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## **TO THE PROBLEM OF STUDY OF A CHILD IN PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL HERITAGE OF A. LAZURSKIY (EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY)**

**Annotation.** Exploring the nature of a child, the child's personality, individual characteristics, peculiarities of formation and development in educational process is one of the main problems of modern pedagogy. The most significant contribution among scientists in the area of study of a child and children individual peculiarities was made by A. Lazurskiy (1874-1917). Established that A. Lazurskiy was favorable to the usage of psychological knowledge in teaching practice and was deeply convinced in possibility of upbringing schoolchildren on basis of detailed and planned studying of children nature with psychological and pedagogical methods. It is identified that A. Lazurskiy developed a versatile method to research a holistic personality of a child in the educational process - a natural experiment, and was the author of "experimental classes" as a valuable educational tools.

**Keywords.** A. Lazurskiy, the identity of a child, schoolchildren, individual characteristics and features, method of natural experiment, psychological characteristics.

The period of the early twentieth century is a rich source of ideas and experiences which are consonant with the modern challenges of pedagogy. In the early twentieth century historical necessity and fundamental changes in society set for pedagogy absolutely clear tasks: understanding of accumulated experience about authoritarian school and development of new theoretical principles of personally-oriented concepts in the upbringing and education. A child with natural uniqueness, age peculiarities, physical and spiritual uniqueness, became the center of the educational process. The child's interests defined purpose, content, organization and methods of teaching interaction - that what was the generator of educational transformation, and consequently required scrutiny. According to the academician O. Sukhomlinskaya, it was the twentieth century when "particularly favorable basis for the development of new science that would unite psychology and pedagogy - pedology"<sup>1</sup> was formed.

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<sup>1</sup> O. Sukhomlinskaya, Problemy rozvytku osobystosti v istorychnomu konteksti psykhologii ta pedahohiki, [in:] Shliakh osvity, 2, 2006, p. 42.

Under the influence of psychological and educational representatives of scientific elite of the nineteenth century – V. Bekhterev, M. Hundobina, V. Kashchenko, A. Krohiosa, G. Rossolimo, I. Pavlov, M. Pirogov, I. Sechenov, I. Sikorskiy, C. Ushynskiy, P. Yurkevych, the researchers of early twentieth century – S. Anan'yin, P. Kapteryev, A. Lazurskiy, N. Lange, P. Lesgaft, A. Nechaev, N. Rumyantsev, expanded approaches to the study of child generated new conceptual ideas of pedagogical anthropology, investigated patterns of mental and physical development of children in the process of purposeful education and developed their own method of study of the student. We can say that during this period there was a so-called "pedological revolution". The main problems and key methodological principle became the idea of holistic examination of a child by usage of experimental methods, to which were attributed the observation, biographical method, natural and laboratory experiment, the method of studying the of child's labor products, questionnaires and testing. The data obtained during the research have significantly deepened the understanding of the child's mind nature and mechanisms of its development, to provide the society with adequate experimental and mathematically verified information about the properties and capabilities of a particular student. It was a big step towards building a new school which could content public demands, prepare teachers for such school, organize scientific and educational centers and provide student-centered learning.

Analysis of educational literature has shown that to the problem of studying a child by psychologists and educators of early twentieth century were dedicated works of such well-known Ukrainian researchers as G. Ball, N. Dichek, S. Zolotukhina, V. Kravets<sup>2</sup>, B. Kurylo, M. Levkovskiy<sup>3</sup>, O. Sukhomlinska<sup>4</sup>. We would like to note that in some works it is extensively covered personology component of that time period science, mentioned different concepts of pedagogical theories, which have been practically implemented in pedagogy<sup>5</sup>.

As a result of analysis of primary sources was found that among formed at the early twentieth century different approaches to the study of the nature of a child, the child's personality formation and its individual features, the most significant contribution to the field of study of the child and child's individual characteristics in the national educational

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<sup>2</sup>V. P. Kravets, *Zarubizhna shkola i pedahohika XX stolittia*, Ternopil, 1996, 290 p.

<sup>3</sup>M.V. Levkovskiy, *Istoriia pedahohiky*, Kyiv, 2003, 360 p.

<sup>4</sup>O. Sukhomlinska, *Problema "pryroda-vykhovannia" v pedahohichnii teorii ta praktytsi Ukrainy 20 – 30 rokiv*, [in:] *Pedahohika ta psykholohiia*, 2, 1997, p.73 – 80;  
*Ukrainska pedahohika v personaliiakh*, 1, Kyiv, 2005, 624 p.

<sup>5</sup>I. Bech, *Osobystisno- oriientovanyi pidkhdid u vykhovanni*, [in:] *Profesiina osvita: pedahohika ta psykholohiia*: Kyiv, 2000, p.331 – 350;

B. Stuparyk, *Ukrainska natsionalna shkola: vytoky, stanovlennia*, Kyiv, 1998, 336 p.

psychology belongs to outstanding scientist, representative of experimental pedagogy A. Lazurskiy.

