



INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY ІНКЛЮЗИВНА ПЕДАГОГІКА

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THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF TEACHER'S ASSISTANT AND CHILD'S ASSISTANT WITHIN THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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The article examines the theoretical and practical aspects of the activity of a teacher's assistant and a child's assistant in the conditions of inclusive education. The historical humane attitude towards persons with limited functional capabilities, which is characteristic of Ukrainian society, has been relied upon. The essence of the inclusive approach is described. The analysis of scientific research in this direction and the existing legislative framework of inclusive education allowed us to conclude that despite the large volume of work on the organization of inclusive education, there are many problems that require immediate resolution. The important question is the division of duties between the teacher, the teacher's assistant and the child's assistant and also the problem of their effective interaction.

Special attention is paid to the description of the path of a child with special educational needs to an inclusive educational institution, since the level of social and pedagogical support in the process of inclusive education depends on the adequate determination of the degree of the child's educational difficulties. It is emphasized that the teacher is the organizer of the pedagogical process in the inclusive class, and he/she is responsible for the effectiveness of the pedagogical process. Documents regulating the work of a teacher's assistant have been analyzed. Based on this analysis, the functional duties of a teacher's assistant are described and the aspects of pedagogical activity that are not included in them are highlighted. The purpose of the activity and the main tasks of the child's assistant are formulated. Their difference between the tasks of a teacher and a teacher's assistant is emphasized.

It was noted that despite the fact that there are methodological recommendations on the functions and duties of a teacher's assistant and a pupil's assistant (child) developed by the

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Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, in practice their activities are not properly demarcated, which leads to the emergence of conflict situations, weakening of interaction and reduction the level of effectiveness of the entire educational process in the inclusive class.

Taking into account the aspects of interaction described in this article will increase the productivity of the interaction between the teacher, the teacher's assistant and the child's assistant.

Further research of the problem will be aimed at identifying the effective mechanisms of interaction between the teacher, the teacher's assistant and the child's assistant and specifying the description of the distribution of their functional responsibilities for different nosologies and different levels of educational difficulties of pupils.

Keywords: inclusive approach, inclusive education, child with special educational needs, educational difficulties, inclusive class, teacher's assistant, pupil's (child's) assistant.

ТЕОРЕТИКО-ПРАКТИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ АСИСТЕНТА ВЧИТЕЛЯ І АСИСТЕНТА ДИТИНИ В УМОВАХ ІНКЛЮЗИВНОЇ ОСВІТИ

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У статті розглянуто теоретичні та деякі практичні аспекти діяльності асистента вчителя та асистента дитини в умовах інклюзивної освіти. Зроблено опору на історично гуманне ставлення до осіб з обмеженими функціональними можливостями, яке є характерним для українського суспільства. Описано сутність інклюзивного підходу. Аналіз наукових досліджень в цьому напрямі та існуючої законодавчої бази інклюзивної освіти дозволив дійти до висновку, що незважаючи на великий обсяг напрацювань щодо організації інклюзивної освіти, є чимало проблем, які потребують негайного вирішення. Дуже важливими є проблема розподілу обов'язків між вчителем, асистентом вчителя і асистентом дитини та проблема їх ефективної взаємодії. Особлива увага приділена опису шляху дитини з особливими освітніми потребами до інклюзивного навчального закладу, оскільки саме від адекватного визначення ступеню освітніх труднощів дитини залежить рівень її соціально-педагогічної підтримки в процесі інклюзивної освіти. Підкреслено, що організатором педагогічного процесу в інклюзивному класі є вчитель, і саме він несе відповідальність за ефективність педагогічного процесу. Проаналізовано нормативні документи, які регламентують роботу асистента вчителя. На основі цього аналізу описано функціональні обов'язки асистента вчителя та виділено аспекти педагогічної діяльності, які до них не входять. Сформульовано мету діяльності й основні задачі асистента учня. Підкреслено їх відмінність від задач вчителя і асистента вчителя.

