project tasks, the methods of innovative computer training into psychological and pedagogical disciplines; 5) the prospective teachers should be motivated to study modern psychological and pedagogical literature in this field, since working with gifted pupils requires special training both in the sphere of higher education and

in further independent professional activity through life.

Prospective aspects of research include research in the indicated direction using the synergistic concept «talent is the sum of talents and abilities», since the basis for all special abilities of a person are general abilities («general factor of intelligence», «basal factor of giftedness»). Here it is appropriate to cite the idea of M. Shchetynin regarding the development of talents, which he described in the book «Embracing the Infinite: Teacher's Notes». This approach corresponds to the synergistic principle of superadditivity («the

whole is greater than its parts»), when any system exhibits certain systemic properties that are not inherent in the properties of its components. Under such conditions, the problem of human development in the context of «heredity VS environment» can be resolved, since the systemic properties of the whole (holistic person), which appear as organismic-personal neoplasms, are built on the basis of the components that include both the hereditary qualities of a person and acquired qualities in the process of onto- and phylogenesis in the context of the impact of the socio-pedagogical environment.

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Дубасенюк О. А.

почесний академік НАПН України, доктор педагогічних наук, професор кафедри професійно-педагогічної, спеціальної освіти, андрагогіки та управління Житомирського державного університету імені Івана Франка, Житомир, Україна, dubasenyuk@ukr.net
ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9447-4527>

Вознюк О. В.

доктор педагогічних наук, професор кафедри англійської мови з методиками викладання у дошкільній та початковій освіті Житомирського державного університету імені Івана Франка, Житомир, Україна, alexvoz@ukr.net
ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4458-2386>

ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ГОТОВНОСТІ МАЙБУТНІХ УЧИТЕЛІВ ПОЧАТКОВОЇ ШКОЛИ ДО РОБОТИ З ІНТЕЛЕКТУАЛЬНО ОБДАРОВАНИМИ УЧНЯМИ

Анотація. У статті порушується актуальна проблема професійної підготовки майбутніх учителів початкової школи до роботи з інтелектуально обдарованими учнями. З'ясовано, що обдарованість спричинена як вродженими задатками, так і соціальними умовами та, безперечно, потребує підтримки й допомоги з боку підготовленого педагога. Досліджено ступінь готовності майбутніх учителів початкової школи до роботи з інтелектуально обдарованими учнями в сучасних умовах. Програма дослідження здійснювалася поетапно: 1) проаналізовано розуміння студентами сутності поняття «інтелектуальна обдарованість» та виокремлення ними характерних ознак, притаманних інтелектуально обдарованій дитині; 2) виявлено як необхідні риси, котрі мають бути притаманні вчителю для роботи з цією категорією учнів, так і обізнаність студентів щодо ефективних форм та методів роботи з інтелектуально обдарованими учнями; 3) досліджено ступінь готовності студентів у визначеному напрямі. У результаті дослідження виявлено, що більшість студентів обізнана з поняттям «інтелектуальна обдарованість», основними ознаками інтелектуально обдарованого учня; виокремлено риси, що повинні бути притаманні вчителю, щоб працювати з такими учнями (професіоналізм, високий рівень знань, досвідченість, компетентність, ерудованість, креативність, наполегливість, урівноваженість, цілеспрямованість та ін.), а також відповідні ефективні форми й методи роботи. З'ясовано, що більша частина майбутніх учителів не готова до роботи з інтелектуально обдарованими учнями, їм бракує необхідних знань, умінь, досвіду. Педагогічний експеримент підтвердив необхідність посилення професійної підготовки майбутніх учителів у визначеному напрямі.

Ключові слова: обдарованість, інтелектуальна обдарованість, майбутній учитель початкової школи, учень початкової школи, професійна підготовка, самостійна професійна діяльність, синергетичний принцип суперадитивності, системні властивості.

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