A. Lazurskiy was a remarkable scientist of his time. His psychological ideas were innovative and original. But equally important place in the life of Alexander Fedorovich occupied teaching. A wonderful teacher, who was able to present interesting subject, A. Lazurskiy paid much attention to the dissemination of psychological knowledge among teachers and educators who listened to his lectures . He was invited to give lectures to several institutions of higher education in Petersburg, Moscow, Kharkov and Poltava province. He took an active part in the organization of several universities and research institutions in St. Petersburg, in organization and realization of congresses of educational psychology and experimental pedagogy. His reports were devoted mainly to methods of objective research of the child, especially schoolchildren. Continuing to develop the idea of J.A. Comenius (Komenskiy), John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, F. Froebel and C. Ushynskiy, A. Lazurskiy advocated for the use of scientifically based teaching practice of psychological knowledge, he emphasized on the necessity to consider the fact that "the identity of a child is in the process of formation , has not adopted a specific, complete shape, but it already has a certain direction of development (endopsychika) which can equally hinder education process, or promote educational success"<sup>6</sup>. Scientist affirmed the opportunity for teachers to provide comprehensive development of students through the usage of children's data about obtained during the carefully planned research by method of psycho-pedagogical observation and experiment<sup>7</sup>.

Therefore, the aim of this article is to analyze the ideas of Alexander Fedorovich Lazurskiy (1874-1917) about the complex psychological and educational research of child's personality as a basis of educational process.

The idea of a holistic study of student's personality in the creative legacy of Alexander Lazurskiy was formed gradually. His way of creating a "natural classification of characters" (1906)<sup>8</sup> to assert the necessity to "holistic study of personality, with all its individual peculiarities" (1917)<sup>9</sup>. Although the first research of A. Lazurskiy concerned adult personality and their individual characteristics, shortly after researcher concluded that "the

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<sup>6</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, Lichnost` i vospitanie, [in:] Trudy` 3 Vserossiyskogo s`ezda po e`ksperimental`noj pedagogike v Petrograde, 1917, p. 88.

<sup>7</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, E`ksperimental`ny`e uroki i ix znachenie v texnike vospitaniia, [in:] Trudy` 1 Vserossiyskogo s`ezda po semejnomu vospitaniyu v Petrograde, 1, 1914, p. 204-209.

<sup>8</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, Ocherki nauki o xarakterax, Sankt-Peterburg, 1906, 307 p.

<sup>9</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, O vzaimnoj sviazi dushevny`x svoystv i sposobax eyo izucheniia, [in:] Trudy` 3 Vserossiyskogo s`ezda po e`ksperimental`noj pedagogike v Petrograde, 1917, p.87-94.

study of an adult should go through the study of child's personal features. It helps to understand how accurate and emerge certain personality features, how they change and become more complicated with age"<sup>10</sup>. "The identity of the individual depends, - said A. Lazurskiy - not only from its natural features, but also on education and social environment"<sup>11</sup>. Scientists rightly believed that "the purpose of education is to provide complete, the most intensive development of the individual according to his individual abilities and skills"<sup>12</sup>.

According to the recollections of his student and colleague V. Myasishcheva, A. Lazurskiy held to the position that "personality is a unity of mental processes and human properties, where physiological and mental - are different sides of a single process, <...> and this process should be studied in the unity of the experiment and the observation of free labor and gaming activities based on the personality characteristics and personality types"<sup>13</sup>.

Alexander Fedorovich by placing the task of psycho-pedagogical monitoring of a child to those "who knows investigated one's well and can watch him in the classroom and outside it"<sup>14</sup> noted that "for the teacher who learns his students, <... > it is undesirable to come from subjective perceptions, about character, that is personalities which are interesting. If we would guess the character of another person by subjective method or «by intuition», naturally, a huge role will play feelings (sympathy and antipathy, fear, respect, compassion, etc.). Therefore, during the observation we need to be strictly objective"<sup>15</sup>. The study of personality, according to A. Lazurskiy should begin with the application of the "clinical" method [in the sense of an objective - sign I.V.] Observation of mental characteristics of children (mostly preschool and school age children )<sup>16</sup>. To make pedagogical observations objective at most, A. Lazurskiy made a number of requirements for their implementation: 1) conduct the research of individual with previously compiled program; 2) record in a diary all experimental observations, all facts that somehow characterize a certain person; 3) monitoring should be conducted only by those people who knows the investigated identity well<sup>17</sup>. A. Lazurskiy attached great importance to the well done research application of personality and to him

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<sup>10</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, O vzaimnoj svyazi dushevny`x svoystv i sposobax eyo izucheniia, [in:] Voprosy` filosofii i psixologii, 53, 1900, p.230.

