



Abakumova I.V., Savchenko N.A.

## Professional Dispositions as a component of personal formation

*Different theoretical approaches to "disposition" are represented in this article. The particularities of the dispositions as the sense disposition in the theory of sense are described here. The structure, role and particularities of the professional disposition as a form of a sense disposition are shown in this article. Notice that professional dispositions influence the arrangement of a professional strategy through sense directions.*

**Key words:** *the theory of sense, a fixed attitude, an attitude, a relation, a sense sphere, a sense – formation, a sense disposition, a professional disposition, a sense attitude.*

The interest in sense problems remains continual in home and western psychology. The rise of interest in the given problem in western psychology is connected with psychoanalysis (Z. Freud, A. Adler, and K.G. Jung). In the middle of the previous century the given problem was elaborated in two directions, differing in their notion of the role and function of a sense in an individual's activity: 1) as the highest integral basis of an individual (V. Franckle, J. Royse, A. Powel, Ph. Phoenix) and 2) as a structural element of conscience and activity (J. Neuttan, R. May, J. Kelly).

In home psychology several stages of the elaboration of the given problem can also be singled out: 1) the introduction of the concept "sense" and its elaboration as a basic category of psychology (L.S. Vigotsky, A.N. Leontiev, A.R. Luria); 2) its differentiation and the appearance of new notions, describing sense reality (A.G. Asmolov, B.S. Bratus, V.K. Willunas, E.E. Nasinovskaya, V.V. Stolin, E.V. Subbotinsky, O.K. Tikhomirov); 3) the integration of all the notions and the appearance of classifications of sense formations (A.G. Asmolov, B.S. Bratus, Ph. E. Vasiluk, B.V. Zeigarnik, V.A. Ivannikov, and E.E. Nasinovskaya). A number of authors (such as I. V. Abakumova, M.Kh. Mashekuasheva) hold the opinion that from the middle of 1990s onwards the fourth stage of the development of the theory of sense has begun, which is characterized by the integration of knowledge, accumulated in the field of psychology of sense and by the appearance of fundamental works, representing a precise structure of the conception of theory of sense (D.A. Leontiev, I. V. Abakumova).

Despite the dynamic character of the development of the theory of sense, a number of the most important aspects of sense and sense formation still remain not enough elaborated. The dynamics of the investigation of an individual's sense reality on the whole can be represented as a movement from the investigation of immediate individual structures, changeable and incorporated into real activities (an individual's senses) towards the investigation of the most steady formations, concluding all the life and activity of an individual (the sense of life, values, the sense of life conception). Moreover one can speak about the broad enough investigation of such structures as a motive, a value, and sense of life, an individual's sense and about the insufficient



investigation of the intermediate section in the form of latent structures to which in particular sense dispositions can be referred. Though there have appeared investigations recently, devoted to individual dispositions, where they are regarded as a factor of toleration (Sukhikh, 2006) and a career growth (Jurkova, 2007), however up to now this phenomenon remains little investigated. There exist also definite terminological differences that hamper the process of the analysis of dispositions. In psychology there exist three terms of the notion "disposition" close in meaning: a fixed attitude, an attitude and the notion of "relation" in the theory of relations created by V.N. Miasishev.

V.N. Miasishev [12] characterizes a relation as the one based on an individual's experience, as a selective and a realized connection of a person with the object significant for him, as a potential of the psychical reaction of an individual in connection with some object, process or fact of reality. According to V.N. Miasishev, relations appear from the individual and public experience and are established as "relations with the surrounding public reality full of content" [8, p.15]. In other words, the author regards relations as an objectively, really existing connection between an individual and the objects of reality and at the same time as a subjective reality which belongs to the subject and is reflected in his conscience.

V.N. Miasishev [13] employs the notions of a relation, psychological and subjective. At one place he indicates directly that "relations connect a person not so much with external sides of things but with their essence and sense" [14, p. 143], in such a way indicating the sense nature of relations, which a number of authors agree with (Kokurina, 1990; Leontiev, 2003; Petrov, 2001).

