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Structuring of Conduct in Activity Settings

The Forgotten Contributions of Mikhail Basov

Part 2

Guest Editors: Jaan Valsiner and
René van der Veer

Introduction

Jaan VALSINER AND RENÉ VAN DER VEER 3

The Organization of Processes of Behavior

M. IA. BASOV 8

The Problem of Development in Psychology

M. IA. BASOV 41

The Process of Adaptation to Environmental Conditions in a Child's Behavior

S.A. SHAPIRO AND E.D. GERKE 44

Index to *Soviet Psychology*

Volume 29 (January–December 1991) 91

Soviet Psychology

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Structuring of Conduct
in Activity Settings

The Transition of Children
of Jewish Origin

Part 2

Book Review: Jan Volkmann
and van der Veer

Introduction

JACK VALENTI AND ERIC VALENTI

The Organization of Processes of Behavior
M. E. SHARPE

The Problem of Development in Psychology
M. E. SHARPE

The Russian Approach to Experimental Conditions
in a Child's Behavior
S. A. GIBSON AND D. GIBSON

Index to Soviet Psychology

Volume 10 (January-December 1971)

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Introduction

In this issue of *Soviet Psychology*, we continue to bring to the attention of readers Mikhail Basov's theoretical contributions to study of the dynamics of the structure of conduct, a project we initiated in our last issue (vol. 29, no. 5). Part 2 of "The Organization of Processes of Behavior" completes our excerpt from [*General foundations of pedology*] (2nd ed.), and should be read as a continuation of the previously published section so that the discussion of "transitional" and "mixed" forms of behavior will be understood. Separation of the text into two parts in our journal was required by limitations of space; it was not motivated by any conceptual goal.

As we indicate below, Basov's "pedology"—like that of Vygotsky (see van der Veer and Valsiner, 1991, chap. 12)—was actually an effort to build a science of development (rather than merely to accumulate data, as was done in traditional "child study" movements elsewhere). This is shown most concisely in the small abstract "The problem of development in psychology," which dates from 1930. This abstract reflects Basov's presentation at the First All Union Congress on the Study of Behavior, a congress that played an important part in the history of psychology in the Soviet Union (see Valsiner, 1988, chap. 3).

Finally, in this issue we begin publication of English translations of empirical work done by Basov's co-workers in Leningrad. The work by Shapiro and Gerke is of special importance in the history of developmental thinking in the USSR. First, and most obviously, the naturalistic experiment carried out by Shapiro and Gerke was of central relevance for Basov's theory. The recording of children's speech and problem-solving efforts in a naturalistic situation takes the traditional

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(Köhler-type) experimental setting into a human domain and permits observation of various dynamic forms of conduct.

The work of Shapiro and Gerke has a second aspect of relevance, however. It was one of the models for Lev Vygotsky's claims about the need to construct a new experimental methodology in psychology—the "method of double stimulation." Vygotsky not only referred to Shapiro and Gerke's work (see Vygotsky, 1931, pp. 387–92) but also modeled some of his explications of that method on their experience and experiments (see Levina, 1968, for similarities of the technique to the materials in the Shapiro and Gerke article presented here). Of course, both Vygotsky and the investigators in Basov's research group had the same intellectual roots—those of German Gestalt psychology, and the developmental emphasis that accepts the functional role of thinking, acting, and speaking in real-life problem situations.

A number of elements in Basov's thinking that are represented here and in the last issue warrant special mention as relevant for contemporary developmental psychology. As noted above (and elsewhere—see Valsiner, 1988, chap. 5), Basov's emphasis on the transformational nature of structures of conduct (behavioral forms) is exemplary in itself. Furthermore, Basov's careful methodological focus on the processes of analysis and synthesis in the course of children's peer-group and adult-generated problem-solving situations is noteworthy (see, for example, Basov, 1923, 1924). In those processes, different kinds of stimuli occur in different, dynamically changing relationships with the structure, as Basov pointed out (see part 1—vol. 29, no. 5). The process of development occurs in the interaction of the structural form of the environmental stimulation with the structural form of the person's psychological functions; thus, for Basov it is the structure-with-structure relationship that entails constant transformation of both structures in the course of a person's active participation in the world of activities.