<sup>11</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, Ob estestvennom e`ksperimente, [in:] Trudy` 1 Vserossiyskogo s`ezda po e`ksperimental`noj pedagogike v Sankt-Peterburge, 1911, p. 182-183.

<sup>12</sup> Same.

<sup>13</sup> V. N. Myasishhev, Na puti sozdaniya psixologicheskoy teorii lichnosti, [in:] Voprosy` psixologii, Leningrad, 1925, p.34.

<sup>14</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, Ob estestvennom e`ksperimente, [in:] Trudy` 1 Vserossiyskogo s`ezda po e`ksperimental`noj pedagogike v Sankt-Peterburge, 1911, p. 246.

<sup>15</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, Psixologiya obshhaia i e`ksperimental`naia, Leningrad, 1925, p.45-47.

<sup>16</sup> Same.

<sup>17</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, O vzaimnoj svyazi dushevny`x svoystv i sposobax eyo izucheniia, [in:] Voprosy` filosofii i psixologii, 53, 1900, p.246.

belongs the palm tree of superiority of its creation. Research Program of personality by A. Lazurskiy further became the basis of developing for similar programs in Soviet psychology and pedagogy, which are still used to examine the child.

The next step in the study of the child by A. Lazurskiy idea, should be the composing of detailed psychological characteristics on the basis of "clinical" observations. The main requirement for their preparation, according to the scientist, was their non-abstractness "describing a certain limit or feature of personality, you can't do it in general terms, without giving any specific external manifestations of the quality or the facts on which we have come to similar conclusions"<sup>18</sup>. This requirement of researcher to composing of school psychological and educational characteristics of students remains valid to this day. Further A. Lazurskiy advised to analyze such features, compare, summarize and highlight typical similarities. His experience of students studying by this method A. Lazurskiy described in the book "School characteristics" (1908). Thus, with the purpose of experimental verification of the hypothesis formulated by scientists, 18 students of Second St. Petersburg Cadet Corps aged mainly between 12 and 13.5 years during fall – spring 1904-1905 school year were studied. By A. Lazurskiy and his disciples (E. Hlotov, N. Kenel, Z. Kalliander, S. Lihosherstov, P. Spirin and L. Palmin) were composed student's personal characteristics, based on a comprehensive actual data, which included not only displays of various mental emotions of studied children, but also introduced descriptions of the circumstances in which they arose and were found<sup>19</sup>.

While gathering material for school characteristics, scientist worked on improvement of the method of objective observation, and created a new method which is well-known modern to educators and psychologists as a natural experiment [although the scientists did not think this method was something completely new, and saw it only as a further improvement of his method "clinical" observation - sign I.V.]<sup>20</sup>. A distinctive feature of the new method was a nescience of students that they were taking part in the experiment. Making a natural activity (though deliberately organized by specially selected games, gymnastic exercises, training of manual labor, and finally lessons) allowed to avoid the influence of subjective factors, approximate experiment to real life. The richest material in terms of exploring student's individual were given, according to A. Lazurskiy, by experimental lessons in Arithmetic, Russian language, Science, Drawing. These classes allowed to the prepared

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<sup>18</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, *Shkol'ny'e xarakteristiki*, Sankt-Peterburg, 1908, p.3.

<sup>19</sup> Same.

<sup>20</sup> *Trudy 1 Vserossiyskogo s'ezda po pedagogicheskoy psixologii v Sankt-Peterburge*, 1906, p.142-143.

teachers or tutors to observe students in natural environment to record the individual manifestations of personality that are specific to this type of lesson, and then develop a plan for its implementation, which would create the appropriate conditions under which children may show most clearly their individual characteristics, and teacher gets the opportunity to contribute to kid's development ("peat theory" by A. Lazurskiy, that is the gradual transformation of new forms into old, their transition from ekzopoverhni (ekzo-surface) into deepness of endoyadra (endo-core)).

Experimental lessons conducted by previously prepared plan, however, did not go beyond the curriculum and does not interrupt the normal rhythm of school life. "In naturally experimental study of personality, – said A. Lazurskiy – we do not use artificial methods, do not conduct experiments in artificial laboratory conditions, we do not isolate the child from the usual conditions of life, but we doing experiment with natural forms of the environment. We explore the personality with life itself, and therefore become available the study of all the influences of identity on the environment and environment on personality. We investigate not individual mental processes, as is usually done, but personality as a whole. However, we do not use artificial materials? But use the objects of school education"<sup>21</sup>. The study of students by method of school experiment, the scientist said, "would help the teacher to deal with the shortcomings of academic work at school with symptoms of overloading student with subjects, will provide an opportunity to explore their individual characteristics and abilities"<sup>22</sup>.