As distinguished from a psychical one, a psychological relation is characterized by consciousness, arbitrariness, integrity, individualization, and it is connected with an individual's sense and is specified in interests, evaluations, realized motives. A subjective relation is regarded in the context of interpersonal relations, where it "distinctly manifests itself in the reactions and actions disclosing their objectivity and an individual – psychological relation becomes social – psychological" [13, p. 48]. It is necessary to note that in other investigations an individual's subjective relation is designated as a broad class of phenomena (such as a value system, interests and likes and others), connected with the requirement – motive field, as a subjective position of an individual in the world, being reflecting as a matter of fact and kin to the notions of "a directive, an individual's sense, attitude" [10].

Summarizing the ideas of the structure of relations (V.N. Miasishev, 1995; Bodalev, 1994; Sargveladze, 1989; Iljin, 2001) one can speak about it as about a three – component formation in which the following is singled out: 1) a connotative component, expressed in motives and directions resulted from them; 2) cognitive which contains the subject's knowledge of an object; 3) emotional – evaluative which displays emotional experiences and evaluations of the subject towards an object.

The second notion close in meaning with the notion of "disposition" is the notion of a "fixed attitude" elaborated in the theory of attitude by D.N. Uznadze and his followers Sh. S. Prangishvili, Sh. N. Chkhartishvili and others.



Within the framework of the theory of attitude D.N. Uznadze singles out two kinds of attitudes: primary and fixed. In accordance with the opinion of D.N. Uznadze, the primary attitude appears and disappears after the act of behaviour corresponding to it is fulfilled. However, "the attitude once formed does not disappear, it remains by the subject as a willingness to the recurring actualization in case of the recurrence of appropriate conditions" [3, p. 13]. Sh. N. Chkhartishvili points to the fact that a fixed attitude is "a state of chronic order which may remain intact in an inactivated condition, inactively, during days, weeks and months, sometimes till the very death" [3, p. 14 – 15]. It is the primary attitude which implements the function of the control of the actual activity and the fixed attitude exists latently, without having the direct yield to some kind of a conduct (Chkhartishvili, 1971; Prangishvili, 1975). The manifestation of a fixed attitude is judged by those distortions which it introduces into the process of conduct. These mistakes and distortions signify the fact that in a number of cases the fixed attitude may acquire a relative self – sufficiency and independence from the task set before the subject. In such a way, the fixed attitude represents the willingness of a person to the multiple recurrence of a certain way of actions in the conditions in which it has appeared because "it is that section of the objective reality that is reflected and preserved in it on the basis of which it itself has been created and fixed" [3, p. 26 – 27].

The arising question about the correlation of the notions of "relation" and "attitude" was solved by different authors in a different way. In some conceptions attitudes and relations are regarded as various structures (Norakidze, 1979; Nadirashvili, 1970; Leontiev, 2003).

The investigation of social attitudes has a long – term history, mainly in the American social psychology (G.Allport, M. Smith, K. Hovland and others).

According to P.N. Shihirev, "attitude" is a notion used in sociology and social psychology for the designation of a steady predisposition, a willingness of an individual or a group to the action oriented to a socially significant object. Under an attitude one can understand the psychological experience by an individual of the value, meaning and sense of a social object, the state of an individual's conscience of a relatively certain value.

In sociology the notion of an attitude was first used by W. Thomas and F. Znaneky [20] for the designation of an individual's orientations as a member of a group with regards to the values of this group. For them an attitude is the subjective orientations of an individual as a member of a group, community or society towards this or that values which prescribe precise socially accepted ways of conduct. This is the willingness of a person to act in a certain way in certain situations conditioned by the orientations in the system of values.