Відзначено, що не зважаючи на те, що існують методичні рекомендації щодо функцій та обов'язків асистента вчителя та асистента учня (дитини), розроблені МОН, на практиці їх діяльність не розмежована належним чином, що веде до появи конфліктних ситуацій, послаблення взаємодії і зниження рівня ефективності всього навчально-виховного процесу в інклюзивному класі.

Врахування аспектів взаємодії, описаних у даній статті дозволить підвищити продуктивність взаємодії вчителя, асистента педагога й асистента дитини.

Подальше дослідження проблеми буде спрямоване на виявлення ефективних механізмів взаємодії вчителя, асистента вчителя і асистента дитини та конкретизацію опису розподілу їх функціональних обов'язків при різних нозологіях і різних рівнях освітніх труднощів учнів.

Ключові слова: інклюзивний підхід, інклюзивна освіта, дитина з особливими освітніми потребами, освітні труднощі, інклюзивний клас, асистент вчителя, асистент учня (дитини).

Introduction of the issue. Society's attitude towards children with special needs is a certain measure of its civilization. In Sparta, such children were thrown from a high cliff, in ancient France they were sacrificed to the god

Moloch, in ancient Greece and Rome they were deprived of their civil rights and equated with madmen. As for Kievan Rus, it had a more humane attitude towards persons with functional limitations, and even in the 11th century

there were certain centers in which people with limited functional capabilities found shelter and care. At that time, they were called blind, lame or crippled (according to the type of limitation). Most often, such centers were churches and monasteries.

For example, a separate home for orphans (blind, deaf, crippled) was opened not far from the monastery on the initiative of the abbot of the Pechersk monastery, Feodosius Pecherskiy. Chronicles show that already at that time there were attempts to educate deaf-mutes and children with speech disabilities. However, the development of guardianship forms of this category of people on the territory of modern Ukraine was inhibited by certain historical events and processes. Neither the Tatar-Mongol invasion nor the years of hegemony of the proletariat contributed to the development of care and education for people with limited functional capabilities. Practically until the end of the 20th century in our country, the issue of children's anomalies and disabilities was kept silent.

There were no such children in comprehensive schools (except for individual home schooling), they were not visible on playgrounds or sports grounds, and it was impossible to meet them in cultural and leisure facilities. Such spaces were not adapted and therefore not accessible to people with disabilities. The only choice that a family with a child with a disability had been either to close this child within the confines of the apartment, or to place him/her in a special residential institution for life. And due to the fact that parents had to work in order to survive, the choice in most cases was made in favor of a boarding school.

Only since the 90s of the 20th century have gradual changes occurred in the process of supporting persons with limited functional capabilities. The volunteer movement is spreading, charitable organizations, societies, and foundations are being created to support these people. Foreign, especially

European, experience is studied in depth.

Today, there is a wide implementation of social inclusion, which is based on the recognition and respect of individual human differences and involves the modification of the entire social space. The inclusive approach consists in the fact that it is not the individual who should adapt to the social space and relations, but on the contrary, society should create conditions for meeting the special needs of each individual. Each person is special, and the task of the state and society is to ensure that the specialness is not perceived as a brand or sentence and does not cause marginality of the individual. In today's Ukraine, inclusive education has become the main model of education for children with special educational needs. However, this approach requires systematic work, and practical aspects require more detailed coverage.

Current state of the issue. In Ukraine, such scientists as A. Arendaruk, I. Berezanska, A. Kolupayeva, S. Kornienko, M. Shved, etc., were engaged in the study of various aspects of inclusive education. It was S. Kornienko, speaking about the development of state social policy, who defined the implementation of inclusive education as one of its priority areas [5]. Studies of foreign experience conducted by A. Kolupaeva and A. Arendaruk had an important influence on the development of inclusive education as well [1; 4].

A. Arendaruk, having studied the experience of inclusion and integration of children with limited functional capabilities in the educational systems of countries such as the USA, Canada, Australia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland, claims that "the majority of such children are able to receive education in comprehensive schools according to the model of inclusive education. Using such a model means providing high-quality educational services to pupils with special needs in regular classes (groups) of general educational (preschool) institutions, subject to appropriate

training of teachers and support of families" [1: 11-12]. A. Kolupaeva develops strategic guidelines for reforming the education of persons with special needs [4]. I. Berezanska analyzes the peculiarities of interpretation of inclusive education by domestic researchers [2].