Naturally experimental study of personality by A. Lazurskiy included the following steps: 1) conduct the observations of certain students on a previously prepared plan with careful recording of results within few weeks; 2) preparation of detailed psychological characteristics of the studied students; 3) the exploring of psychological possibilities of such lessons in Mathematics, Russian language, Science, Gymnastics, Manual labor, etc. (capabilities of each subject for disclosure of certain individual mental capabilities of students: Russian language and Literature - to study the characteristics of memory, thinking, perception, imagination, emotional and moral sphere, features of creative activity; arithmetic - to study the characteristics of mental activity, memorizing poems - the study of memory, ability to concentrate or get distracted, speed of involvement into work, etc.); 4) conduction of experimental lessons in association with teachers on the basis of research program

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<sup>21</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, Ob estestvennom e`ksperimente, [in:] Trudy` 1 Vserossiyskogo s`ezda po e`ksperimental`noj pedagogike v Sankt-Peterburge, 1911, p. 186-187.

<sup>22</sup> Same.

materials of before mentioned subjects; there special tasks are developed for the studied students; 5) registration of all displays of students which are associated with these tasks<sup>23</sup>.

At the beginning of 1904 at the Pedagogical Museum of military schools was established The Department of Education named C. Ushinskiy, which aimed to put the scientific study of human as the subject of education. The purpose was to be achieved through the dissemination of knowledge about the psychological and physiological characteristics of schoolchildren and preschool kids; creation of conditions favorable for scientific researches in pedology, training researchers of psychophysical nature of the child; distribution knowledge of methods and techniques for the study of individual characteristics of students to teachers and educators; and finally, collecting scientifically proven factual material, which in future would become the basis for school reform<sup>24</sup>. There, under the direction of A. Lazurskiy research workers and school teachers conducted similar experimental lessons, which gave valuable material for further study of students. The results were published under the editorship of A. Lazurskiy in the collection of "natural experiments and its school use" (1918)<sup>25</sup>. Scientist himself rightly indicated that "a great future it belongs to these lessons as they give a rich material for pedagogy and will help teachers and in the education and comprehensive development of student's personality" [same].

**Conclusions.** Although A. Lazurskiy didn't have enough time to fully complete his researches, his work had a considerable influence on the further development of child and educational psychology. Natural experiment method was the most popular in pedagogy throughout the twentieth century, every handbook on pedagogy and psychology has a reference on it, which could not be told about other methods developed within experimental pedagogy in early twentieth century.

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<sup>23</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, Ob estestvennom e`ksperimente, [in:] Trudy` 1 Vserossiyskogo s`ezda po e`ksperimental`noj pedagogike v Sankt-Peterburge, 1911, p. 187.

<sup>24</sup> Trudy` 1 Vserossiyskogo s`ezda po pedagogicheskoy psixologii v Sankt-Peterburge, 1906, 280 p.

<sup>25</sup> A. F. Lazurskiy, Estestvenny`i e`ksperiment i ego shkol`noe primeneniye, Petrograd, 1918, 192 p.

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### **Summary**

Among formed at the early twentieth century different approaches to the study of the nature of a child, the child's personality formation and its individual features, the most significant contribution to the field of study of the child and child's individual characteristics in the national educational psychology belongs to outstanding scientist, representative of experimental pedagogy A. Lazurskiy. He was a remarkable scientist of his time. His ideas were innovative and original. A. Lazurskiy advocated for the use of scientifically based teaching practice of psychological knowledge, he emphasized on the necessity to consider the fact that "the identity of a child is in the process of formation, has not adopted a specific, complete shape, but it already has a certain direction of development (endopsychika) which can equally hinder education process, or promote educational success". Scientist affirmed the opportunity for teachers to provide comprehensive development of students through the usage of children's data about obtained during the carefully planned research by method of psycho-pedagogical observation and experiment.

Alexander Fedorovich by placing the task of psycho-pedagogical monitoring of a child to those "who knows investigated one's well and can watch him in the classroom and outside it" noted that "for the teacher who learns his students, <... > it is undesirable to come from subjective perceptions, about character, that is personalities which are interesting. To make pedagogical observations objective at most, A. Lazurskiy made a number of requirements for their implementation. The next step in the study of the child by A. Lazurskiy idea, should be the composing of detailed psychological characteristics on the basis of "clinica" observations. While gathering material for school characteristics, scientist worked on improvement of the method of objective observation, and created a new method which is well-known modern to educators and psychologists as a natural experiment. Making a natural activity allowed to avoid the influence of subjective factors, approximate experiment to real life.

Although A. Lazurskiy didn't have enough time to fully complete his researches, his work had a considerable influence on the further development of child and educational psychology. Natural experiment method was the most popular in pedagogy throughout the twentieth century, every handbook on pedagogy and psychology has a reference on it, which could not be told about other methods developed within experimental pedagogy in early twentieth century.