G. Allport gives a wide interpretation of an attitude, regarding it as "the nervous – psychic willingness conditioned by previous experience having a guiding or dynamic influence on an individual's reactions to all the objects and situations which he is connected with" [2, p. 810]. Within the framework of his theory of individual characteristic features he, in such a way, considers a personal disposition which lets him study a



person, his unique individuality. Features and personal dispositions really coexist in a person; they are not directly observed and must be deduced from a conduct.

In an encyclopedic entry attitudes are defined somewhat narrower as “a predisposition to classify groups of objects and phenomena and respond to them in a certain correspondence to their evaluation” [11, p. 360]. L. Katz and E. Stotland exclude the tendency to reaction from the definition of an attitude, defining it as a tendency or “a predisposition of an individual to evaluate an object or its symbol in a certain way” [6, p. 428].

Within the framework of social – psychological investigations the traditional conception of a three – component structure of an attitude has been established: 1) an affective component (it is connected with the emotional evaluation of an object); 2) a cognitive component (it expresses the realization by a person of the object of an attitude); 3) behavioural component (it contains real actions directed to the object). However, among the researchers till now there continue disputes concerning the fact which of the named components plays a deciding role and which of them is the efficient object of measuring.

The reinterpretation of the results assembled in this tradition has become the conception of the dispositional regulation of the social behaviour of an individual elaborated by V.A. Jadov [15]. The dispositional conception characterizes the behaviour of an individual depending on the state his willingness to a certain way of an action. V.A. Jadov regards an individual's dispositions as “predispositions to perceive and to evaluate the conditions of an activity fixed in his social experience and also to operate in theses conditions in a certain way” [15, p. 3]. The author regards an individual's dispositions as a hierarchically organized system the apex of which is the general reference of interests and a system of values as a product of impacts of general social conditions, the medium level of which is constituted by a system of generalized attitudes to various social objects and the lower level of which is formed by situational attitudes as willingness to evaluation and operation in the specific conditions of an activity. This also allows looking at the content of dispositions widely enough.

The understanding of attitudes as fixed in the social experience of predispositions, that is the understanding of an attitude as a specific particular case of fixed attitudes is enough spread (Nadirashvili, 1974; Prangishvili, 1975; Sargveladze, 1981 and others).

From the conducted analysis of notions one can see that a disposition is interpreted widely enough beginning from its identification with an attitude and the attribution to them of the system of values, the locus – control, the basic ideas of a person's nature [17, 5], with a fixed attitude [7], up to the erosion of differences between a disposition and an attitude to a purely temporal factor [18, p. 45]. However, the given differences concern the manifestation of a disposition in various contexts; with respect to the content of theses notions one can single out a number of similar moments which consist, on the one hand, in the unity of structural components singled out in them (connotative, cognitive and affective); on the other hand, - in the similarity of the definition through the predisposition fixed in the experience, a fixed willingness. The given similarity will consequently let us confine to one notion, the notion of a sense disposition.



In philosophy there exists the notion of “dispositive”, also close in its essence to the notion of “disposition”. A “dispositive” (dispositif (Fr.) – an order, an arrangement as a “disposition”, and also an organization, a mechanism) is a term offered by M. Phucko, “which fix the system of strategic landmarks of purposefulness, implicitly given by the complex “power - knowledge” characteristic for this or that society and acting as a matrix of conformation of practices cultivated by this society” [19, p. 332]. M. Phucko regards the dispositive as an implicit invariant of typical strategies of implementation of this or that practice, focusing the attention on its strategic function. This function of a dispositive, disclosed by M. Phucko, entirely correlates with a disposition, what becomes known, when applied to the notion of the structure of a sense sphere by D.A. Leontiev.

The notions of a sense disposition display the self - sufficiency of the given factor within the framework of the theory of sense and sense – formation. Analyzing sense structures D.A. Leontiev [9] deduces the basic structural – functional constituents of the sense sphere of a person and describes their interaction. According to the ideas of the regarded author, the sense sphere of a person consists of three levels of sense structures which are connected by functional ties and are realized in the process of sense – formation.