A comparative analysis of the foreign and domestic practice of implementing the position of teacher's assistant conducted by O. Illina and S. Sytnyakivska [14] is interesting. Also useful are the tips for teachers working in inclusive classes and parents of children studying in them, developed by N. Zayerkova and A. Treytyak [3].

The developments of scientists and the general focus of society on social inclusion were reflected in legislative acts and resolutions of executive authorities. These are the Law of Ukraine "On Education" [9], the Procedure for the Organization of Inclusive Education in General Secondary Educational Institutions, approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine [7], the letter of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine "On Ensuring the Accessibility of Educational Institutions for Persons with Special Educational Needs" [13], the Resolution "On Making Changes to Some Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Regarding the Organization of Training of Persons with Special Educational Needs" [6], Model regulation on the team of psychological and pedagogical support (order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine) [8], etc.

The aim of the research is to analyze the theoretical and practical problems of organizing inclusive education, describe the activities of a teacher's assistant and a child's assistant in the conditions of inclusive education, highlight the main differences in their activities, and consider the possibilities of effective cooperation.

Methods of research: theoretical analysis of methodological and pedagogical literature, Internet resources, legal documents on the issue connected with the inclusive education,

forms and methods of its organization; synthesis and generalization.

Results and discussion.

Consideration of the theoretical and practical problems of the organization of inclusive education is expedient to begin with the study of the path of a child with special educational needs to an inclusive educational institution. Inclusive education of persons with special educational needs is organized in accordance with the Procedure for the Organization of Inclusive Education in General Secondary Educational Institutions, approved by Resolution No. 957 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated September 15, 2021 [7]. According to it, the parents of a child with special educational needs, or persons replacing them, should contact the inclusive resource center at the child's place of residence for a comprehensive psychological and pedagogical assessment of the child's development. Specialists of the inclusive resource center provide parents with a conclusion on a comprehensive psychological and pedagogical assessment of the child's development based on a diagnostic examination of the child.

Although the mechanism of the procedure of applying to the inclusive resource center and diagnostic examination is described by the relevant regulatory acts, there are a number of problems. One of them is the unconscious attitude of parents or persons who replace them to the child's problems, misunderstanding the degree of their responsibility for the choice of the child's life path, or avoidance of responsibility. Such a position leads to the fact that a child with special educational needs does not receive the rehabilitation and educational services provided by the law, spends most of the time at home without proper support, which causes the appearance of secondary violations that could be avoided in case of timely intervention.

There is also the problem of adequately determining the degree of a child's educational difficulties, which

depends on the level of psychological and pedagogical support. Diagnostic tools are constantly evolving, but there simply cannot be a universal way of determining a child's needs. Each child is special and needs adaptive use of common research methods in each specific case. Even the condition of the child at the time of application of the diagnostic tools is important. Failure to do so may lead to distorted results. In addition, there is sometimes a non-fulfillment of existing regulations and instructions, or a rather loose interpretation of them.

With the conclusion of the comprehensive psychological and pedagogical assessment of the child's development in hand, parents should contact the management of the educational institution with a written application. Ensuring the organization of inclusive education in accordance with the level of support recommended by the inclusive resource center is the responsibility of the educational institution. For this purpose, an inclusive class is formed, a team is formed, and an individual development program is drawn up. If necessary, an individual study plan can also be drawn up.

The teacher organizes the pedagogical process in the inclusive class. Along with this, a teacher's assistant works in an inclusive class. In the Standard Staff Regulations of General Secondary Educational Institutions, approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 1205 dated 06.12.2010, registered with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on December 22, 2010 under No. 1308/18603, it is stated that the position of teacher's assistant is introduced at the rate of one teacher's assistant per inclusive class [11].