Basov was one of the psychologists in the Soviet Union in the 1920s who advanced an activity-theoretical position in psychology (the other notable parallel constructors of such a viewpoint were S. Molozhavyi and A. Zaluzhnyi; A.N. Leont'ev's well-known "activity theory" was formulated only in 1970 [see van der Veer and Valsiner, in press]). Of course, Basov's intellectual interdependence with A. Lazurskii and V.M. Bekhterev set him off in the direction of creating his activity-theoretical perspective.

Within Basov's (admittedly at times obscure) texts, readers may be helped by the emphasis that Basov's developmental perspective places on capturing the dynamic form of processes; static description of the structure of the person and of the environmental stimulation serves merely as a background for analysis of the "flow" of conduct. Hence, it is not so much the novelty of the three "pure" structural forms of conduct (i.e., the simple temporal chain, the associatively determined process, and the apperceptively determined process), which were described in the section of the text presented in part 1, but rather the *emphasis on intermediate and transitional forms* that can be observed at the intersections of these "pure" forms that is the crux of Basov's contribution to study of behavioral development. We consider this worthy of special mention since it may remain underemphasized by readers who adhere to contemporary conventions of psychological research on children.

The reason for this emphasis is of a profoundly critical nature. Contemporary developmental psychology seems to have become increasingly classificatory in ways that defy the vagueness of the forms of psychological phenomena at times of developmental transitions. We are trained to create clear-cut categorization systems (which include homogenized categories—see Valsiner, 1984) for observational research that possess high intercoder agreement. Consequently, those categories—on which we can easily agree—are made poor detectors of phenomena that are ambiguous in nature. Such phenomena may bear, simultaneously, marks of multiple categories, but none in very conclusive ways. This methodological imperative of present-day empirical research is not in accord with the goal of studying development (see Valsiner, 1987), which takes place over long periods characterized by ambiguities that cannot be easily classified according to any "pure" form category.

Basov's emphasis on empirical study of these transitional forms—however complicated such study might be in practical terms—should be a refreshing message for contemporary developmental psychologists. Of course, knowledge of the "pure" forms can help in analyzing the phenomena that occur at the transition periods; but reduction of those phenomena to simple "either/or" kinds of categories eliminates the very process of development from our empirical scrutiny. Basov's stress on the analytic and the synthetic in the realm of methodology (for an in-depth analysis, see Valsiner, 1988, chap. 5) is one of the major practical contributions that his legacy can have for modernizing our present methodological thinking.

Nevertheless, it is appropriate to remind ourselves that Basov's methodological message was far from a complete treatise on the subject. What we have before us in these special journal issues (and in all of Basov's work) is merely an active effort in the proper direction rather than any final, easy-to-use system. For example, the schematic figures that readers will encounter in Basov's texts are clearly "first attempts," and our contemporary computer-graphics-wise world should be in a position to suggest better illustrations of his ideas than the figures he devised. Illustrations aside, it is the core of Basov's theoretical ideas and careful examination of real-life phenomena that constitute the valuable part of the materials presented here.

Finally, it should be quite evident that Basov's move from empirical research on children's social conduct in peer-group settings and in laboratories to the world of study of children's integration into the structural organization of the work world of adults' productive labor was based on theoretical premises rather than the slogans of "making pedology relevant for socialist society" (which became widespread in about 1930—see Valsiner, 1988). His interest in describing the structural stimulation conditions of different professions (e.g., those of streetcar driver, or typist, or teacher—note that in Russian society the term *profession* is used more widely than in English, "occupations" being included under that label) constitutes a good example of merging of the structural realities of everyday life and his focus on naturalistic experimentation (in the Lazurskii traditions) and development of structural forms of conduct.

Basov introduced the developmental approach to the traditionally nondevelopmental field of psychotechnics (see Basov and Kazanskii, 1931). Indeed, children's main way of becoming adequately functioning members of the society that surrounds them is that of gradual entrance into participation in action structures of relevant everyday activities (see Rogoff, 1990, for a thorough overview of cross-cultural evidence). Different occupational niches—exemplified in Basov's terms as different structures of stimulation that are involved in the structure of work activities—establish conditions for children's gradual entrance into the existential work-life of the society. The process by which different children at different ages enter these niches can be the target phenomenon of "developmental psychotechnics" and can enrich our understanding of the basic developmental processes, which perhaps cannot be replicated within laboratory settings (see an investi-

gation into issues of replicability in social sciences—van der Veer, van Ijzendoorn, and Valsiner, 1991, in press).

In sum, Basov's intellectual and methodological legacy is worth building on today, when a consistently developmental perspective on psychological phenomena is perhaps even rarer than in Basov's time.

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