The first level is constituted by an individual’s senses and attitudes having direct regulatory influences on the structures of an activity and the image of the world. The second level is constituted by motives, sense constructs and sense dispositions. These structures are responsible for sense – formation and take part in regulatory processes indirectly through the structures of the first level generated by them. The third level is constituted by higher senses to which an individual’s values are referred.

Within the framework of the integral pattern of sense – formation, proposed by I.V. Abakumova [1], sense constructs, sense dispositions also belong to the area of potential sense – forming structures.

D.A. Leontiev speaks about a sense disposition in the context of an individual’s aptitude for the preservation of traces of sense experience in the form of the fixed latent inactivated stable relation of the subject to objects and phenomena of reality, invariantly significant in various contexts of an individual’s life and activity and manifesting themselves in specific effects of a sense regulation of an activity. The author offers to single out two sides in it – content and dynamic – in such a way indicating its double nature: as a phenomenon rich in content, phenomenological and as a phenomenon of a fixed nature that is their predispositions.

D.A. Leontiev believes that a relation represents a phenomenological side of sense dispositions. These relations can be of different degrees of generalization – from the relation to single objects to the relation to the whole classes of objects, while relations can be differentiated within these classes, the relations to the whole may differ from the relations to its parts. “By every new clash in the practical activity with significant objects and phenomena the relation of the subject already existing to them enriches, supplements and differentiates at the expense of the disclosure of new sense ties, what in its turn may lead to either to strengthening or vice versa to shattering of the



initial relation" [9, p. 209]. By this their difference of sense structures of the higher level (values) are underlined, the values which are rooted the structure of an individual and the shift of which is a turning point in life and activity. One can judge about the presence of steady relations through certain invariant characteristic features of the behaviour of the subject in relation to one and the same objects in different contexts of activity. Together with this D.A. Leontiev notes that sense dispositions do not have a direct outlet into activity. Sense dispositions in a specific situation are actualized through the generation of an individual's senses and attitudes of actual activity, "which tend to bring the direction of activity on the whole or its separate episodes into correspondence with stable extra situational dispositions" [ibidem, p. 209].

Speaking about the outcome of the content of sense dispositions into activity and a person's behaviour it is necessary to turn to their dynamic side that is to fixed attitudes. As D.A. Leontiev notes in the context of the theory of sense, "the indication of the sociality of an attitude presents itself superfluous ... an individual's structures in which the sense experience of the subject is fixed have in principle one and the same composition irrespective of the fact whether they regulate the sphere of social behaviour or other spheres of activity" [9, p. 208]. D.A. Leontiev proposes to regard an attitude as a private case of a sense disposition (which the authors of the given work agree with). In the internal structure of a sense disposition as a phenomenon of a directive nature three components can be singled out: 1) an objective constituent that is the reflection of an object to which the subject steadily refers; 2) a sense constituent, that is the reflection of a specific sense in the given object; 3) a behavioural component.

D.A. Leontiev following M. Fishbein and I. Ajzen [4] proposes not to ascribe a behavioural component to the structure of the very disposition as no specific actions can be deduced from a sense disposition. They are formed, as D.A. Leontiev notes, on the basis of an actual attitude, which is formed in its turn on the basis of the disposition under the influence of the situation and taking into account the direction of an activity, set by the motive. In connection with it the author offers to single out two components in a sense disposition - objective and sense.