The problem of dividing responsibilities between a teacher and a teacher's assistant and establishing effective interaction arises. Normative documents define that both a teacher and a teacher's assistant are pedagogical workers, but it is the teacher who is responsible for the effectiveness of the pedagogical process. The activities of the

teacher's assistant are aimed at ensuring the personal orientation of the educational process. At the same time, the teacher's assistant must work not only with children who have a certain level of defined educational difficulties, but with all pupils of the class. Thus, the main aspect of the interaction between the teacher and his/her assistant in the inclusive class lies in the implementation of a personal, individual approach to each child. When organizing the interaction of a teacher and a teacher's assistant, it should be taken into account that according to Article 24 of the Law of Ukraine "On Comprehensive General Secondary Education", the teaching load of a teacher's assistant in a general secondary education institution is 25 hours per week.

Therefore, the assistant cannot physically be present at all lessons in an inclusive class. The problem of choosing those subjects in which children have the greatest difficulties and the presence of a teacher's assistant is necessary arises. As a rule, this applies to mathematical, linguistic and literary educational fields. However, depending on the educational difficulties of the children, other fields may be defined. For example, if children in an inclusive class have blindness or musculoskeletal disorders, the presence of a teacher's assistant is necessary in the physical education classes, etc. In addition, a child with special educational needs may need to be in a resource room or other educational facilities of educational institutions. In this case, the child must also be under the supervision of a pedagogical worker and be accompanied by a teacher's assistant. All this should be considered when drawing up a schedule of classes.

In practice, the teacher's assistant is often required to perform functions that are not specific to him/her, which should be performed by other officials. It should be emphasized that according to existing regulations, a teacher's assistant should not provide correctional-developmental and psychological and pedagogical services, conduct speech

therapy consultations and classes, replace a practical psychologist or other specialists within the limits of his/her pedagogical workload. The teacher's assistant should not independently develop individual programs for the development of children or consult parents. Of course, a teacher's assistant, performing his/her duties, may discover psychologically traumatic family situations or inappropriate behavior on the part of children or parents.

In this case, he/she must inform the teacher and/or head of the educational institution about it. Being with the child in the educational premises is the responsibility of the teacher's assistant, but he/she should not provide constant physical support of the child or meet the social needs of the child with limited functional capabilities. According to the Law of Ukraine "On Comprehensive General Secondary Education", namely Part 7 of Article 26 of the aforementioned law, these needs are provided by a child's assistant that is a social worker, a volunteer, one of the parents or a person authorized by them [10].

He/she is not a teacher, but a participant in the educational process. According to the Model Regulation on the support team, the child's assistant is a member of the support team of the child and must contribute to the achievement of the developmental goals determined by the support team in matters of social adaptation, communication and social and everyday orientation. At the same time, the child's assistant should not interfere in the educational process; to carry out an educational program, to provide educational services in an educational institution. He/she does not provide recommendations to teaching staff and does not perform the functions of teaching staff. His/her task is to ensure the social and everyday needs of a child with special educational needs. He/she works specifically with a pupil with special needs, helping him/her with movement, visiting the toilet, changing

clothes, eating and meeting other social and physical needs. Of course, he/she can be present (with the consent of the head of the educational institution) during lessons and extracurricular work, other events of the educational institution, but in no case does not replace the teaching staff.

Conclusions and research perspectives. The analysis of the theoretical and practical aspects of the activity of the teacher, his/her assistant and the child's assistant in the conditions of the inclusive class, as well as the analysis of scientific research in this direction and the existing legislative framework of inclusive education allowed us to come to the conclusion that despite the large volume of work on the organization of inclusive education, there are many problems that need immediate solution. The urgent issue is the problem of the division of duties between the teacher, the teacher's assistant and the child's assistant and the problem of their effective interaction.

Even though there are methodological recommendations on the functions and duties of a teacher's assistant and a pupil's assistant (child), developed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, in practice their activities are not properly demarcated, which leads to the emergence of conflict situations, weakening of interaction and a decrease of general educational process in an inclusive class.

Considering the aspects of interaction described in this article will increase the productivity of the interaction between the teacher, the teacher's assistant and the child's assistant.

Further research of the problem will be aimed at identifying the effective mechanisms of interaction between the teacher, the teacher's assistant and the child's assistant and specifying the description of the distribution of their functional responsibilities for different nosologies and different levels of educational difficulties of pupils.

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