As it was noted above, an individual's senses and attitudes are also derivatives from sense dispositions. According to D.A. Leontiev [9], the relation between a disposition and a motive of activity is reduced to two types: 1) the motive acts as a determinant of an actualization of relevant sense dispositions in the activity through the sense component of a disposition; 2) the actualization of sense dispositions through their objective component, when sense formation appears to be in no way connected with the context of actual activity. The author says that not the motives act as a source of sense in the second case but significant objects the relation to which is rooted in the structure of an individual in the form of a fixed sense disposition. In connection with it incoherence between dispositional (on the basis of an objective component) and motivational sense formation (on the basis of a sense component) may appear. This happens when a person in the course of his activity clashes with the object which has a steady sense for him, fixed in a disposition. "As the sense disposition actualized



in this case is not connected with the system of a sense regulation of the given activity, it can be the source of an individual's senses and sense attitudes which do not coincide in their regulative reference with an individual's sense and sense attitudes determined by an actual motive" [ibidem, p. 211 – 212].

The incoherence of dispositions and the motive of an activity depend on their "sense charge" (Leontiev, 2003, p. 213). This incoherence can generate obstacles on the way to the implementation of the given activity or can lead to the formation of a completely new motive and a new activity, induced by the unwilful influence of sense dispositions on the course of an actual activity. These processes were studied by O. M. Krasnoryadtseva [8] who singled out two types of senses within the sense regulation of an activity: senses originated by the actual requirement and the actual motive and senses generating the actual need. O. M. Krasnoryadtseva [8] has managed to show empirically that extra situational individual's structures – an individual's fixed attitudes – participate actively in the regulation of an activity generating situational emotions and actual attitudes, interconnected into unified emotional – attitude complexes. By the detection of the cognate discrepancy in the material of an activity the devaluation of the sense of an actual (non - cognitive) activity, the destruction of the functioning and the formation of a new emotional – attitude complex, which determine the incentive to a new, more valuable activity, take place. Sense dispositions act as a mechanism of the shift of an activity, "their actualization is expressed in the generation of actual individual senses and sense attitudes, tending to lend the activity in which they originated a reference coherent with the reference of a sense disposition" [9, p. 212 – 213]. Here we can speak about a sense disposition in a strategic aspect, as about a sense structure which contributes indirectly through the generation of individual senses and sense attitudes to the production of a strategy of succeeding in this or that activity. Moreover it is necessary to underline just the indirectness of a connection with the aim in a disposition.

So, one can single out a number of characteristics of a sense disposition: 1) a phenomenon of a double nature, that is phenomenological and dynamic at the same time; 2) a fixed, latent, invariant, inactivated, stable relation and willingness; 3) the sense formation structure of an individual's sense sphere; 4) possesses a two – component structure; 5) has the strategic aspect of functioning contributing to the production of the strategy of the attainment of the aim.

One can say that an individual's sense dispositions with regard to a profession, a professional activity may obtain the form of professional dispositions in which we consider the singled – out characteristics of sense dispositions are inherent. Professional dispositions will have an influence on the professionally oriented educational and maybe on the future professional activity being an indirect mechanism of the arrangement of a professional strategy.

On the one hand the professional disposition comes into contact with the motive of the actual activity and comes into interaction with it; on the other hand, it possesses its own stable relation or a fixed sense which can also generate its specific intentions. The given sides in the real behaviour and activity of a person integrate itself in a



particular quality, expressed in sense attitudes which have already a direct influence on the activity actually taking its course. In view of which the strategic aspect of the functioning of a professional disposition is possible.

Emanating from this it is expedient to single out the following components within the structure of a professional disposition: a content – sense component, consisting of the fixed and stable relation to its profession and its components; a dynamic component, which is connected with the motives of an educational or professional activity, and the third component is a sense attitude as an integrator of the content – sense and dynamic components. In this context we follow D.A. Leontiev, understanding under sense attitudes a constituent of the executive mechanisms of an activity reflecting in itself the sense of life of objects, to which this activity is directed, and which reveals itself in a phenomenological way in various forms of impacts on the course of actual activity.

If the content side of a disposition correlates with the motive of the action the professional disposition fits in the general professional strategy. But some cases are possible when it can come into the incoherence with the motive of an activity. For example, a student – psychologist wants to become a successful psychologist and knows that to achieve this purpose it is necessary to gain the appropriate knowledge, to develop in him definite qualities, however in reality he has a negative attitude and prejudice towards studies as such, some subjects of the educational standard, teachers, other psychologists, clients, psychological theories, himself as a psychologist and so on, then he chooses the way to the set aim in accordance with these stable relations. In the last case objects significant to the professionally oriented educational activity contribute to the attainment of the purpose of an activity through sense attitudes, formed by a stable and latent relation. The student gains a selective attitude towards knowledge which reveals itself in the selection of those components which correspond to sense attitudes.

In connection with this there arises the problem of defining such stable relations of students – psychologists which form a kind of a sense background within which the choice of aims and means of actual activity and also their impact on the choice of aims and means of professionally oriented and further professional activity, their contribution to the arrangement of a general professional strategy are implemented (exercised). It can be achieved in particularly by investigating sense attitudes, in which the content of a professional disposition is realized.

### **Literature**

1. Abakumova I. V. Training and sense: sense formation in an educational process. (A psychological didactic approach). Rostov-on-Don: Publishing House of the Rostov University, 2003. 480 p.
2. Allport G. W. Attitudes // A handbook of social psychology / C. Murchison (Ed.). Worcester (Mass.): Clark University Press, 1935. P. 798-844.
3. Chhartishvili Sh. N. Some debatable problems of the psychology of attitude. Tbilisi: Metzniereba, 1971. 237 p.





4. Fishbein H., Ajzen I. Belief, attitude, intention, and behavior: an introduction to theory and research. Reading (Mass.): Addison-Wesley, 1975. XI, 578 p.
5. Jurkova I.G. ideas and dispositions of an individual as a factor of professional growth: Abstract, dissertation ... the candidate of psychological sciences. Krasnodar, 2007. 24 p.
6. Katz L., Stotland E. A preliminary statement to a theory of attitude structure and change // Psychology: a study of a science. V. 1. / S.Koch (Ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959. P. 423-475.
7. Khovrachov A.P. Peculiarities of a dispositional attitude of the patients with mental disorders // The psychological magazine, V. 16, № 2, 1995. P. 164 – 167.
8. Krasnoryadtseva O.M. The regulation of an intellectual activity on the initiation stage: Abstract, dissertation ... the candidate of psychological sciences. M., 1986. 25 p.
9. Leontiev D.A. Psychology of sense: nature, structure and dynamic of a sense reality. 2nd revised edition. M.: Sense, 2003. 487 p.
10. Lomov B.F. The methodological and theoretical problems of psychology. M., 1984. 326 p.
11. McGuire W.J. Attitudes // Encyclopaedia Britannica. 15th ed. V. 2. Chicago: 1974. P. 360–363.
12. Miasischev V.N. An individual and neuroses. L.: Publishing House of the Leningrad University, 1960. 426 p.
13. Miasischev V.N. Psychology of relations: selected psychological works. M; Voronez. 1995. 356 p.
14. Miasischev V.N. The problem of relations of a person and its place in psychology // Questions on Psychology, 1957. № 5. P. 142 – 155.
15. Self - regulation and forecast of the social behaviour of an individual \ edited by V.A. Jordova. L.: Science, 1979. 264 p.
16. Shikhrev P. I. Investigations of an attitude in the USA. // The questions of philosophy. 1973. № 4.
17. Sukhikh E.S. Social – perceptive style and dispositions of an individual as factors of toleration. Abstract, dissertation ... the candidate of psychological sciences. Krasnodar, 2007. 24 p.
18. The Great explanatory psychological dictionary. V. 2. (P - Z); Translation from English \ Reber Arthur. OOO Publishing House "Ast"; Publishing House "Veche", 2001. 560 p.
19. The newest philosophic dictionary: 2nd edition recast and supplemented. M.: Interpressservice, the Book House. 2001. 1280 p.
20. Thomas V., Znanjecki F. The polish peasant in Europe and America Boston 1918. Vol. 1.